Investigating the Relationship between Store Environment and Store Loyalty in the Context of Supermarkets of Bangladesh

Robaka Shamsher [1]

Abstract

Bangladesh retail market has drastically changed with the inception of standard and disciplined practice of supermarkets in the urban parts of the country. Compared to the developed countries, the retailing industry in Bangladesh is fragmented and undeveloped, which has received a breakthrough with the massive expansion of supermarket culture. From a socio economic perspective, the Bangladeshi consumers are getting exposed to outside tastes, which is reasonably creating some preference towards supermarkets culture. The present study is an attempt to investigate the relationship between "Store Environment" and "Store Loyalty" of supermarkets in Bangladesh. The study was implemented in Chattogram Metropolitan city – the commercial capital of the country. Multiple regression has been applied to test the hypotheses. The results of the study show that store cleanliness, followed by sales persons' behaviour and store interior influence store loyalty. In contrast, store display, background music, pleasant scent and store lighting have no effect in determining store loyalty. At the end of the paper, a few recommendations along with some agenda for future research studies have been proposed.

Introduction

Over the last few decades the retail industry has experienced innovative modernization all over the world with the emergence of super markets (Verma & Madan, 2011; Shamsher, Abdullah, & Saha, 2012; Shamsher, 2018). During the latter half of the 20th Century, in both Europe and North America, the supermarket culture became the dominant grocery retail form. According to Reardon, Timmer and Minten (2012), countries like China, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand moved towards the rapid growth of super markets and later on this growth sustained with more expansion in countries like India and

[1] Associate Professor, Department of Marketing, CIU Business School, Chittagong Independent University, Chattogram, Bangladesh.

Corresponding author:
Robaka Shamsher, Associate Professor, Department of Marketing, CIU Business School, Chittagong Independent University, Chattogram, Bangladesh.
Email: robaka@ciu.edu.bd

Vietnam. However, the chain grocery store started to raise in the early 1900s; afterward, approximately in 1950, with the super market set-up these stores espoused on the way to technology-intensive distribution system in the 1980s and 1990s (Hossain, Rahman, & Akter, 2009).

According to Shamhser (2011), the technological growth particularly due to the impact of the internet, enlarged working opportunities, expansion of industrialization and additional amenities has resulted in better income-expenditure for the shoppers. Moreover, the influence of western cultural shift has brought huge transformation in the shopping practice of the Bangladeshi consumers (Shamsher, 2018). This change has taken place specifically in the consumer behavioral pattern of urban areas towards the contemporary shopping practice of super market (Shamsher & Hossain, 2012).

The practice of super market culture was initiated in Bangladesh in the year 2000 as Rahimafrooz Superstores, operating company of Agora, entered the retailing and wholesale trade, which has been growing annually by more than 6 percent on an average and contributing over 13 percent to GDP since the 1999-2000 fiscal year. Traditionally, the super markets were perceived for shoppers from the upper and upper-middle classes who preferred to shop in a relaxed shopping atmosphere (Shamsher & Hossain, 2012). Later on, super markets became a place to shop for consumers from different income classes. According to Shamsher and Hossain (2012), the supermarket culture in Bangladesh has significantly changed the shopping behavior of the city dwellers especially for the dual income families whose purchasing patterns have shifted towards the preference for clean environment, cozy, disciplined and time-saving shopping option with varieties of commodities under one roof. Studies on the modern establishments of super markets have revealed the need for a better shopping environment (Kashem, 2012; Shamsher, Abdullah, & Saha, 2012) to enhance store loyalty of Bangladeshi shoppers (Shamsher, 2018). Therefore, retailers must have a widespread awareness concerning the environment of any particular store that influence the customers' choice behavior, purchase intention, and loyalty toward their chosen stores (Thang & Tan, 2003; Pan & Zinkhan, 2006; Shamsher & Hossain, 2011). Customers will prefer to shop from the store that offers them with maximum sparkling shopping surroundings, and large unbolt pathway (Shamsher, 2018).

