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A Study of Indentity Consumer Purchasing Behavior and Factors that Influence Consumer Purchse Decision: With Reference to Durban

Abstract

This literature review focuses on consumer purchasing behavior and factors that influence consumer purchasing decisions. Notably, this literature review is based on the three main objectives of the study. Regarding consumer purchasing behavior, literature shows that there are four major categories of consumer behavior. They include variety-seeking behavior, habitual-buying behavior, dissonance-reducing buying behavior, and complex buying behavior. These four major consumer behavior categories are based on consumers' level of involvement and differences between product or service brands. Regarding the second objective on the factors that influence consumer purchasing decisions and shopping, current literature shows that cultural, social, personal, and psychological factors influence consumer-buying decisions. Most importantly, in the contemporary world, consumers are highly influenced by environmental sustainability and privacy in online purchases, trust, and social media networks in their buying decisions. These factors might fall under one or more of the major categories. However, they help understand why consumers make certain decisions and choose to shop in particular places. Regarding the third objective that focuses on the role of personal attributes on consumers' purchasing decisions, literature acknowledges age, level of education, level of income, gender, and marital status as the most influential factors. Concerning age, shopping malls are popular among the younger population as well as the educated. Women further frequent malls due to their satisfaction based on the variety of benefits such malls offer. For men, satisfaction with their purchases determines their purchasing behavior and the chances of frequenting certain shopping places. Besides, for the married and those with children, shopping behavior is more likely to be influenced by the family than single consumers who make decisions independently. However, there are still gaps in literature that require future studies to focus more on consumer behavior in the digital age. Overall, the literature provides insight into why some consumers behave in certain ways and choose specific shopping places.

A Study to Identify Consumer Purchasing Behavior and Factors that Influence Consumer Purchase Decision: With Reference to Durban

Key-Words : Consumer, Purchase Behaviour, Purchase Decision Durban City

Introduction

Consumer behavior entails a wide range of concepts and is a broadly studied field due to its importance. Consumers follow through complex processes to choose, consume, and dispose of goods and services. These processes might entail behavioral, mental, and emotional responses of an individual or group. In this regard, consumer behavior integrates ideas and concepts from different fields of study, including economics, chemistry, biology, and psychology. According to Chandan (2019), numerous characteristics, specificities, and factors affect an individual consumer in their decision-making process, the retailers one chooses, the brands one prefers, their purchasing behavior, and shopping habits. A consumer's purchase decision is, therefore, a result of diverse factors. Commonly, a consumer seeks to identify the commodities they desire and select those that promise greater utility based on prevailing circumstances (Chandan, 2019). Consumers further consider the amount of money they are willing to spend on a specific commodity depending on aspects such as influence from their friends, how they perceive such a commodity and whether it addresses their current or future needs, among other influences. As a result, a commodity or service price might determine whether a consumer purchases or foregoes it. Regardless of existing differences among individuals and groups, consumer behavior consists of many factors that impact their buying behaviors. According to Qazzafi (2020), these factors have distinct characteristics divided into four major categories:

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economic, social, psychological, and personal. For businesses, understanding factors that drive consumer-buying behaviors could be a source of competitive advantage as they can tailor their products and services to specific groups or individuals.

Personal factors entail attributes that cannot be separated from an individual. Regarding consumer behavior, they are the consumer's characteristics in terms of their values, lifestyle, personality, occupation, and stages of their lifecycle. These factors determine what consumers buy from the market and what motivates them, for example, at a specific age, as argued by Kotler et al. (2019). On the other hand, psychological factors tend to be strongly linked to a customer's thinking patterns, such as memory, learning, perception, and motivation, as Kotler and Keller (2016) found. In most cases, these factors determine the value consumers attach to products, such as the need for belonging, ego, or satisfy their basic needs. Considering that humans are social beings and consistently interact with others in their environment, social factors such as family, social networks, and other groups impact personal buying behaviors (Kotler & Keller, 2016). It is also common for consumer behavior to be affected by economic factors, including consumer credit, family income, personal income, among other factors, as found by Qazzafi (2020). Examining these major factors that influence consumer behavior provides significant insight into what compels one to buy or consume specific commodities or services.

