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Factors Affecting Customers' Choice of Supermarkets for Grocery Shopping in Chinhoyi Town

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate the factors that consumers in Chinhoyi Town consider when selecting a supermarket for purchasing goods and services. Supermarkets in Chinhoyi Town have been facing customer loyalty problems hence this study is critical in identifying the real factors that drive customers to choose a supermarket. In recent years, supermarkets in Chinhoyi have increased and become more concentrated in the Central Business area (CBA) and at the same time new grocery store forms, such as hypermarkets have invaded the Central Business Area too. These new options have given customers more alternatives for grocery shopping. Therefore the questionnaire approach was used to collect data from 322 respondents. The cross sectional method of data was collected once from the primary source. The hypothesis developed in this study was measured using regression analysis. The results of the study revealed that the location of the supermarket, children's play areas and parking areas are likely to influence the customers' choice of a supermarket. Thus this study recommends that supermarkets in Chinhoyi must have well defined parking areas, children's play areas and must be located in areas that are more convenient to customers.

Keywords: Supermarkets, Parking Areas, Children's Play Areas, Location of the Store and Consumer Behavior

Introduction

The retail industry is growing fast and experiencing a rapid change due to an increase in global population (Karumba and Nigi, 2018). Supermarkets are good examples of retail businesses that have helped to develop global economies (Karumba and Nigi, 2018:285). Karumba and Nigi define supermarkets as "large self-service retail stores with at least 150 square meters" floor space that sells a wide range of household items and foods which are arranged on shelves. In the past, the Americans and Europeans in the West had well developed retail markets (Kuloba and Wesonga, 2014). The African continent has witnessed the exponential growth of supermarkets, hypermarkets and shopping malls in recent years (Kuloba and Wesonga, 2014). The choice of supermarkets has been on research for a long time (Yoo and Chang, 2005; Carpenter and Moor, 2006; Theodoridis and Chatzipanagictou, 2009; Cooper 2010). Alhemoud (2008) argues that the choice of supermarkets means investigating the

factors that motivated consumers to exhibit certain purchasing behaviours (Makhitha and Khumalo 2019). Consumers hold certain views about supermarkets and these views help consumers to make well informed choices of supermarkets for grocery shopping (Alhemoud, 2008). In this regard, managers of supermarkets have an obligation to study the factors that customers adopt when choosing a supermarket for grocery shopping and “incorporate them into the retail marketing strategy”. (Makhitha and Kumalo, 2019). Mafini and Dhurup (2015), argues that supermarkets have a package of attributes that are attractive to consumers and these attributes influence the behaviour of consumers either negatively or positively. Mafini and Dhurup (2015) posit that consumers use supermarket attributes to decide whether or not they will do their grocery shopping from this or that supermarket (Cooper, 2010). It is important to note those personal factors, such as, age, sex, education, source of income, occupation and family size affect consumers’ selection of supermarkets for grocery shopping (Prasad and Aryasri, 2009). Gunaseelan and Chitra (2014) believe that demographic factors have an influence on ‘consumer’s perceptions of store attributes’. Whereas, Mortimer and Clarke, (2010) express divergent views on the impact of sex on supermarket attributes. The literature on retail grocery shopping shows that female customers are more concerned about price whereas as male customers are more concerned about services (Mortimer and Weeks, 2011; Williams, 2002).

Table 1

Supermarket Attributes

Authors	Type of store	Country	Store attributes
Watanabe et al (2013)	Supermarket	Brazil	Personnel, product, price, convenience and ambience
Makhitha (2014)	Supermarket	South Africa	Personnel, Services, products, location, economy
Ali et al, (2010)	Food and grocery market-place	India	Freshness, cleanliness, price, quality
Alhemoud (2008)	Co-operative Supermarkets	Kuwait	Quality of merchandise, fairness of price, range of merchandise selection, friendliness of staff, variety of merchandise, and fast check out.
Ali et al, (2010)	Supermarket	South Africa	Customer service, in store temperature, in store-layout, location of parking bays, cleanliness of store, store