Research Gap

In the revolutionized retail environment of Bangladesh, the supermarket culture is gradually becoming popular to the new generation of convenience seeking consumers. The changing shopping surroundings are giving customers the opportunities for experiencing a clam and secure store environment. The era of traditional overcrowded, open 'wet' market style shopping practice has been shifted towards comfort and conveniences for the Middle-class shoppers for their everyday grocery shopping.

Since the retail shopping industry in Bangladesh changed from traditional wet market to modern air conditioned hygienic retail style, understanding the

shopping environment of the supermarkets of Bangladesh is an important area of concentration for both academicians and practitioners. A number of studies on store loyalty have been carried out (Thang & Tan, 2003; Sinha, 2003; Ahmed, 2007; Orth & Green, 2009; Verma & Madan, 2011; Shamsher & Hossain, 2011; Imran, Ghani, & Rehman, 2013). However, in the context of Bangladesh, no research work has been conducted in the area of store environment and its impact on store loyalty. Moreover, retail store managers are now realizing the trend of customers' changing behavioral perception for which they need to become highly concerned about retail success and long term prosperity (Lau, Chang, Moon, & Liu, 2006).

The blossoming super market sector has enriched the retail industry of Bangladesh which has apparently attracted the interest of different researchers. Yet surprisingly, none of these studies attempted to examine the influence of store environment on store loyalty, theoretically or empirically, in Bangladesh retail industry from the context of the super market sector. Therefore, it is important for the retailers to acquire more knowledge about store environment to enhance store loyalty among the Bangladeshi supermarket shoppers. Thus, the value of the study is to explore shopkeepers' awareness to improve the environment of the store which will enhance store loyalty and will increase the store's ability to obtain sustainable competitive advantage and future growth opportunities. In addition, the study can aid the policymakers to formulate and implement more consumer-friendly retail policies in the future, given the economic growth and rising standards of living.

Literature Review

This review is organized into three sections. The first section provides a discussion on the overview of Bangladesh retail market and the following section focuses on the studies related with store loyalty and store environment.

Bangladesh Retail Market

Bangladesh retail industry witnessed a rapid growth in the last 19 years when in 2001 Rahimafrooz started its retailing trade in Dhaka city. Before 2001, retail trade was dominantly controlled by thousands of small retailers in the traditional stores or bazaars where shoppers solely had to depend on these unorganized wet markets to buy their essentials (Shamsher & Hossain, 2011). Currently, two percent of Bangladeshi consumers prefer shopping from supermarkets while in neighboring India, five percent shoppers go to supermarkets, according to information obtained from the entrepreneurs. The highest eighteen percent consumers in the Maldives and fourteen percent in Sri Lanka go to supermarkets for shopping (Shamsher, 2018).

Compared to the developed countries, the retailing industry in Bangladesh is fragmented and undeveloped which has received a breakthrough with the expansion of the supermarket culture. From a socio economic perspective, the Bangladeshi consumers are being exposed to outside tastes which are creating

some preference towards the supermarkets culture. Besides this, an unwilling attitude towards the practice of bargaining in the unsophisticated unhygienic wet markets has increasingly converted the urban shopping practice towards convenience and comfort (Sinha, 2003) where shopping form supermarkets are believed to be an emerging socialization function and a matter of social status by fulfilling recreational preference (Shamsher, 2018). Modern consumers now want a roomful of choice in a calm, hygienic environment and are less prone to take the price haggling challenge.