In today's turbulent business world, the process whereby new services and commodities enter the market and how different consumer groups with diverse characteristics make judgments during pre-purchase decisions is a major area of interest for developers and marketers. According to Chakraborty and Suresh (2018), these insights into consumer perceptions of products are critical to every player in the business world as they help develop innovative production and marketing techniques. These elements are part of complex consumer decision making and buying behavior. Learning these behaviors enables businesses to profile their consumers and communicate relevant messages besides customizing products and in-store experiences. This way, retailers address the unique decision-making styles of their consumers. While significant literature exists on consumer buying behavior, little is known regarding consumer purchasing behavior and factors that influence consumer purchase decisions in Durban city. For this reason, this research seeks to identify consumer buying behavior and factors that influence consumer purchase decisions with a focus on Durban city.

Literature Review

Consumer Purchasing Behavior

Consumer purchasing behavior is a major area of interest in marketing today. Consumer purchasing behavior refers to consumers' decision-making process that entails choosing from a wide range of products and services to meet their needs, minimize costs, and maximize their satisfaction (Willman-Iivarinen, 2017). This concept can further be defined as the final consumer behavior when one makes a purchase. Usually, consumer-buying behavior reflects their budget constraints, nature, and preferences. There are four major types of consumer behavior: variety-seeking behavior; habitual buying behavior; dissonance-reducing buying behavior, and complex buying behavior (Hariyanti et al., 2019; Majerova & Krizanova, 2020). The consumer's level of involvement determines these different buying behaviors during purchase and the differences between brands. Notably, significant brand differences and high involvement is associated with complex consumer behavior. It also occurs when consumers consider a risky, expensive purchase or a commodity bought infrequently. It is further common when a consumer seeks to utilize a specific product or service as a way of expressing himself or herself. In most cases, such consumer behavior is rare, for example, when buying a wedding dress, specialized technological equipment, or house. In complex consumer behavior, an individual also tends to go through most or all of the stages of the buying decision process.

However, low involvement and significant brand differences amount to variety-seeking behavior. In most cases, consumers frequently alternate between diverse brands aimed at enjoying the variety. On the other hand, fewer brand differences with high involvement are associated with dissonance reducing behavior. Although consumers are highly involved during this purchase, they encounter challenges determining how some product or service brands differ from each other. Consumers might also choose certain products based on convenience or price and later seek further confirmation to decide whether they made the right choices. Dissonance might also occur, especially if consumers worry about purchasing a product if they think they might have made a wrong decision (Mandel et al., 2017). Common products and services associated with dissonance-reducing buying behavior include financial services and products such as investments and insurance.

Consumer behavior can be classified as habitual when there are few brand differences and low involvement during such purchases. Habitual buying behavior is the most frequently demonstrated behavior around the globe. According to Dhiman et al. (2018), this type of purchasing behavior occurs when consumers perceive brands to have few differences, relatively affordable, and frequently buy such products. In this regard, consumers might buy the same brand repeatedly out of habit. However, if a particular brand is unavailable or good offers from other brands, consumers might switch easily, for example, when buying toothpaste, soap, or household detergents.

Factors that Influence Consumers' Purchase Decision and Place of Shopping

Based on the four types of consumer purchasing behavior, different consumers are driven by diverse reasons before purchasing. According to Jaiswal and Kant's (2018) study, environmental sustainability is one of the key influences of consumers' attitudes towards certain products. In this regard, attitude towards green products is the best predictor of purchasing environmentally-sensitive products worldwide. However, during purchase decisions, environmental sustainability remains a concept popular among the current young adult and educated populations. They exhibit high levels of responsibility to protect the planet individually (Jaiswal & Kant, 2018). This group of consumers is more likely to avoid products that will ecologically damage the environment during their purchase decisions. As a result, one's attitude towards green products is a major determinant of consumer behavior, with the number of consumers who advocate for green consumption on the rise around the globe. Environmental sustainability in the current world can be classified as a psychological factor and a cultural factor regarding influences on consumer behavior.

