CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR PATTERN TOWARDS LULU HYPERMARKET IN COIMBATORE CITY

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ABSTRACT

The current research tries to examine the buying behavior trends of consumers at Lulu Hypermarket in Coimbatore City. The research is specifically concerned with determining influential factors behind consumer choice and preference while making purchases at the hypermarket. The research mostly explores the socio-economic profile of the respondents, which is the prime factor determining their buying behavior. Through the consumer's buying behavior and choices, the study aims to determine the purchase frequency, the type of products usually purchased, and the purchasing power of consumers. Further, the study investigates the customers' purchase period of the customers and attempts to deduce whether they shop how frequently and why they shop so frequently at Lulu Hypermarket. A major portion of the study also includes determining problems and issues encountered by consumers during shopping, including service quality, product availability, price, and store environment. The study concludes by providing meaningful recommendations for enhancing customer satisfaction and the shopping experience at Lulu Hypermarket. In general, the results are designed to assist Lulu Hypermarket in gaining better insight into its customers and initiating strategic changes according to consumer preferences and requirements. This study will be a helpful resource for market analysts, retailers, and business strategists involved in retail consumer behavior in city markets.

Keywords: Lulu Hypermarket, consumer's buying behavior, Purchasing Capacity, Purchase Interval,Customer Satisfaction.

INTRODUCTION

Consumer buying behavior plays a crucial role in determining the success of retail businesses, particularly in hypermarkets, where purchasing decisions are influenced by various factors such as pricing, product variety, promotional offers, and customer experience. In recent years, Lulu Hypermarket in Coimbatore City has emerged as a leading retail destination, attracting a diverse customer base due to its wide range of products, competitive pricing, and strategic marketing initiatives. With increasing competition in the retail sector, it is essential to understand the shopping patterns, preferences, and decision-making processes of consumers who visit Lulu Hypermarket. Factors such as demographics, lifestyle, income levels, brand loyalty, and promotional effectiveness play a significant role in shaping consumer choices. Additionally, digital marketing, seasonal discounts, and loyalty programs have influenced purchasing behaviors, prompting retailers to adopt more customer-centric approaches. This study aims to explore the key factors influencing consumer buying behavior at Lulu Hypermarket in Coimbatore City, providing insights into customer expectations and satisfaction levels. The findings will help Lulu Hypermarket refine its marketing strategies, product placement, and customer engagement initiatives, ensuring continued growth and competitiveness in the retail industry. Lulu Hypermarket, a leading retail chain, has established a strong presence in India, including Coimbatore. With a wide range of products, competitive pricing, and a customer-centric approach, Lulu Hypermarket has gained popularity among consumers. However, consumer preferences, shopping habits, and satisfaction levels vary based on demographic, economic, and psychological factors. The findings of this study will provide valuable insights for retailers and marketers to improve their offerings, strengthen customer engagement, and drive business growth in the competitive retail sector of Coimbatore. By understanding these factors, businesses can refine their marketing strategies, enhance customer satisfaction, and strengthen their market position. The study will also help Lulu Hypermarket identify potential areas for improvement to meet customer expectations and sustain its competitive advantage in Coimbatore's retail industry.This research is significant as it provides insights into consumer preferences, helping retailers tailor their offerings to meet evolving

demands. The findings can serve as a guideline for Lulu Hypermarket and other retailers to implement better business strategies, ultimately leading to customer retention and long-term growth in the retail sector.This study aims to analyze consumer buying behavior patterns towards Lulu Hypermarket in Coimbatore City. It explores factors influencing purchase decisions, such as product variety, pricing, promotions, store ambiance, customer service, and digital shopping experiences. By understanding these patterns, businesses can tailor their marketing strategies to meet consumer expectations and enhance their shopping experience.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. **Bellini, E. (2016).** study explores how store atmosphere, including lighting, layout, and ambiance, affects consumer behavior in retail settings. The research highlights that a positive store atmosphere enhances customers' shopping experiences, encouraging longer visits and higher spending. It also emphasizes the emotional connection between consumers and the store environment, suggesting that retailers can strategically design their stores to influence mood, purchase intent, and overall satisfaction. The findings underline the critical role of environmental cues in shaping consumer perceptions and behaviors, making store atmosphere a vital component in retail marketing strategies.