The shopping behavior of Bangladeshi consumers have intensely changed due to factors such as rapid urbanization, increase in per capita income of the "middle class" segment, demographical shift with the increasing employment opportunity for women, preferences for "westernization" of lifestyles-particularly among the younger people, growing use of credit cards, and changes in family structure with the emergent proportion of nuclear families. This change took place when the very first supermarket Agora started their retail trade in Bangladesh in 2001. Agora was followed by Nandan, initially with two large-scale outlets and Meena Bazar with four medium-scale outlets. In 2008, ACI Ltd. launched its own retail chain, Shwapno. Inside Dhaka, there are other smaller chains such as Daily Shopping (9 outlets), Almas (4 outlets), Pick & Pay (2 outlets), Lavender (2 outlets) and Prince Bazar (2 outlets). Besides Dhaka, Agora, Shwapno and Meena Bazar operates in Chattogram, Khulna, Sylhet and Rajshahi too. In terms of larger customer coverage and number of outlets, Shwapno is currently the market leader (60 outlets), serving approximately 35,000 customers daily on an average (IDLC, 2017). Among others, Meena Bazar has 18 outlets and Agora has 10.

The organized retail industry is progressively going forward to becoming the next growing sector of Bangladesh. Modern supermarkets are the next emergent business in the industrialization of Bangladesh. These supermarkets are a new source of profitable revenues, for the working-class, business proprietors and the country for accelerating employment opportunities where around 50 people can work for a single store (Kashem, 2012).

Store Loyalty

Store loyalty has been defined as consumers' commitment to the store and repeating purchase to satisfy their needs. It occurs because consumers distinguish the store from other stores and perceive that the store has the excellence to serve them. Store loyalty exists where a shopper continues to purchase the product from the same shop for a long time (Chinomona & Dubihlela, 2014). Store loyal customers are those who exhibit repurchase behavior and a commitment to re-patronize the product from the same store repeatedly in future purchases (Eid, 2011).

Global competition, technological development, and customers awareness has been driving the organizations to consider loyalty as a main concern in marketing planning. One of the strategic goals of marketing is to retain the customers through repurchase behavior (Thomas, 2013). Retail research

results showed that a store's prolonged existence is highly dependent on store loyalty which has the highest importance in building retail success (Anić & Radas, 2006). In other words, in the ever changing retail environment store, loyalty directs the way towards the competitiveness of the retailers (Kesić, Kraljević, & Vlašić, 2005).

Rajaguru and Matanda (2006) scrutinized the results of Indian consumers' viewpoint of store and product attributes on customer loyalty where results revealed that service quality, store convenience, product quality, price and availability of new products has confirmed significant effects on customer loyalty. Rahman and Jalil (2014) examined the influencing factors of customer loyalty in Malaysian hypermarkets shoppers where results of the research revealed that product quality, price strategy and service quality were showed to have important connection with customer loyalty. However, Clottey, Collier and Stodnick (2008) determined that brand image showed the strongest determinants of customer loyalty followed by product quality and service quality in examining women's apparel retail market in the U.S. context. A study conducted on Korean retail market by Yoo and Chang (2005) highlighted that store loyalty was largely influenced by store atmosphere. Imran, Ghani and Rehman (2013) indicated a strong correlation between store image and store loyalty. In another study, Stan (2015) showed that customer satisfaction was found to have the strongest direct impact on loyalty, followed by store image and perceived value. Furthermore, the findings also verified that women shoppers were more loyal to the store compared to the male. However, Perumal (2005) confirmed that consumer loyalty was not found to be different among the gender, age and income groups of the shoppers; nonetheless significant differences in store loyalty behavior were observed with married and higher educated shoppers.

Though store loyalty is a major area of research in the retail industry globally, a tiny amount of such studies so far have been undertaken in the context of Bangladesh. As such, Akbar (2013) conducted a study to examine store loyalty among Bangladeshi shoppers of retail shops in Dhaka. The results highlighted that customer satisfaction as an arbitrary variable confirmed the most influential impact on loyalty among Bangladeshi retail shoppers. A study conducted by Shamsher (2014) revealed that Bangladeshi shoppers' loyalty towards store is strongly influenced by store appearance. Another study, conducted in Chattogram Metropolitan city by Shamsher and Hossain (2011), revealed that service quality, store conveniences, product quality, and availability of new products influenced store loyalty. However, Datta and Chakraborty (2009) examined the degree of consumer's loyalty in Bangladesh amongst the consumers who shop from various superstores on the basis of their shopping behavior and store-level service.