Kumar et al. (2017) also found that environmental sustainability has emerged as a social demand characterized by the need to execute specific consumer behaviors. Similar to Jaiawal and Kant's findings, Kumar et al. (2017) argue that environmental sustainability in consumer purchase behavior is a subjective norm, allowing consumers to access the collective self in a rather prominent way (Kumar et al., 2017). Since consumers are dependent on the social bonds they have with other individuals and groups, environmental sustainability becomes an important symbolic identification with the group during consumer decision-making (Kumar et al., 2017). Joshi and Rahman (2017) also studied the significance of environmental sustainability in consumer behavior. They found that a consumer's environmental concern, perceived knowledge regarding sustainability issues, perceived marketplace influence, attitude towards sustainable buying, subjective norms, and supportive behaviors for environmental institutions determine whether they embrace sustainable purchase behaviors. These factors do entail not only social but also psychological attributes of consumer behavior.

With the proliferation of the internet and social media platforms and websites for shopping, consumer-buying behavior is driven by different factors from physical buying. According to a study by Fortes and Rita (2016), the perceived risk of electronic commerce determines consumers' confidence in buying from specific platforms. When consumers perceive that a particular website has a certain level of risk on their privacy, they develop a negative attitude towards such media that translates to a consumer behavior against them (Fortes & Rita, 2016). As a result, consumers' privacy concerns in the contemporary world matter significantly as far as their purchasing behavior is concerned.

Trust in a commodity or company also plays a key role in consumer behavior, as found by Giampietri et al. (2018), who argue that consumer trust might translate to positive consumer purchasing behavior when it exists. Trust might drive what Giampietri et al. (2018) consider solid relationships between consumers and producers to overcome confusion and build loyalty. For those using social media platforms and websites for selling commodities and services, trust can significantly increase when consumers exhibit a lower perceived risk regarding their privacy, as argued by Fortes and Rita (2016). As a result, retailers should focus on enhancing their privacy policies and consumer trust in their products and services due to the positive outcomes they accrue.

Additionally, social media networks in the contemporary world have a huge impact on consumer purchasing behavior. According to a study by Xhema (2019), customer loyalty diminishes with an increase in consumer use of social media networks. The reduced customer loyalty results from the availability of close substitutes and the power of negative word of mouth, which reduces the chances of consistently buying the same brands. Besides, Xhema (2019) argues that social media users are less tolerant than nonusers and, therefore, less likely to buy from a brand with high prices and bad service. Social media use also increases consumers' chances of experimenting with different products and services, translating to variety-seeking consumer behavior (Xhema, 2019). Such variety-seeking behaviors result from high product and service varieties on social media platforms and customized marketing.

Personal Variables of the Consumers and their Selection of Shopping Place

Besides consumer behavior relying on external factors such as the pricing of commodities and sellers' availability in the market, personal attributes play a key role in shopping place choice. One of the key determinants of the choice of shopping place is a consumer's income. According to a study by Sanyal and Hisam (2018), shopping malls are generally perceived to price their products and services higher than other retail formats as consumers perceive their products to be of superior quality and brand. In this regard, consumers' disposable income determines whether they might shop in malls. For this reason, consumers with a higher income are more likely to frequent shopping malls than their low-income counterparts. Besides, Sanyal and Hisam (2018) found that the educated and youngsters between 26 and 35 years frequent shopping malls considering that they find them trendy than other retail formats. As a result, personal income, education level, and age are major predictors of consumer selection of malls as their favorable shopping places.

