Marketing Strategies of Retail Stores: An Evaluation of Grocery Shops of Dhaka City

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MARKETING STRATEGIES OF RETAIL STORES AN EVALUATION OF GROCERY SHOPS OF DHAKA CITY

Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:

Marketing Strategies of Retail Stores: An Evaluation of Grocery Shops Of Dhaka City

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Abstract - The marketing strategy and behaviors of the retailers vary due to the differences in locations. There is a general assumption that people of different income levels live in different areas. Based on this assumption this study was conducted to identify the differences in the grocery shop owners' marketing strategy due to the differences in locations or residential areas. For the study grocery shop owners of different locations of Dhaka City were considered. Based on the different income group people's dwelling area the locations were selected. The locations i.e. Gulshan/Bonani/Baridhara and Dhanmondi/Mohammadpur were considered as higher income group people's living area. On the other hand Malibagh/Mogbazar and Old Dhaka were considered for middle and lower-middle income group people. The study found that keeping branded products, credit sells, promotion, building customer relations, etc. do not vary due to the differences in location. It is also found that the way of expressing the quality to customers, measurement of quality, price fixation, etc. differ due to the variations in locations.

I. INTRODUCTION

Grocery shops meet the everyday requirement of the common people on a day-to-day basis. The product mix of the grocery shops depends on the socioeconomic profile of the customers. The homogeneity of customer group asks for a homogeneous group of products. The diversity in socioeconomic background of the customer groups makes the tasks challenging for the grocers, as they are required to meet varying demand of the heterogeneous customer groups. The marketing strategy i.e. product, price, place, promotion is a function of the socioeconomic profile of the customers. The present article assumes that Dhaka city has heterogeneous groups of customers living in different parts of the city. The general objective of the article is to see how the marketing strategies of the grocery shops located in the different parts of the city varied from one location to other location. This research has divided the Dhaka city into four locations assuming that the people living in those locations have distinctive socioeconomic profile.

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The locations on the considerations are Dhanmondi/Mohammadpur, Malibagh/Mogbazar, Old Dhaka, Gulshan/Bonani/Baridhara. Out of these four locations Gulshan/Bonani/Baridhara area is considered as the pouch area of the city and is famous for expensive consumptions. The another area under consideration Dhanmondi/Mohammadpur is composed of higher income and higher educated group. The Malibagh/Mogbazar area is considered as educated upper-middle income group. And the Old Dhaka area consists of lower-middle income group with mixed educational background with distinctive cultural orientation. Considering the variation in customer demography the local grocers are expected to develop and execute location specific marketing strategies.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The objective of this paper is to identify how marketing strategies for a grocery shop (mainly those are related to product quality, building customer relation, choosing location,price, promotion, place)differ from one loacation to another location at most of the part in Dhaka city.Many factors affect the store patronage decision like location, service levels, pricing policies, store environment and store image. At the same time, location also brings so many effects on all marketing strategies in business.

A **grocery store** is a store established primarily for the retailing of food. A grocer, the owner of a grocery store, stocks different kinds of foods from assorted places and cultures, and sells them to customers. Large grocery stores that stock products other than food, such as clothing or household items, are called supermarkets. Small grocery stores that mainly sell fruits and vegetables are known as produce markets (U.S) or greengrocers (Britain), and small grocery stores that predominantly sell snack foods and sandwiches are known as convenience stores or delicatessens. '…Grocery store outlet types included local store, discounter, supermarket, hypermarket and department store…' (Hortman *et al.*, 1990).Grocery or Retail location theory can be said to rest on four broad theoretical approaches, namely: central place theory; spatial interaction theory; land value theory; the principle of minimum differentiation.

Central place theory was first formulated by Christaller[5] and subsequently developed by Losch[12], and is described by Craig *et al.*[13] as "the best developed normative theory of retail location". Central place theory is predicated upon static, equilibrium-seeking assumptions which have become increasingly divorced from today's highly dynamic retailing environment. Spatial interaction theory is based on the hypothesis that consumers trade off the attractiveness of alternative shopping areas against the deterrent effect of distance. This offers an alternative normative model to explain behavioural interaction.. Land value theory proposes that the location of different activities (retailing formats) will depend on competitive bidding for specific sites. Lastly, the principle of minimum differentiation originates from Harold Hotelling's[3] classic paper "stability in competition". The principle suggests, in a retailing context, that a given number of stores operating within the same market sector will achieve superior performance if they are clustered together.