Store Environment

Store environment can be defined as the set of physical characteristics of the store (such as architecture, layout, display, colors, lights, temperature, sounds and smells) that, as a whole, contribute to creating an image in the shopper's

perception, influencing emotions and purchasing behavior (Dunne & Lusch, 2005). Studies have identified the importance of store atmospherics such as color, lighting, odor and music (Arnold, Oum, & Tigert, 1983; Fotheringham, 1988; Freymann, 2002), slow-beat background music (Milliman, 1982), pleasant and comfortable shopping environments (Ahmed, 2007; Shamsher, 2014), layout accessibility, facility aesthetics, electronic equipment, seating comfort, clean and pleasant shopping environment, spacious and open aisle (Sirohi, McLaughlin, & Wittink, 1998), and store ambience (Baker, Grewal, & Levy, 1992). In addition, graphic and interior design, clean environment, and properly displayed merchandize influence store choice (Štursa, 2009).

After analyzing the literature, this study considered factors of store environment as store cleanliness, sales persons' behavior, store display, background music, pleasant scent, store lighting and store interior as important factors in influencing the store loyalty of Bangladeshi consumers.

Store Cleanliness

Store cleanliness is a key driver of customer retention and an effective means of adding value in the retail sector. Studies suggested that cleanliness is a significant element of retail environment (Wiszniewski, 2012). A clean store always welcomes customers with open arms and encourages shoppers to spend more time in the store. In recent times, supermarket retailers need to differentiate themselves from competitors by focusing on customer service, store cleanliness and convenience. Lee, Johnson and Gahring (2006) conducted a study to identify the important factors on local Small-Town Consumers where results revealed that store cleanliness is the third important factor in choosing a store. Markovic at el. (2014) have identified store cleanliness followed by temperature, merchandise, lighting, music, scents, absence of tobacco smoke and width of aisles as the most important interior attributes.

Makhitha (2014) revealed that cleanliness of the supermarket, was the most important attributes by South African students to choose a supermarket. Shashikala and Suresh (2013) revealed that cleanliness of a store is found to have more importance in building loyalty of customers. Therefore, to verify the influence of store cleanliness on store loyalty the following null hypothesis is developed.

H_1: Store cleanliness is positively related with store loyalty of Bangladeshi shoppers.

Sales Person Behavior

Literature shows that sales people contributed an important function in retailing (Mackintosh & Lockshin, 1997). Kulkarni (2012) emphasized the significant influence of store personnel on consumers' behavior. Another study by Kulkarni (2013) revealed that well-groomed, trained and efficient store staff showed positive impact on the customers' buying experience. Supportive and friendly salespersons are confirmed as the most important determinant that

influence of in-store shopping environment on Pakistani consumers' impulse buying behavior (Ali & Hasnu, 2013). Store staff was often proved to be a vital element of customer loyalty (Bove & Johnson, 2001). Therefore, to verify the influence of "Sales Person Behavior" on store loyalty the following null hypothesis is developed.

H_2: "Sales Person Behavior" is positively related with store loyalty of Bangladeshi shoppers.

Store Display

Some recent studies have mentioned the importance of store display for influencing impulse buying behavior (Tendai & Crispen, 2009; Makal & Pangemannan, 2014). Banat and Wandebori (2012) emphasized the significance of store display for influencing Indonesian shoppers' sales per visit. However, attractive display is considered as one of the important atmospheric factors by the Indian shoppers. Therefore, to verify the influence of store interior on store display the following null hypothesis is developed.

H_3: Store display is positively related with store loyalty of Bangladeshi shoppers.