Gender also plays a key role in the selection of places of shopping. According to a study by Abrudan (2016), although there is no significant difference in the level of satisfaction between genders, conative loyalty differs for the two genders, with women more likely to purchase from a store or place they previously purchased. Besides, women tend to frequent shopping places with a rise in their satisfaction with the shopping visits, whereas men with an increase in the satisfaction with products purchased (Abrudan, 2016). As a result, for women, the choice of shopping place goes beyond their satisfaction with goods to entail the visit and the shopping place's characteristics. These findings are consistent with those by Swadia and Patel (2018), who argue that women frequent shopping malls than men due to the outstanding shopping experience ranging from convenience to pleasant ambience to shopping comfort. Consequently, women and men have different preferences regarding their shopping places.

Additionally, the marital status of an individual determines their choice of shopping place. According to Deepak and Velaudham (2019), consumers' purchase decision differs from their marital status. Notably, married consumers are highly influenced than their single consumers regarding their purchase decisions. This difference results from their ability to search for information, evaluate alternatives, and their needs. For example, married individuals with children are more likely to visit shopping places such as malls, which meet their family members' diverse needs. On the other hand, single individuals, for example, adult males, might frequent shopping places that exclusively sell commodities for adult men.

Research Methodology

Research Objectives

This research was conducted to serve following objectives.

1. To study the consumer purchasing behaviour
2. To identify factors that influence consumers' purchase decision and place of shopping
3. To associate personal variables of the consumers with their selection of shopping place

Null Hypothesis

Personal variables of the consumers is not significantly associated with their purchasing behaviour / decision

Sample Size

Present study was carried out on consumers of Durban city. Consumers from various market places were selected for this study. Departmental stores, Shopping Malls, Company Outlets, Retail Shops and Shopping Markets of Durban city were source for data collection. Considering 60% purchasing behaviour among consumers with 20% relative precision and 5% risk, minimum 64 consumers should be selected for present study. Total 65 consumers of Durban city were selected for present study.

3.5 Data Collection

Total 65 consumers were selected from various department store, shopping mall, outlets, shops and market of Durban city. The consumers were selected with purposive non-random sampling method. A pre-tested questionnaire

was distributed among selected consumers and filled questionnaires were screened after collecting back from consumers. Personal variables like age, gender, marital status, education, occupation, etc were asked in first part of the questionnaire where purchasing behaviour of consumers was studied in second part.

Tool for Data Collection

A semi-structured closed ended questionnaire was prepared and finalized after pre-test including reliability and validation. Reliability of the questionnaire was tested using Chronbach's Alpha score whereas validity was tested in form of "Content Validity" by getting suggestions from five subject experts in the field of marketing. The Chronbach's Alpha score for the scale was 0.895 which shows high reliability. Majority of the questions were close-ended. For convenience of consumers, most of the questions were asked in Likert scale.

Data Analysis

Collected data was entered in MS Excel sheet and cleaned before transferring for further analysis. Coding and decoding of responses for different questions were also done during data analysis process. Statistical software STATA/MP 13.0, StataCorp, College Station, Texas, USA was used for data analysis. Descriptive statistics like frequency and percentage were obtained for categorical data whereas mean and SD were calculated for continuous data. Pearson's Chi-square test was applied to check association between various categorical variables. Cluster analysis was done to group selected consumers in few homogeneous groups as per their characteristics. Discriminant analysis was carried out to predict family income. Relative Importance Index (RII) was calculated to rank factors which influence consumers' perception regarding choice of shopping place. Throughout the study significance level is set at 5%.

Limitations of the study

For any study there are some limitations in-spite of application of enhanced methodology and proper research technique. Few limitations of present study is listed below.

1. Present study is done on consumers of Durban city only. One can enhance the scope of sample for different areas of South Africa.
2. This study is relay on quantitative answers of various questions. For getting detail information qualitative research should be carried out.
3. Study do not include views of stakeholders like shopkeepers, management / staff of mall and company outlets. It can be done to enhance target population.

Results and Discussion

Present study was carried out on 65 consumers from Durban city. The study is planned to study consumer purchasing behaviour and to identify factors influencing their decision on purchasing and place of shopping.