			appearance, convenience of store location, quality products, and personnel.
Johnson et al (2005)	Apparel stores	USA	Products, price, service, location, faculty, design, atmosphere and leisure.
Koul and Mishra (2013)	Traditional Stores	India	Store image, product assortment, product availability, retailer's attribute, discounts and other services.
Martinez – Ruiz et al (2017)	Multiple stores	Spain	Customer service, convenience, quality image and economic value of purchases.
Wang and Ha (2011)	Department stores	USA	Direct mail, post transaction, interpersonal, preferential treatment, store atmosphere and merchandise.
Theodoridis and Chatzipanogiotou (2009)	Supermarket	Greece	Personnel, atmosphere, product, pricing. Merchandising and in-store convenience.

Source Makhitha and Khumalo (2019: 18).

Objectives of the Study

- (i) To find out the impact of supermarket location on consumers' choice of supermarket for grocery shopping.
- (ii) To investigate the effect of children's play areas on consumer perception of supermarket attribute.
- (iii) To investigate the relationship between the supermarket parking bay consumers' choice of supermarket for grocery shopping.

Hypothesis

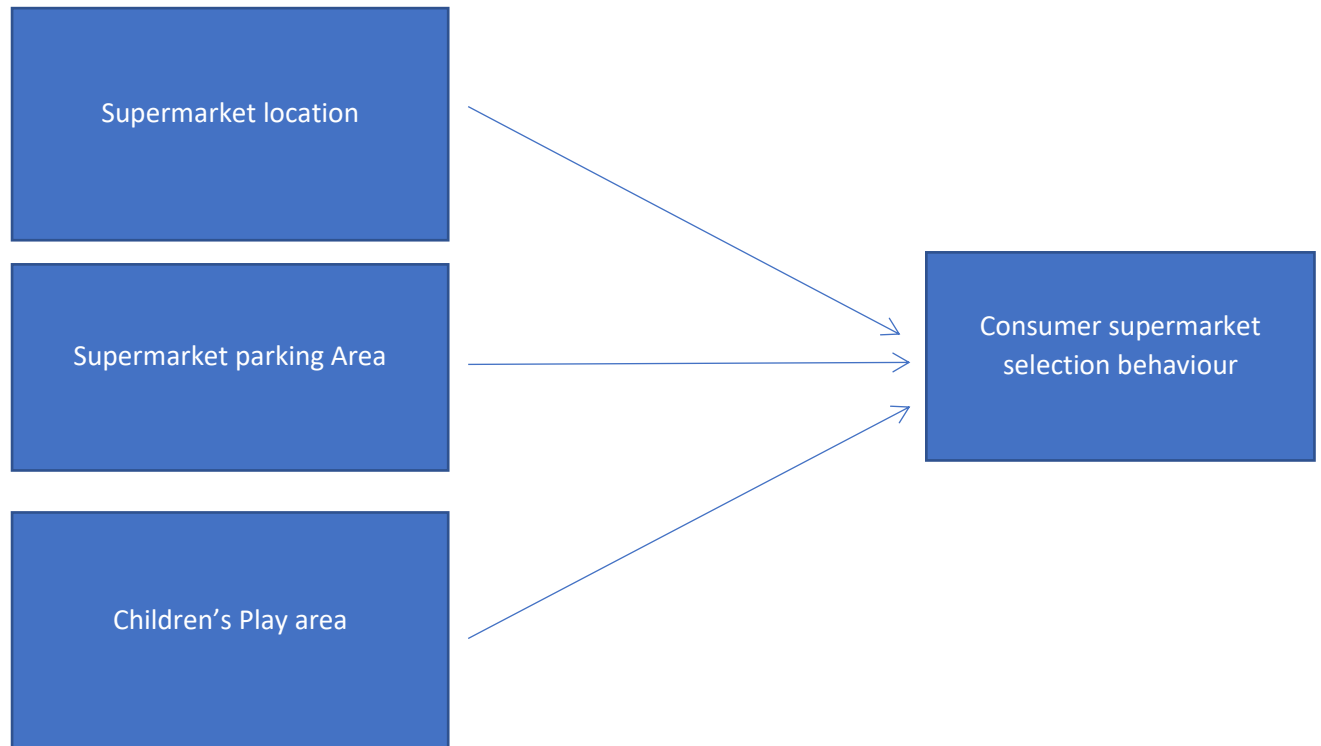
H0: Consumers' supermarket selection behaviour is not positively related to location of store.