Background Music

Morrison, Gan, Dubelaar, and Oppewal (2011) examined the effect of music (volume high or low) on the Australian retail market among the young fashion shoppers. The results of the path analysis showed that volume of music created a significant influence on the young shoppers' emotions and satisfaction levels. The study further revealed that the presence of music encouraged the shoppers which positively influenced shopper satisfaction level that enhance their shopping experience. In another study, Hosseini and Jayashree (2014) revealed that music showed a positive and significant relationship with consumer behavior. A popular music influences the shoppers to stay longer inside the store (Jacob, Lourel, & Guellec, 2007). Therefore, to verify the influence of store interior on store loyalty the following null hypothesis is developed.

H_4: Background Music is positively related with store loyalty of Bangladeshi shoppers.

Pleasant Scent

Hussain and Ali (2015) revealed that scent has a significant relationship with consumer purchase intention among Pakistani retail shoppers. In another study, Basera, Mutsikiwa, and Dhliwayo (2013) examined that scent has a positive effect on patronage behavior in Zimbabwe fast foods retails. However, Morrison, Gan, Dubelaar, and Oppewal (2011) emphasized that the presence of vanilla scent created a significant influence on the Australian young shoppers' emotions and satisfaction levels by intensifying their pleasure levels. Pleasant scent ultimately increase shoppers' tendency to spent longer time in

the store (Vaccaro, Yucetepe, Torres-Baumgarten, & Myung-Soo, 2009). Therefore, to verify the influence of pleasant scent on store loyalty the following null hypothesis is developed.

H_5: Pleasant scent is positively related with store loyalty of Bangladeshi shoppers.

Store Lighting

Research shows that store lighting hasa strong positive correlation with consumer buying behavior (Deshmukh, Joseph, & Soni, 2014). In a study, it was discovered that lighting originated an important influence on consumers' perception in specialized departmental stores in Pakistan (Qureshi, Humayun, & Hummayun, 2015). Ariffin, Bibon and Abdullah (2012) discovered that restaurant atmospheric environmental elements like lighting, significantly influence the behavior of Malaysian youth consumers. Another investigation by Mirabi and Samiey (2015) highlighted the influence of store lighting on Iranian consumer perception. Therefore, to verify the influence of Store Lighting on store loyalty the following null hypothesis is developed.

H_6: Store Lighting is positively related with store loyalty of Bangladeshi shoppers.

Store Interior

Store interior is an important factor for the shoppers in making their purchasing decision. Hasan (2015) mentioned that consumers consider store interior while assessing any particular store and their shopping experience depends widely on pictures of store interiors. The interior of a shopping mall positively affects aspiration to stay inside the store and results in higher spending. Some investigations carried out on store interior (Shashikala & Suresh, 2013) mention that it refers to store colour which was found to influence trust and store choice (Lee & Roa, 2010). Therefore, to verify the influence of store interior on store loyalty the following null hypothesis is developed.

H_7: Store interior is positively related with store loyalty of Bangladeshi shoppers.

Conceptual Framework

Based on the aforesaid hypotheses the following conceptual framework is proposed:
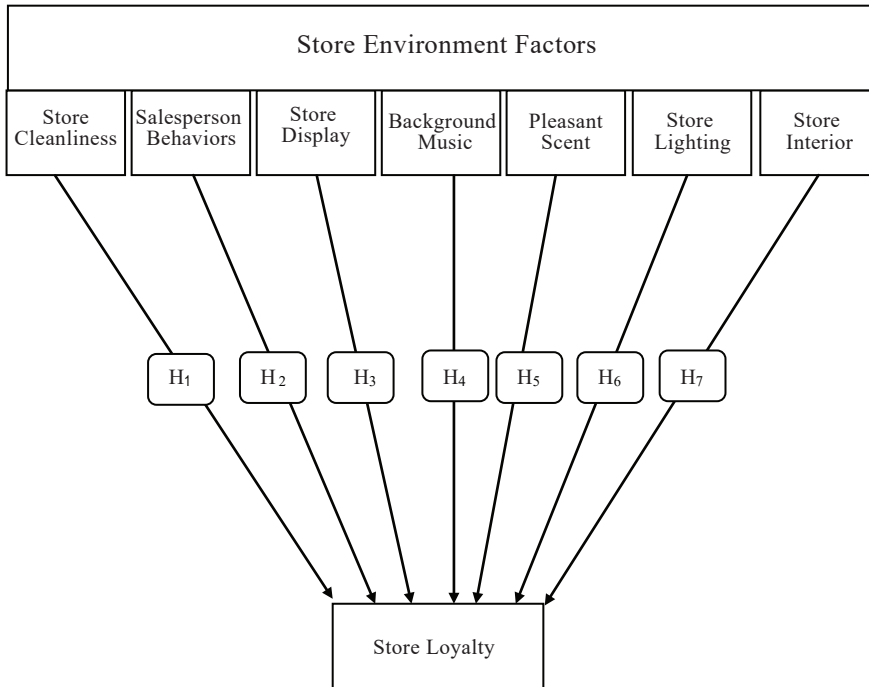
Figure: Conceptual Model