Table 1 : Personal Information

		Frequency	Percent (n=65)
Age	Mean ± SD	38.83 ± 10.58	
Gender	Male	33	50.8
	Female	32	49.2
Ethnicity / Race	Indian	7	10.8
	White	16	24.6
	Coloured	15	23.1
	Black	27	41.5
Marital status	Married	45	69.2
	Unmarried	20	30.8
Educational Qualification	Below Metric	20	30.8
	Metric	20	30.8
	Diploma	13	20.0
	Graduate	9	13.8
	Post Graduate	3	4.6

Occupation	Business	19	29.2
	Govt Service	14	21.5
	Private Service	13	20.0
	Professional	13	20.0
	Retired	2	3.1
	House Wife	4	6.2
Monthly Income	<R5000	20	30.8
	R5000-R10000	15	23.1
	R11000-R20000	15	23.1
	R21000-R30000	10	15.4
	>R30000	5	7.7

Cluster analysis is an exploratory analysis that tries to identify structures within the data. Cluster analysis is also called segmentation analysis or taxonomy analysis. More specifically, it tries to identify homogenous groups of cases if the grouping is not previously known. Because it is exploratory, it does not make any distinction between dependent and independent variables. Cluster analysis is often used in conjunction with other analyses (such as discriminant analysis).

For present research, cluster analysis is applied to answer a research question "What is the customer purchasing behaviour"? To answer this question researcher had conducted this survey covering needs, perception, demographics and behavior of consumers. The researcher has used cluster analysis to identify homogenous groups of consumers that have similar purchasing behaviour.

Using 2-step cluster analysis, three clusters were obtained based on the four input fields viz. Apparel, Gift Article, Cosmetic and Consumer Durable. Average value of Silhouette measure of cohesion and separation is 0.6 which shows good quality of separation of consumers in three clusters.

Figure 1 : Importance of performance indicators
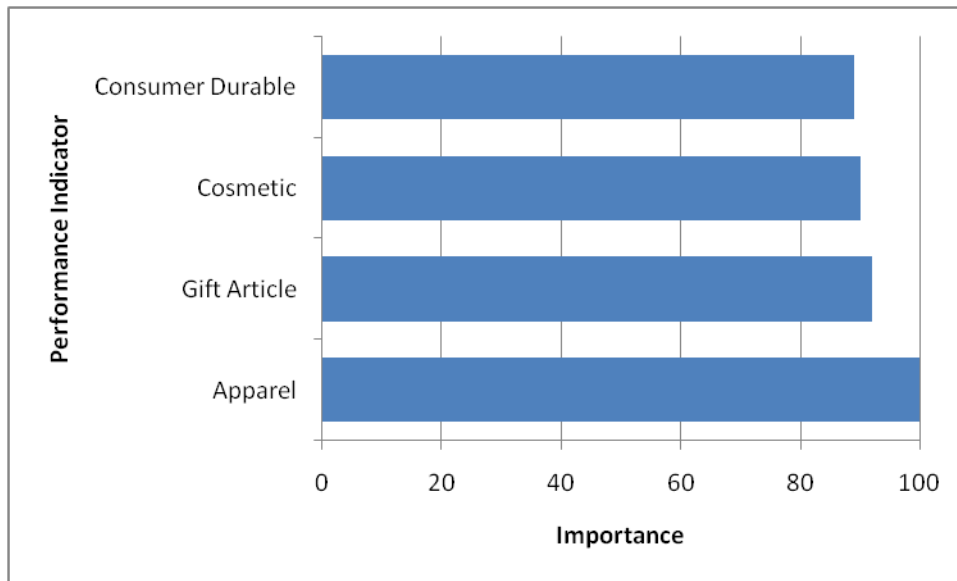
Importance of performance indicators is also obtained using this analysis. As per the results, most important indicator is apparel (100%) followed by gift aricle (92%), cosmetic (90%) and consumer durables (89%).