Now come to the store dimensions which are relevant for grocery store choice of customers may now be investigated. Grocery industry is strongly driven by price competitiveness (Taylor, 2003). Pricing is a dimension that can be identified from the perspective of the customer as well as that of the retailer/manufacturer (Sivakumar, 2000a, p. 294).Price defines a firm's competitive position in the market and consumers use price to evaluate quality of a brand or retailer (Dolan and Simon, 1996; Gabor and Granger, 1966). Usually, retail pricing strategies are described as either an every day low price (EDLP) or high low strategy (Aliabad). Bolton and Shankar (2003) propose, however, that grocery retailer's pricing strategies and tactics may be more diverse and complex, including decisions on the depth, frequency, and duration of deals, feature advertising, and displays for myriad brands and categories. They found that retailer pricing and promotion strategies are based on combinations of four underlying dimensions: Relative price, Price variation, Deal intensity, and Deal support (Bolton and Shankar, 2003).

Secondly, "Credit Sell" is a predictor of the selection of grocery shop's location. Product selection, assortment and courtesy of personnel are also very important in determining format choice and cleanliness is the most important attribute regardless of the format of grocery store (Carpenter and Moore, 2006; Teller *et al.*, 2006). In terms of many residents of small rural communities work in larger cities and towns and are able to shop at more convenient hours (Marjanen, 1993; Schiffman *et al.*, 1977). Larger centres also offer a wider choice of stores (LaForge *et al.*, 1984). There often is a perception that larger communities provide cheaper products and services (Lillis and Hawkins, 1974).

Moreover, Singh and Powell (2002) found that grocery shoppers consider quality to be most important,

followed by price, locality, range of products and parking. Fox *et al.* (2004) found that shopping and spending vary much more across than within formats, and expenditures respond more to varying levels of assortment and promotion than price, although price sensitivity was most evident at grocers. Chinese supermarket shoppers found store location, price and product variety as the most important store attributes influencing satisfaction (McDonald, 1991). In an investigation of consumer shopping destination choice behavior for convenience goods shopping trips in Taiwan, spatial separation distance best explained respondents' shopping destination choice behavior, followed by store selection criteria (Yang, 2006).

In terms of Grocery sales and consumer behavior, Engel, Kollat, and Blackwell model of consumer behaviour, expanded by Engel *et al.* (1993), examined store patronage variables to obtain an explanation of store choice (Figure 2). Salient variables were organized into valuative criteria and perceived store characteristics. Valuative criteria, i.e. variables that could be quantitatively recorded, included store location (distance), assortment breadth and depth, price, advertising, sales and promotion, store personnel, and services. Matthews (1992) suggests that the rural poor have limited access to supermarkets and lower priced food products. Yet little is known about how psychographic and store patronage factors affect their grocery shopping practices. Two studies that examined behavioural segmentation, as applied to grocery shopping, have yielded salient findings that should be examined in the context of the present study.

The first study (Hortman *et al.*, 1990) employed a hierarchical cluster to examine demographic and socioeconomic variables, such as age of head of household, number of working adults in the household and number of years at the current address, in order to segment grocery consumers. The analysis yielded three customer categories: baby boomers, middle-aged families, and the elderly. A multinomial logit model was used to analyse store patronage patterns within and across market segments. Distance and low price were found to be key predictors of grocery store patronage.

In the second study, Marjanen (1995) employed factor analysis ratings to identify six choice orientation factors: recreation, quality and selection, accessibility, atmosphere, price consciousness, and family shopping. Grocery store outlet types included local store, discounter, supermarket, hypermarket and department store. ANOVA was used to identify significant differences between store groups regarding store patronage factors and demographic variables. Regression analysis determined that family shopping, price consciousness and distance predicted grocery shopping destination choice.

Finally from many previous researches it may be deduced that the dimensions that are relevant for

grocery store choice are: price-consciousness, assortment, behavior of the store personnel, cleanliness, quality, deals/specials/promotions, ease of shopping, time/day of shopping, no of outlets visited, location/distance, home order/delivery, shopping list/unplanned, recreational/time spent at store, frequent buyer schemes, payment/credit facility, shopping companions, in-store specialty, store signage/ambience, parking, expenditure/no of times shopping, apathy/stress, refund/exchange. And here location makes a significant influence in every aspect of the related marketing activitie like mentioned above.

III. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of this study is to observe the marketing strategy and behaviors of the grocers of different locations. The study tries to identify the differences in various marketing strategies due to the differences in location of the grocery shops. Thus the study tries to explore whether the shops keep the branded products, sell on credit, how they fix prices, measure quality, build customer relationships, etc.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

It is the nature of the research problem that should dictate the appropriate research method; sometimes quantification is required, sometimes not (Ackroyd and Hughes, 1992). Questionnaires offer a method of conducting a survey where all respondents are asked exactly the same questions in the same circumstance. To support this method, Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe (1999: 72) noted, "If researchers wish to obtain answers to a number of fairly simple questions then a questionnaire might well be more appropriate". In this research, questionnaire survey was conducted to identify the marketing strategies of the grocery shops situated at different locations. Structured questionnaire were formulated in order to identify the different marketing strategies. Hypotheses were formulated on the basis of core variables and conclusive research was applied to prove the hypothesis. Total of 70 grocers of Dhaka city were surveyed. Among these 70 respondents, 26 respondents have grocery shops in Dhanmondi/Mohammadpur location, 24 have in Malibagh/Mogbazar location, 11 have grocery shops in the Old Dhaka location, and 9 are from Gulshan/Bonani/Baridhara area. The sampling technique was random sampling method. Finally, the study considered both quantitative and qualitative analyses. The statistical package used to conduct the various analyses is the SPSS, which is one of the most commonly used packages for quantitative research methods for data analysis (Bryman and Cramer, 1994).

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on the quantitative data that is questionnaire survey following are the findings on the grocers' marketing strategies based on the location.

a) Key Characteristics

I. *Ownership Structure*

Among 70 grocers, 63 have sole proprietorship and rest of the 7 have partnership in business ownership.

II. *Distribution Channel*

Only 1.4% owners of the grocery shops have their own distribution channel. Around 98.6% owners do not have their own distribution channel.

III. *Preference of Branded Products*

Among 70 grocers 88.6% prefer for keeping branded products in their shops and only 11.4% do not prefer branded products.

IV. *Need Based Products*

All the 70 grocers of the grocery shops keep need based products in their shops.

V. *Extra Storage Facilities*

All the grocers do not have the extra storage facilities. Among 70 grocers, 45.7% have extra storage facilities and rests 54.3% do not have any extra storage facilities.

VI. *Control over Price in All Products*

Most of the grocers, around 74.3% do not have control over price in all products. Only 25.7% have the control over the pricing of the products.

VII. *Understanding Customer Satisfaction*

The grocers understand customer satisfaction through several ways. Among 70 grocers, 31.3% understand from the behavior of the customers, 25% from getting good quality products, 8.9% from large amount of sale, 27.1% from repeat purchase, and 7.8% from good brand or company.

VIII. *Delivering Higher Customer Value*

The grocers also try to provide higher customer value in various ways. Around 31.5% deliver the higher customer value with behavior to customers, 23.4% by selling good quality of products, 6.5% by large amount of sale, 18.5% by repeat sales, and 20.1% by providing good band or company.

IX. *Considerations for Maintaining the Business*

To maintain the business for higher value chain management the grocers emphasize on different elements of the value chain. Among 70 grocers, 14.7% consider the infrastructure of the shop, 17.8% consider the sales persons, only 0.6% considers the technology management, 18.4% consider procurement, 12.9%

consider inbound logistics, 7.8% emphasizes on storing/sizing/decorating, 2% on outbound logistics, 11.8% on marketing and sales, and 14.1% on services.

b) *Inferential Statistics*

i. *Relationship between Expression of Quality to Customer and Location*

Ho = *Expression of quality to the customers does not vary for different locations*

H_1 = *Expression of quality to the customers varies for different locations*

Cross tabulation Result: The Gulshan /Bonani /Baridhara grocers express their product quality mostly through brand name and product features. In Dhanmondi and Mohammadpur the quality is expressed mostly by the brand name. In Gulshan/Bonani/Baridhara

66.7% grocery shops express quality with brand name and product features and in Dhanmondi/Mohammadpur 88.5% grocery shops express quality with brand name. But in case of Malibagh and Mogbazar the quality is expressed by the product features. In Old Dhaka a prominent number of owners express quality with product features. In Malibagh/Mogbazar 75% and in Old Dhaka 63.6% of the grocery shops express quality with product features. Though the quality is expressed mostly by the product features in most of the areas, some area's grocery shops still express quality with brand name, high price and low price. So it can be said that the expression of quality varies for differences in location, which leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis.