Research Methodology

The study was geographically confined to Chattogram metropolitan area and all super market shoppers initially formed the sampling frame of the study. The study followed the survey approach using a structured-non-disguised closed-end questionnaire. Both primary and secondary information were used in the study. Secondary data were collected from various published sources including books, online journals, newspapers, magazines, and reports. Primary data were collected from the super market shoppers of Khulshi Mart, Grocer, Agora, Meena Bazar and Shwapno.

The sample size for the study was calculated by Cochran's (1963) formula. On the basis of the formula, at 95% confidence level and 6% sampling error with maximum degree of variability (p=.5, q=.5), the sample size arrived at 267. However, a total of 280 questionnaires were collected by using the Mall intercept technique. After sorting the collected questionnaires, 49 were found to be incomplete and inaccurate. Finally, 231 questionnaires were used for the purpose of data analysis.

The questionnaire had two sections. The first section of the questionnaire was comprised of seven questions, out of which the first four questions were developed to collect the demographic information of the respondents (gender, age, education and occupation). The fifth question allowed the researcher to segment consumers into store loyal consumers and store switchers. The next

two questions were used to identify the respondents preferred stores and frequency of using the store. In the second section, the respondents were asked to evaluate the importance of the elements of store environment to evaluate loyalty towards their favorite stores through twenty statements. The statements of the seven store environment factors were adapted from previous literature: Store cleanliness (Wiszniewski, 2012; Markovic at el., 2014), sales person behavior (Kulkarni, 2012), store display (Tendai & Crispen, 2009; Makal & Pangemannan, 2014), background music (Morrison, Gan, Dubelaar, & Oppewal, 2011), pleasant scent (Basera, Mutsikiwa, & Dhliwayo, 2013; Hussain & Ali, 2015), store lighting (Deshmukh, Joseph, & Soni, 2014) and store interior (Hasan, 2015). Reliability of the statement was calculated employing the Cronbach's Alpha (Cochran, 1963) since it is the most commonly used tool in measuring the internal consistency. Since all the scales in the present study produced desirable Cronbach's alpha (Churchill & Peter, 1984; Nunnally, 1978), the data reliability issue in the study can be considered highly satisfactory. The statements were measured on a five-point Likert Scale ranging from strongly disagree with scale point 1 to strongly agree with scale point 5. Data were collected on the basis of convenient sampling. All the data were collected during the 1st and 2nd week of September, 2018. Both descriptive and inferential statistical tools were employed to analyze the data. All the calculations were conducted using SPSS, Version 17.0 (Leech, Barrett, & Morgan, 2005). The publication manual of APA (American Psychological Association, 2001) was used for citation of the sources of references that have been used in the study.