Table 2 : Details of Clusters

Indicators	Cluster – 1	Cluster – 2	Cluster – 3
Apparel	Shop 100%	Mall/Company 68.8%	Mall 100%
Gift Article	Shop 100%	Shop 62.5%	Mall 100%

Cosmetic	Shop 100%	Shop 56.2%	Mall 100%
Consumer Durable	Shop 100%	Shop 53.1%	Mall 100%
Size	17(26.2%)	32(49.2%)	16(24.6%)

The researcher must be able to interpret the cluster analysis based on their understanding of the data to determine if the results produced by the analysis are actually meaningful. Table 2 shows list of three clusters along with their size and importance of four inputs. Cluster-1 consists of 17 (26.2%) consumers who are purchasing apparel, gift articles, cosmetic and consumer durables form small huts or shops. Cluster – 2 consists of 32 (49.2%) consumers who are purchasing apparel from Mall / company outlets (68.8%) whereas gift articles, cosmetic and consumer durables form shops (62.5%, 56.2% and 53.1% respectively). Cluster – 3 consists of 16 (24.6%) consumers who are purchasing apparel, gift articles, cosmetic and consumer durables from only shopping malls. Ratio of largest cluster to smallest cluster is 2.

Discriminant Analysis to predict family income from place of shopping

Discriminant analysis is a multivariate technique used for predicting group membership on the basis of two or more independent variables. In present study discriminant analysis is applied to predict monthly income of the consumers on the basis of their purchasing behaviour. Discriminant function was obtained to differentiating the consumer with monthly income upto R 10,000 and more than R 10,000. Classification statistics given in table 3 shows 69.2% consumers are correctly classified in income groups. Independent variable is a binary variable (Mall/Outlet and Small Shops/Weekly Market) which represent shopping place visited most frequently by a consumer.

Table 3 : Classification Statistics

Actual Income	Predicted Income Group		Total
	Upto R10,000	More than R10,000	
Upto R10,000	24(68.6%)	11(31.4%)	35(100%)
More than R10,000	9(30.0%)	21(70.0%)	30(100%)
Total 69.2% consumers are correctly classified with their monthly income			

Walks' Lambda statistic was obtained for predictor to check significance. The predictor shows significance (Wilk's Lambda = 0.852 and p-value = 0.002).

Canonical discriminant function was obtained as follows :

Y = -3.216 + 2.133(Most Frequently Visited Place for Shopping)

Table 4 : Group Centroids

Monthly Income	Function
Upto R10,000	0.380
More than R10,000	-0.443

Table 4 gives group centroids for discriminant function which provides cut-offs for a predictor. If the value of function is near to 0.380 then the consumer's income is predicted as "upto R 10,000" whereas for function value around -0.443 predicts monthly income of the consumer as more than R 10,000. Thus using this analysis, consumers can be discriminated in two income groups.

Majority consumers are purchasing vegetables / fruits and consumer durables regularly (more than three times in a month) whereas majority of them purchasing cosmetics and grocery once in a month. Majority consumers purchase of apparels / footwear once or twice in a month. Most convenient time for shopping is evening (4-8 pm) followed by afternoon (11 am to 4 pm). Majority people (44.6%) are preferring shopping only whereas 24.6% like shopping with food and 26.2% like to shop with having food and entertainment.

Table 5 : Preference of various shopping destinations

Products	Department Store	Shopping Mall	Hyper market	Multi brand outlet	Exclusive outlet	Small shop	Weekly market
Grocery	13	11	13	3	2	23	0
Vegetable Fruits	10	3	17	0	0	17	18
Cosmetics	14	11	3	10	6	19	2
Apparel	15	17	3	12	6	7	5
Consumer Durable	6	15	2	9	5	16	12
Gift Article	10	10	3	4	11	18	9

The preferences of various shopping destinations to purchase Grocery, Cosmetics, Vegetable / fruit, Apparel, Consumer durables and gift articles were examined and shown in table 5. Apparel and groceries are purchasing from department stores, shopping malls and hypermarkets whereas majority people purchase fruits / vegetables from either hypermarket or small shops & weekly markets. Favourite places to purchase cosmetics and consumer durables are department store, mall and small shops. Gift articles are mostly purchasing from either small shops or exclusive shops, malls and department stores.