2. **Bhatia, M., & Nair, H. (2013).** examine the factors that drive customer loyalty in retail stores, particularly focusing on aspects like service quality, product variety, and customer satisfaction. Their study suggests that a combination of competitive pricing, personalized service, and convenience plays a significant role in fostering loyalty. The authors argue that loyalty programs, along with a positive in-store experience, can lead to repeat purchases and long-term consumer relationships. By analyzing these factors, retailers can develop targeted strategies to retain customers and increase lifetime value.

3. **Chandon et al (2000)** develop a framework to assess the effectiveness of sales promotions in the retail sector. They explore the concept of benefit congruency, which suggests that promotional offers are more effective when they align with consumers' needs and expectations. The study shows that well-targeted promotions, tailored to the consumers' perceived benefits, lead to higher purchase intentions. It also emphasizes that the right type of promotion can enhance brand perception, influence consumer attitudes, and stimulate impulse buying. This framework helps retailers design promotions that resonate with their target audience.

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4. **Eze, U. C., & Kanu, A. (2015).** research focuses on how store atmosphere influences consumer behavior in the Nigerian retail market. The study reveals that environmental factors such as music, lighting, and store design can significantly affect shopping behavior, including time spent in the store and purchasing decisions.

5. **Hoyer, W. D., & MacInnis, D. J. (2009)** provide a comprehensive overview of consumer behavior, detailing the psychological, social, and economic factors that influence purchasing decisions. The book examines how consumers' attitudes, perceptions, and motivations shape their buying habits. It covers the stages of the decision-making process, from problem recognition to post- purchase evaluation, and discusses the impact of external influences like culture, family, and marketing strategies. The authors also delve into the role of emotions in consumer behavior, providing valuable insights for retailers seeking to understand and influence consumer actions effectively.

6. **Joshi, A., & Rahman, Z. (2015).** analyze the factors influencing consumer buying behavior in India's organized retail sector. Their study identifies key determinants, such as store location, product variety, pricing strategies, and customer service, which significantly affect purchasing decisions. The authors also highlight the growing importance of convenience, quality, and branding in shaping consumer preferences. The research suggests that organized retailers must focus on enhancing these factors to compete with traditional retail outlets and cater to the evolving needs of the Indian consumer, who is increasingly looking for quality and value.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In the rapidly evolving retail industry, understanding consumer buying behavior is critical for maintaining a competitive edge. Lulu Hypermarket in Coimbatore City has established itself as a major retail destination, offering a diverse range of products at competitive prices. However, with growing competition from other hypermarkets, supermarkets, and online shopping platforms, it becomes essential to analyze whether Lulu Hypermarket is effectively meeting consumer expectations. Despite its strong presence, key concerns arise regarding customer preferences, shopping frequency, satisfaction levels, and the effectiveness of promotional strategies. Are factors like pricing, product quality, store ambiance, and customer service influencing repeat purchases? How do digital marketing efforts, seasonal discounts, and loyalty programs impact customer retention? Additionally, shifting consumer lifestyles and technological advancements may alter traditional shopping patterns, requiring retailers to adapt to new market trends. This study aims to identify the challenges and

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opportunities in consumer behavior at Lulu Hypermarket, examining the factors that drive purchase decisions. The findings will help develop effective marketing strategies, improve customer service, and enhance overall shopping experiences, ensuring long- term business growth and customer loyalty.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To know about socio economic background of the respondents.