Table 1: Cross tabulation of Expression of Quality and Location

Location	How do you express quality to customers							
	Brand name	percentage	Product features	percentage	High price	percentage	Low price	percentage
Gulshan/Bonani/ Baridhara	6	66.7%	6	66.7%	2	22.2%	1	11.1%
Dhanmondi/ Mohammadpur	23	88.5%	20	76.9%	0	0	2	7.7%
Malibagh/ Mogbazar	8	33.3%	18	75%	7	29.2%	5	20.8%
Old Dhaka	4	36.4%	7	63.6%	0	0	6	54.5%

ii. *Relationship between Measurement of the Product Quality and Location*

Ho =*Measurement of the product quality does not vary with the locations*

H_1 = *Measurement of the product quality varies with the locations*

Cross tabulation Result: From the cross tabulation it is found that in some locations the quality is measured with brand name and profit. In

Gulshan/Bonani/Baridhara area 77.8% grocery shops and in Old Dhaka 45.5% grocery shops measure the quality with brand name. But in other locations the quality is measured mostly with the demand. Both in Dhanmondi/Mohammadpur area and Malibagh/Mogbazar area 100% of the grocery shops measure the quality with demand. This leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis, which means that the measurement of quality differs from location to location.

Table 2: Crosstabulation of Measurement of Quality and Location

Location	Choosing the product how do you measure the quality			
	Brand name	Profit	Demand	Low price
Gulshan/Bonani/Baridhara	7	7	6	5
Dhanmondi/Mohammadpur	7	22	26	2
Malibagh/Mogbazar	11	6	24	3
Old Dhaka	5	4	4	4

iii. *Relationship between Building Customer Relationships and Location*

Ho =*Building customer relationship does not vary in different locations*

H_1 = *Building customer relationship varies in different locations*

Crosstabulation Result: It is found that most of the grocers in every location emphasize on the repeat customers the most to build customer relationship. In

Gulshan/Bonani/Baridhara area 88.9%, in Dhanmondi/Mohammadpur 84.6%, in Malibagh/Mogbazar 95.8%, and in Old Dhaka 81.8% of the grocers builds customer relationships based on the repeat customers. Then most of them give the second highest importance to the clients. So it can be said that the null hypothesis is accepted that is building customer relationship does not vary in different locations.

Table3 : Crosstabulation of Building Customer Relationships and Location

Location	Which of the factor do you emphasis more to make the customer relationship			
	Prospects	First time customers	Repeat customers	Clients
Gulshan/Bonani/Baridhara	3	6	8	6
Dhanmondi/Mohammadpur	1	11	22	16
Malibagh/Mogbazar	1	2	23	12
Old Dhaka	2	6	9	4

iv. *Relationship between Promotion and Location*
Ho =*Promotion for the grocery shops does not vary in different locations*
H_1 = *Promotion for the grocery shops varies in different locations*

Crosstabulation Result: From crosstabulation result it is found that most of the grocers in different locations promote their products through direct marketing. In Gulshan/Bonani/Baridhara area 88.9%, in

Dhanmondi/Mohammadpur 92.3%, and in Malibagh/Mogbazar 83.3% of the grocers promote their products through direct marketing. But in Old Dhaka the promotion is made through the sales discount mostly. Around 82% of the grocery shops make the promotion through sales discount in Old Dhaka. So it can be said that the promotional efforts do not vary due to the differences in locations that is the null hypothesis is accepted here.

Table 4: Crosstabulation of Promotion and Location

Location	How do you promote your product			
	Advertising	Sales promotion	Direct marketing	Sales discount
Gulshan/Bonani/Baridhara	0	1	8	4
Dhanmondi/Mohammadpur	1	4	24	12
Malibagh/Mogbazar	4	13	20	5
Old Dhaka	0	0	5	9

v. *Relationship between Considerations while Choosing the Location for Shop and Location*
Ho = *Considerations while choosing the location for the*
Ho = *Considerations while choosing the location for the grocery shop does not vary due to the differences in location*
H_1 = *Considerations while choosing the location for the grocery shop vary due to the differences in location*

Crosstabulation Result: Most of the grocers of different locations choose such a location for their shop that is a suitable market place. In

Gulshan/Bonani/Baridhara, Dhanmondi/Mohammadpur, and Malibagh/Mogbazar area 100% of the grocery shops and in Old Dhaka 90% of the grocery shops consider the suitable market place while choosing the location for the shop. The grocers' second choice is the large number of sale for selecting a location for the shops. Though there are little variations in selecting other dimensions of location, it can be said that the null hypothesis is accepted. Because considerations while choosing the location for the grocery shop does not vary due to the differences in location.

Table 5: Cross tabulation of Consideration while Choosing Location for Grocery Shop and Location

Location	What do you consider while choosing the location			
	Attractive to customers	Large number of Sale	Suitable market place	Own advantage
Gulshan/Bonani/Baridhara	3	7	9	2
Dhanmondi/Mohammadpur	20	12	26	1
Malibagh/Mogbazar	12	17	24	5
Old Dhaka	5	5	9	4

vi. *Relationship between Fixing the Price and Location*
Ho = *Fixing the price of the products does not vary due to the differences in location*
H_1 = *Fixing the price of the products varies due to the differences in location*

Around 89% grocery shops of

Cross tabulation Result: It is found that the grocery shop owners of Dhanmondi/Mohammadpur and Gulshan/Bonani/Baridhara mostly fix the price by own.