Relative importance index (RII) is the mean for a factor which gives it weight in the perceptions of respondents. The contribution of each of the factor to overall decision making on shopping was examined and the ranking of the factors in terms of their criticality as perceived by the respondents was done by use of Relative Importance Index (RII) which was computed using equation and the results of the analysis are presented in table 6. To determine the ranking of different factors from the viewpoint of consumers, the RII was computed using RII equation as follows.

RII = ΣW / (A x N) where, W is weightage given to each factor, A is Highest weight and N is total number of respondents.

Table 6 : Relative Importance Index

Factors influencing to visit shopping places	Weight given to the factor (1 most and 10 least important)										Mean	SD	RII	Rank
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10				
Advertisement	2	5	0	10	2	2	44	0	0	0	5.88	1.83	0.840	8
Word of Mouth	2	1	0	6	2	4	2	47	0	1	7.11	1.85	0.711	7
Bulk Purchase	1	3	42	3	5	6	2	2	0	1	3.78	1.65	0.379	2
Shopping	17	2	0	39	1	2	3	1	0	0	3.43	1.73	0.429	4

Exp														
All product in one roof	11	39	1	1	5	0	4	2	1	1	2.83	2.17	0.283	1
Family influence	0	1	2	1	2	0	2	6	3	48	9.09	1.93	0.909	10
Low price	32	7	5	3	3	0	7	4	3	1	3.17	2.84	0.317	3
Reference Group	0	1	3	0	1	3	0	0	53	4	8.48	1.71	0.848	9
Impulse	0	3	4	0	1	48	0	2	2	5	6.08	1.73	0.608	6
Promotional offers	0	2	8	2	43	0	1	1	3	5	5.28	1.91	0.528	5

Table 6 shows the ranking of factors influencing to visit shopping places by consumers. As per the result, first rank is given to the thought "all product in one roof" whereas bulk purchase is at second important factor. Family influence is not impact preference of the shopping places and hence it got last rank. Rank 1 is given to most influencing factor and rank 10 to least important factor. Thus lower score represents more important / influencing here, RII with low value is given higher rank. Hence the factor having lower RII value is given first rank whereas factor having highest RII is given last rank.

Table 7 : Important factors considering while selecting store for shopping

Factors	RII	Rank
Image and popularity	0.566	16
Billing and checkout time	0.431	7
Employee/Staff's Behaviour and service	0.465	9
Amenities	0.477	10
Customer service quality	0.419	6
Safety and Security	0.369	2
Atmosphere	0.415	5
Parking	0.332	1
Play area for children	0.778	18
Attractive interior décor	0.600	17
Marketing communications/Promotions	0.557	15
Cleanliness	0.381	4
Operating time	0.458	8
Flexibility in payment mode	0.504	11
Product return and exchange services	0.538	13

Brand reputation of products	0.512	12
Toilet/Washroom/ Baby room facility	0.556	14
Near to Home/Office	0.375	3

Table 7 gives relative importance index (RII) for important factors for selecting shopping place. Views of selected consumers were recorded in five point Likert scale (1 : Highly Important and 5: Not Important). As the lower score is more important here, RII with low value is given higher rank.

Parking facility is most important factor for consumers for choosing shopping place. Safety & Security stood at second priority whereas Distance from home / office, Cleanliness and Atmosphere of mall are more important criterion for shopping destination and hence are the part of top five requirements of the consumers while selecting a shopping place.

Other factors taking in consideration by consumers are quality of customer service, time taken for billing and checkout, operating time, staff behaviour and amenities. Play area for children is least important for consumers during selection of shopping place. Attractive interior decor, Image & popularity, Marketing promotions and baby room facility are least important for choosing shopping destinations.