H1: Consumers' supermarket selection behaviour is correlated to location of store.

H0: consumers' supermarket selection is not correlated to children's play areas.

- H2: Consumers supermarket selection is correlated to children’s play areas.
H0: Consumers’ supermarket selection is not related to parking areas
H3: Consumers’ supermarket selection is related to parking areas.

Conceptual Framework



Literature Review

Supermarkets Attribute

Ali et al (2010) argue that certain factors are important for consumers when they choose a supermarket for grocery shopping, and these factors include company employees, the internal environment of the supermarket, the availability of a product, the price of the product, the quality of the product, the tone of the surrounding environment, convenience of the location of the supermarket and the behaviour of the supermarket personnel (Ali et al., 2010; Perushottam, 2011). Related studies have shown that consumers choose supermarkets for grocery shopping based on the merchandise proportion, personnel, ambience, services, products and prices (Wananabe et al., 2013; Ghosh et al., 2010). Makhitha and Khumalo (2019) argue that “parking, accessibility, in-store card payment, store location, and store operation hours” are some of the supermarket attributes that retailers should appreciate when they make a decision to establish a supermarket (Martinez –Ruiz et al., 2017; Hosseini et al., 2014; Ali et al., 2010). Some authors believe that “Product variety, product quality and brands carried by the supermarkets” are some of the factors that positively influence the perception towards supermarkets attributes (Ghosh et al., 2010; Stafford, 2014). Several studies on supermarket attributes have shown that “lower prices and variety of merchandise” are among the most critical aspects that consumers appreciate when they choose a supermarket for grocery shopping (Terblanche and Boshoff, 2014; Neven et al., 2006; Ali et al., 2006). Fracion et al (2018) argues that the store environment which includes physical surrounding of the supermarket is capable of giving an impressive visual experience to the customers. Several authors agree that “proper lighting” in the supermarket is attractive to

the customers and the situation is likely to motivate consumers to make repeated purchases (Jinfeng and Zhilong, 2009; Sinha and Banarjee, 2004). This shows that music, interior décor flowers, appropriate temperatures and well-marked parking areas provide pleasant experiences to customers (Bielen and Demoulin, 2007; Ghosh, 2009; Mathila and Wirtz, 2009; Sweeney and Wyber, 2002). The environment created by the parking areas in the surrounding of the supermarket is equally important in that it helps the customers to decide how long they can do their shopping (Ward et al., 1992; Chen and Ha, 2010). Human beings have a natural propensity for entertainment; hence there is need for supermarkets to provide the needed entertainment to customers (Wakefield and Barker, 1998; Wang and Ha, 2011; Babin and Attanway, 2000).

The research Methodology

The researcher adopted the descriptive survey method in order to achieve the objectivities of this study. Since it was difficult to establish the sampling frame for this study, convenience sampling was used to select participants for this study. Therefore a structured questionnaire was created from prior research studies. The questionnaire showed attributes that customers appreciate when they select a supermarket for grocery shopping. Data were analysed using regression analysis.

Data Analysis and Discussion

Location of the Supermarkets

H0: Consumers' supermarket selection behaviour is not positively related to location of store.

H1: Consumers supermarket selection behaviour is correlated to location of store.

Table 1

Model summary for location of store

Model	R	R square	Adjusted square	R	Standard error of the Estimator
1	0.932 ^a	0.87	0.75		0.01
a. predictor: (constant) Location of store					

Table 2

Coefficients for location of store

Model	Non standardised coefficients		Standardised coefficients	t	Significance
	B	Std Error	Beta		
	2.066	.0.36		77.842	.000
	.055	.022	.932	4.036	.006
a Dependent Variables: Customer store choice behaviour					

The R square (Coefficient of Determination) is 0.87 and is close to 1. It can be concluded that consumers' supermarket selection behaviour is correlated to location of the store. Therefore hypothesis H1 is supported while hypothesis H0 is rejected.