Gulshan/Bonani/Baridhara area and 80.8% grocery shops of Dhanmondi/Mohammadpur fix the price by their own. But in Malibagh/Mogbazar and Old Dhaka the price of the products are fixed mostly by the company. Around 83% of the grocery shops of Malibagh/Mogbazar and 100% grocery shops of Old Dhaka fix the price based on the company price. So it can be said that the price fixation varies in different locations for the grocery shop products. That's why it can be said that the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 6: Cross tabulation of Price Fixation and Location

Location	How do you fix the price			
	Company	By own	Competitors	As much I can
Gulshan/Bonani/Baridhara	7	8	7	0
Dhanmondi/Mohammadpur	18	21	17	1
Malibagh/Mogbazar	20	1	16	0
Old Dhaka	11	2	5	1

vii. *Relationship between Location and Branded Products*

Ho =Location and preference of branded products by the grocery shop owners are not correlated
H1 =Location and preference of branded products by the grocery shop owners are correlated

Chi-Square Result: The significance value (Pearson Chi-Square) .386 is greater than the alpha value of .05. It means the null hypothesis is accepted. The variables are not correlated. The crosstabulation result also shows that most of the owners prefer branded products regardless the location issue. In Gulshan/Bonani/Baridhara 77.7%, in Dhanmondi/Mohammadpur 96.1%, in Malibagh/Mogbazar 91.3%, and in Old Dhaka 81.8% grocery shops prefer to keep branded products.

Table 7: Crosstabulation of Preference for Branded Products and Location

Location.	Do you prefer branded product				Total
	yes	percentage	no	percentae	
Gulshan/Bonani/Baridhara	7	77.7%	2	22.2%	9
Dhanmondi/ Mohammadpur	25	96.1%	1	3.84%	26
Malibug/Mogbazar	21	91.3%	3	12.5%	24
Old Dhaka	9	81.8%	2	18.1%	11
Total	62		8		70

viii. *Relationship between Location and Credit Sell*

Ho =Location of the grocery shop and credit sell are not correlated
H1 = Location of the grocery shop and credit sell are correlated

Chi-Square Result: The significance value (Pearson Chi-Square) .117 is greater than the alpha value of .05. It means the null hypothesis is accepted that is the variables are not correlated. The crosstabulation result also shows that most of the owners sell product on credit regardless of the location issue. In Gulshan/Bonani/Baridhara 88.8%, in Dhanmondi/Mohammadpur 76.9%, and in Old Dhaka 90.9% grocery shops sell on credit. Only Malibagh/Mogbazar is little different than the other areas, around 58.3% of the grocery shops of this area sell products on credit.

Table 8: Crosstabulation of Credit Sell and Location

Location.	Do you sell product on credit				Total
	yes	percentage	no	percentage	
Gulshan/Bonani/Baridhara	8	88.8%	1	11.1%	9
Dhanmondi/ Mohammadpur	20	76.9%	6	23.1%	26
Malibug/Mogbazar	14	58.3%	10	41.6%	24
Old Dhaka	10	90.9%	1	9.1%	11
Total	52		18		70

VI.   CONCLUDING REMARKS

Meeting customer demand is the main target of the retailers as they gain sustainable competitive advantages through high customer satisfaction. The marketing strategies of the grocery shops vary in Dhaka city due to differences in the location of the grocery shops. As the customers of different locations behave differently as their income pattern and preferences for products are different. The grocery shops set their strategies regarding products, price, promotion, and place differently according to the customer preferences to satisfy the customer demands. According to the study findings the grocers considers the following issues, such as, how to express the quality of the products to the customers, measure the product quality, fix the prices, based on the differences in location. The grocers do not differentiate regarding whether to keep the branded products or not, whether to sell product on credit or not, how to build strong customer relationships, how to promote the products, etc. But the grocers should differentiate their marketing strategies based on the location as the consumer choice and preferences vary due to the differences in income level. Otherwise they will not be able to sustain in the market for a long time, as they will not be able to satisfy the customer demands.

VII.   LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Due to time and financial restriction, this research could study only the grocery shops marketing strategy. In future this research should be extended for other types of retailers of Dhaka city to find out the differences of the marketing strategies due to the variation in location that will help to draw a conclusion regarding the retailers' marketing strategies based on the location.

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