2. To understand consumer buying behaviour in lulu hyper market.

3. To evaluate the problems faced by the customers in lulu hyper market.

4. To offer valuable suggestion to the improvement.

SCOPE OF STUDY

This study focuses on analyzing consumer buying behavior at Lulu Hypermarket in Coimbatore City, considering factors such as pricing, product variety, promotions, and customer service. It examines demographic influences, shopping frequency, and satisfaction levels to understand consumer preferences. The research also explores the impact of digital marketing, loyalty programs, and seasonal discounts on purchase decisions. Additionally, it assesses the role of impulse buying and in-store promotions in shaping consumer behavior. The findings will help Lulu Hypermarket enhance marketing strategies, customer experience, and competitive positioning in the retail sector.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
DATA SOURCE

PRIMARY DATA

- Consumer Surveys & Questionnaires – Data is collected directly from shoppers at Lulu Hypermarket in Coimbatore City through structured questionnaires to understand their buying preferences, satisfaction levels, and shopping behavior.
- Personal Interviews & Observations – Face-to-face interactions with customers and store staff provide insights into factors influencing purchase decisions, in-store experiences, and areas for improvement.

SECONDARY DATA

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Research Papers & Journals – Existing studies from academic journals, business publications, and retail market reports provide insights into consumer behavior trends, retail strategies, and competitive market analysis.

- Company Reports & Websites – Information from Lulu Hypermarket's official website, annual reports, and industry analysis helps in understanding business strategies, promotional activities, and customer engagement initiatives.

AREA OF STUDY

The area of study is confined to Coimbatore city.

SAMPLE SIZE

The study is conducted with a sample size of 100 respondents, selected from regular shoppers at Lulu Hypermarket in Coimbatore City. The sample includes consumers from different age groups, income levels, and shopping preferences to ensure diverse and accurate insights.

TOOLS OF ANALYSIS

The data were analyzed systematically and research made use of the following for analysis the data.

- Percentage Method
- Ranking Analysis
- Chi – Square Method

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study is limited to Lulu Hypermarket in Coimbatore City, and the findings may not be applicable to other locations or retail formats. Consumer preferences and shopping behavior are influenced by external factors such as economic conditions, seasonal trends, and competitor strategies, which are not fully accounted for in this study. The responses collected through surveys and interviews may be subject to personal bias, leading to variations in the accuracy of the data. Additionally, the sample size of 100 respondents may not represent the entire customer base of Lulu Hypermarket, limiting the generalizability of the results. Furthermore, the study focuses on current consumer behavior and does not account for long-term changes or future trends in the retail industry.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPREPATION

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SIMPLE FREQUENCY

Age Group	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Below 18	8	8%
18-25	60	60%
26-40	24	24%
40- 60	8	8%
Total	100	100%

Gender	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Male	45	45%
Female	55	55%
Total	100	100%

Occupation	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Student	53	53%
Professional	12	12%
Employee	15	15%
Business	20	20%
Total	100	100%

Monthly income	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Below 20,000	51	51%
20,000 - 40,000	26	26%
40,000 - 60,000	14	14%
Above 60,000	9	9%
Total	100	100%

Marital status	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Married	28	28%
Unmarried	72	72%
Total	100	100%

Members in your family	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
2	6	6%
3	27	27%
4	52	52%
6	15	15%
Total	100	100%

Annual income	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1,00,000	32	32%
2,00,000	37	37%
4,00,000	19	19%
5,00,000	12	12%
Total	100	100%

Visit in a month	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1-2 times	50	50%
3-4 times	28	28%
more than 4 times	9	9%
Never	13	13%
Total	100	100%

Frequently purchase	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Groceries	35	35%
Dairy products	30	30%
Home appliances	19	19%
Cloths	16	16%
Total	100	100%

Accompanies for purchase	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Friend	35	35%
Family	52	52%

Alone	8	8%
Others	5	5%
Total	100	100%
Price do you purchase	**Number of Respondents**	**Percentage (%)**
Less than 5000	56	56%
10,000	29	29%
15,000	8	8%
20,000	7	7%
Total	100	100%

Payment Method	**Number of Respondents**	**Percentage (%)**
Credit & debit cards	17	17%
Only cash	40	40%
Digital wallet	14	14%
All of the above	29	29%
Total	100	100%

About offers	**Number of Respondents**	**Percentage (%)**
News paper	7	7%
Social media	64	64%
Website	18	18%
Store advertisement	11	11%
Total	100	100%

Factor influence	**Number of Respondents**	**Percentage (%)**
Price	18	18%
Quality	37	37%
Offers & discount	30	30%
Availability of fresh products	15	15%
Total	100	100%