Children's Playing Areas

H0: Consumers' supermarket selection is not correlated to children's playing areas.

H2; Consumers supermarket selection is correlated to children's playing area.

Table 3

Model Summary for Children's playing areas.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Standard error of the Estimates
1	0.933 ^a	0.891	0.711		0.01
a predictor: (Constant), Children's playing area					

Table 4

Coefficient for children's playing area

Model	Non standardised coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Significance
	B	Standard Error	Beta		
Constant	2.544	0.215		78.421	0.000
Playing area	0.183	0.53	0.922	4.282	0.009
a Dependent valuable: Consumers' store choice behaviour					

The R square (Coefficient or determination) is 0.891 and is close to 1. The children's playing area is one of the critical reasons consumers choose a particular supermarket for grocery shopping. Therefore H0 is not supported, whereas H2 is supported because the purchasing behaviour of consumers is significantly affected by children playing area in the surrounding of the supermarket.

Supermarket Parking Area

H0: Consumers' supermarket selection is not related to parking areas.

H3: Consumers' supermarket selection is related to parking areas

Table 5

Model for Summary for parking area

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Standard Error of estimates
1	0.943 ^a	0.942	0,724		0.0221
A predictor: (Constant), Parking are					

Table 6

Coefficient for parking area

Model	Non standardised coefficients		Standardised coefficients	t	Significance
	B	Standard error	Beta		
Constant	2.888	0.36		75.977	0.000
Parking area	0.070	0.044	0.942	4.122	0.020

R square (coefficient determination) is 0.942 and is close to 1. This means that the decision made by consumers to choose a particular supermarket for grocery shopping is motivated by the existing supermarket attribute, namely, the surrounding parking areas. Therefore H0 is rejected while H1 is supported.

Summary and Conclusion

Liberalisation of the economy in Zimbabwe and globalisation has increased competition in the Retail Industry such that customers are faced with difficulties when they want to make a decision for the selection of a supermarket for grocery shopping. It means that retailers have to find well-defined ways of attracting loyal customers and meeting the needs of customers. This study revealed that customers would choose a supermarket for grocery shopping because they were attracted by three factors namely, the location of the store, the existence of a well-defined parking area and the presence of children playing areas. Ali et al (2010) argue that customers would choose a supermarket for grocery shopping because they are attracted by certain supermarkets attributes such as, the behaviour of company employees, the tone of the internal environment of the supermarket, the quality of the product, the availability of the product mix, the quality of the product, the price of the product and the distance that customers have to travel to reach the particular supermarket. Makhitha and Khumalo (2019) argue that “parking accessibility, in store card payment, store location and store operation hours” are some of the supermarket attributes that retailers should appreciate when they make a decision to establish a supermarket.

Recommendations

Supermarket stores in Chinhoyi Central Business district are facing a number of challenges when it comes to attracting loyal customers since customers are now able to switch from one supermarket to another very easily. The competition is stiff among supermarkets in Chinhoyi Central Business District (Ok Supermarket: TM supermarket North, Tm Supermarket South, N Richards Hypermarket and Metro Peach) to the extent that winning customers is quite a

daunting task. This study therefore recommends that supermarkets in Chinhoyi Central Business District (CBD) should carry out customers' survey to find out the factors that derive customers to choose a particular supermarket and not the other.

Conclusion

The aim of the study was to investigate the factors affecting customers' choice of supermarkets for grocery shopping. The results of the study show that there is a positive relationship between supermarket attributes and customers' choice of a supermarket. Attributes such as supermarket, location, supermarket parking area and children's playing area have a critical effect on customers' choice of supermarkets for grocery shopping. Women want their children to find a place where they can have fun while they use their precious time doing the shopping. Nowadays, people value parking areas more because they want their cars to be in a safe environment while they do the shopping. Therefore customers shopping decisions are effectively supported by the location of the store, children's play areas and parking areas.

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