Table 8 : Association of personal variables with selection of shopping place

Variables		Most Frequently Visited Shopping Place		p-value
		Mall / Company Outlet	Department Store / Small Shop / Weekly Market	
Monthly Income	Up to R 10,000 (n=35)	11(31.4%)	24(68.6%)	0.002
	More than R 10,000 (n=30)	21(70%)	9(30%)	
Gender	Male (n=33)	17(51.5%)	16(48.5%)	0.450
	Female (n=32)	15(46.9%)	17(53.1%)	
Marital Status	Married (n=45)	22(48.9%)	23(51.1%)	0.573
	Unmarried (n=20)	10(50%)	10(50%)	
Education	Below Metric (n=20)	8(40%)	12(60%)	0.030
	Metric (n=20)	8(40%)	12(60%)	
	Diploma (n=13)	5(38.5%)	8(61.5%)	
	Graduate (n=9)	8(88.9%)	1(11.1%)	
	Higher (n=3)	3(100%)	0(0%)	

Impact of personal variables like monthly income, gender, education and marital status of selected consumers was checked on their choice of shopping place. Pearson's Chi-square test was applied to check significance. As per table-8, monthly income and education of the consumers are significantly influencing selected of shopping place (p-value = 0.002 and 0.030 respectively).

Majority consumers with monthly income above R 10,000 are choosing shopping malls and company outlets as the first choice of shopping place. Thus it can be concluded that people with low income are shopping from small shops or weekly market whereas people with high income like to shop from big malls and company outlets. There is no significant impact of gender and marital status of consumers on choice of shopping places (p-value = 0.450 and 0.573 respectively). Consumers with high education are more likely to choose shopping malls and company outlets than those who have low level education.

Areas for Further Research

While there exists significant literature on consumer behavior and factors that influence purchase decisions and choice of places of shopping, there are areas that need further research. First, with the proliferation of the internet and the use of social media networks, future studies should seek to examine consumer behavior and factors that influence choice of online shopping platforms. Further, more researcher is needed regarding personal attributes associated with the selection of online shopping platforms. A focus on these major areas in the contemporary world will provide a more holistic perspective of consumer behavior by complementing current literature, which mostly explores traditional consumer behavior associated with physical stores.

Conclusion

Consumer purchasing behavior is an essential element in consumer decision making. Consumers make numerous buying decisions every day. However, while it is common to focus on the final buying decisions, such decisions are driven by a wide range of factors. For some, such factors that drive buying decisions develop into their buying behaviors, which define them as a group. For others, their buying decisions tend to be unpredictable due to the uncertainties in their environment. Consumer behavior ranges from the processes one uses to choose, buy, and consume a product and service. Such behavior can be defined as variety-seeking behavior, habitual buying, dissonance-reducing behavior, and variety-seeking behavior. In these different consumer-buying behaviors, consumers seek to achieve satisfaction based on their needs besides brand differences and involvement during the purchase decision. Numerous factors influence consumer behavior in both the short term and long term. Factors that influence consumer behavior are categorized as cultural, social, personal, and psychological. Whatever drives consumer behavior is classified under these major categories. In today's world, one of the critical determinants of consumer buying behavior is environmental sustainability. Notably, consumers' buying behavior depends on their environmental concern, perceived knowledge of environmental issues, perceived marketplace influence, their attitude towards sustainability, subjective norms, and supportive behaviors towards environmental organizations. Technology is also a major influence on consumer behavior, with privacy and trust being major determinants of whether consumers buy from particular outlets. Besides, social media networks greatly influence consumer behavior depending on the frequency of use among consumers. Regarding the role of personal variables, age, level of education, gender, and marital status determine the choice of shopping place among consumers. However, future research should mainly focus on consumer behavior associated with online shopping platforms due to the proliferation of the internet, social media networks, and virtual stores. An understanding of these factors provides businesses with an edge in tailoring their products to suit customer needs.

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