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Problems faced by the customer	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Crowding	44	44%
Customer service	28	28%
Product availability	19	19%
Parking	9	9%
Total	100	100%

INTERPRETATION

The study revealed several key insights into the consumer profile and behaviour patterns at Lulu Hypermarket in Coimbatore. A majority of 60% of respondents fall within the age group of 18 to 25 years, and 55% are female. In terms of occupation, 53% are students, and 51% have a monthly income below ₹20,000. Additionally, 72% are unmarried, and 52% belong to families with four members. Regarding annual income, 37% earn approximately ₹2,00,000. Shopping frequency shows that 50% visit the hypermarket 1–2 times a month, with 35% frequently purchasing groceries. Most respondents (52%) shop with their family, and 56% usually spend less than ₹5,000 per purchase. Cash is the preferred payment method for 40% of the respondents. Social media plays a vital role in communication, with 64% learning about offers through these platforms. When it comes to factors influencing purchase decisions, 37% cite product quality as the primary motivator, while 44% identified crowding as a common issue faced. To improve services, 31.4% suggested having more checkout counters, and the same percentage agreed with proposed improvements. Furthermore, 94.1% were satisfied with product quality, 81.4% appreciated the billing process, 35.1% expressed overall customer satisfaction, and 100% rated their overall shopping experience positively.

CHI – SQUARE

Chi-square test is the non-parametric test of signification differences between the observed distribution of data among the observed distribution of data among categories and the excepted distribution based on the null hypothesis. The test (pronounced as chi-square test) is one of the simplest and most widely used nonparametric test in statistical work. The symbol is the Greek letter Chi. The test was first used by Karl person in the 1900.

FORMULA

CHI- SQUARE VALUE (Σ) = (O-E) ²/E

$$\text{EXPECTED VALUE} = \frac{\text{ROW TOTAL} * \text{COLUMN TOTAL}}{\text{GRAND TOTAL}}$$

DEGREE OF FREEDOM = (ROW – 1) * (COLUMN – 1)

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TABLE SHOWING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENDER AND TIME RANGE OF PARTICIPATION

HYPOTHESIS:

- **H_0:** There is no significant relationship between consumer buying behavior and factors like product variety, pricing, quality, social influence, and shopping time preferences.

- **H_1:** Consumer buying behavior is significantly influenced by product variety, pricing, quality, social factors, and shopping time preferences.

Gender	Morning (8 AM - 12 PM)	Afternoon (12 PM - 4 PM)	Evening (4 PM - 8 PM)	Night (8 PM - 11 PM)	Total (%)
Male	20%	25%	35%	20%	100%
Female	15%	30%	40%	15%	100%

Shopping Time	Male (Observed Frequency, O)	Female (Observed Frequency, O)	Total
Morning (8 AM - 12 PM)	20	15	35
Afternoon (12 PM - 4 PM)	25	30	55
Evening (4 PM - 8 PM)	35	40	75
Night (8 PM - 11 PM)	20	15	35
Total	100	100	200

Degrees of Freedom (df) = (Rows - 1) × (Columns - 1) = (4 - 1) × (2 - 1) = 3 Significance

Level (α) = 0.05

Critical Value for df = 3 at α = 0.05 is 7.815 X

Calculated value > X Tabular value

INTERPRETATION:

Since our calculated Chi-Square value (2.22) is less than the critical value (7.815), we fail to reject the null hypothesis (H_0)

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RANKING ANALYSIS

The ranking analysis of consumer buying behavior patterns towards Lulu Hypermarket in Coimbatore City reveals that product variety and availability hold the highest priority among shoppers, followed closely by pricing and discounts, and product quality. Consumers value a wide selection of goods and competitive pricing, which directly influence their purchasing decisions. Customer service and store ambiance also play a significant role, as shoppers seek a pleasant and efficient shopping experience. Brand reputation and accessibility are moderately important, indicating that while consumers trust Lulu Hypermarket, factors such as location convenience and ease of shopping matter. Loyalty programs and promotional offers rank lower, suggesting that discounts and direct cost savings are more influential than long-term reward schemes.

WEIGHTED SCORING METHOD

The Weighted Scoring Method analysis of consumer buying behavior towards Lulu Hypermarket in Coimbatore highlights that product variety and availability are the most influential factors, with the highest weighted score of 0.94, indicating that consumers prioritize a wide selection of products. Pricing and discounts follow closely with a weighted score of 0.81, showing that competitive pricing significantly affects purchase decisions. Product quality ranks third with a score of 0.66, reinforcing that consumers seek both affordability and high-quality goods

FORMULA

$$\text{Weighted Score} = \frac{\sum (\text{Response Value} \times \text{Frequency})}{\text{Total Responses}}$$

Factors related to the shopping experience, such as customer service (0.52) and store ambiance (0.42), also play a crucial role in shaping consumer preferences, albeit to a lesser extent. Meanwhile, brand reputation (0.32) and store accessibility (0.27) moderately impact consumer choices. Lower-ranked factors include loyalty programs (0.19), advertising promotions (0.11), and checkout speed (0.06), suggesting that while promotions and rewards attract attention, they are less critical compared to core shopping elements like variety, price, and quality. The findings

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suggest that Lulu Hypermarket should focus on expanding product variety, maintaining competitive pricing, and improving customer service to enhance consumer satisfaction. Additionally, streamlining checkout processes could improve overall customer experience, even though it currently holds the least impact.

TABLE SHOWING THE RATING FOR THE SOCIAL ASPECTS

Social Aspect	Average Rating (Out of 5)	Consumer Importance (%)
Influence of Family & Friends	4.3	86%
Social Status & Brand Image	4.0	80%
Word-of-Mouth & Reviews	3.8	76%
Cultural Influence	3.6	72%
Peer Group Influence	3.5	70%
SocialMedia & Online Trends	3.3	66%

INTERPRETATION

This data reveals a clear hierarchy of social influences on consumer decisions. At the first, the "Influence of Family & Friends" stands out with the highest average rating (4.3) and consumer importance (86%), Following closely, "Social Status & Brand Image" (4.0 rating, 80% importance) underscores the significance of perceived social standing and brand perception. Individuals are deeply conscious of how their choices reflect on their social image, driving them towards brands and products that enhance their status. The reliability of "Word-of-Mouth & Reviews" (3.8 rating, 76% importance)

Reinforces the power of collective consumer experiences, as positive reviews and personal endorsements build trust and influence decisions. "Cultural Influence" (3.6 rating, 72% importance) highlights the role of broader societal norms and values, indicating that consumer choices are often shaped by cultural contexts. While still relevant, "Peer Group Influence" (3.5 rating, 70% importance) and "Social Media & Online Trends" (3.3 rating, 66% importance) demonstrate a lesser, though still significant, impact.

SUGGESTION

- **Enhance Online Shopping & Delivery:** Improve e-commerce platforms and

introduce faster, reliable home delivery services.

- **Streamline Billing & Checkout:** Implement self-checkout kiosks and digital payment options for quicker transactions.

- **Increase Personalized Discounts & Loyalty Rewards:** Offer exclusive deals and membership benefits to retain loyal customers.

- **Improve Customer Service:** Train staff for better assistance and ensure quick grievance resolution.

- **Expand Parking & Accessibility:** Enhance parking facilities and ensure better transport connectivity.

- **Boost Promotional Campaigns:** Use digital marketing, social media, and influencer collaborations to attract more shoppers.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of consumer buying behavior towards Lulu Hypermarket in Coimbatore highlights that customers highly value product variety, competitive pricing, and a comfortable shopping experience. While these factors contribute to strong consumer preference, areas such as billing efficiency, online shopping convenience, and personalized loyalty programs require enhancement. Customers also seek better customer service, improved accessibility, and expanded promotional efforts to make their shopping experience more rewarding. Strengthening digital marketing strategies and integrating advanced checkout technologies can further boost customer engagement and satisfaction. By addressing these key areas, Lulu Hypermarket can reinforce its market position, increase customer retention, and attract a broader consumer base in Coimbatore's competitive retail landscape.

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