Findings of the Study

Demographic profile of the respondents

The following table shows the demographic profile of the respondents:

Table 1: *Demographic Profile of the Respondents*

Demographic particular	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	149	64.5
Female	82	35.5
Total	231	100
Age		
Below 30 years	143	61.9
More than 30 years	88	38.1
Total	231	100

(Table 1 Continued)

(Table 1 Continued)

Demographic particular	Frequency	Percentage
Education		
Up to HSC	66	28.6
Bachelor/Master or above	165	71.4
Total	231	100
Occupation		
Employed	110	47.6
Unemployed	121	52.4
Total	231	100
Loyalty for a specific store		
YES	165	71.4
NO	66	28.6
Total	231	100
Preferred super market		
Khulshi Mart	166	71.9
Grocer	22	9.5
Meena	35	15.2
Agora	8	3.5
Total	231	100
Shoppers of		
Khulshi Mart	161	69.7
Grocer	23	10.0
Meena Bazar	36	15.6
Agora	11	4.8
Total	231	100

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the respondents. Out of 231 respondents, 64.5 percent were male and the rest 35.5 percent were female. 61.9 percent respondents fell below the age group of 30 years and the remaining 38.1 percent composed the age group of above 30 years. Majority of the respondents' (71.4 percent) educational background was up to bachelor or masters and the rest of the respondents (28.6 percent) completed up to HSC level. With respect to occupation, 47.6 percent of the respondents were employed compared to unemployed respondents of 52.4 percent. It is interesting to observe that a good proportion of the respondents (71.4 percent) constituted the segment of loyal customers and the rest of the respondents (28.6 percent) were found to be store switchers.

Regarding, the respondents preferred super market, majority of the respondents (71.9 percent) were found to prefer Khulshi Mart. This might be due to the fact that, Khulshi Mart offers different products at different price ranges to grab majority of the market segments. Followed by Grocer, Meena Bazar and Agora shoppers representing 15.2 percent, 9.5 percent and 3.5 percent respectively.

Overall Store Loyalty

The respondents were asked a single question if they were loyal to the supermarket from where they purchased. The result shows a high level of store loyalty with mean score 4.3377 on a scale of 5. The following table shows the overall store loyalty of the respondents:

Table 2: *Overall Brand Loyalty*

	Number of respondents	Mean	Standard deviation
Loyalty to Store	231	4.3377	1.02927

Significance of the store environment factors with store loyalty

The following table shows the correlation between store loyalty and factors of store environment

Table 3: *Significance of Store Environment Factors with Store Loyalty*

Rank	Factors of brand loyalty	Pearson correlation	Significance (2-tailed)
1st	Store Cleanliness	.673	.000
3rd	Store Interior	.401	.000
2nd	Sales Person Behavior	.410	.000
5th	Pleasant Scent	.316	.000
6th	Store Lighting	.177	.007
7th	Store Display	.137	.037
4th	Background Music	.362	.000

The table shows that all the factors of store environment significantly affected store loyalty. Among these factors store cleanliness has the highest significance of .673, followed by sales person behavior (.410), store interior (.401), background music (.362), pleasant scent(.316), store lighting (.177) and store display (.137).

Reliability Analysis

The respondents were asked to evaluate the importance of the factors of store environment towards their favorite store. The statements were measured on a five-point Likert Scale ranging from strongly disagree with scale point 1 to strongly agree with scale point 5. The reliability analysis of these statements are shown in the following table which indicate high reliability coefficients of alpha (.6057).

Table 4: *Reliability Analysis- Scale (Alpha)*

Reliability coefficients	No of respondents	No of items
Alpha = .6057	231.0	20

Effect of Store Environment Factors on Overall Store Loyalty

It was necessary to investigate the effect of the store environment factors to build loyalty towards the respondents' preferred store. Multiple regression was employed to see the effect of the factors as the predictor variables and store loyalty as the dependent variable. The following model was run:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta 1X1 + \beta 2X2 + \beta 3X3 + \beta 4X4 + \beta 5X5 + \beta 6X6 + \beta 7X7$$

Where Y = Store loyalty
X1 = Store Cleanliness
X2 = Sales Person Behavior
X3 = Store Interior
X4 = Background Music
X5 = Pleasant Scent
X6 = Store Lighting
X7 = Store Display

The following tables show the results revealed from the regression analysis.

Table 5: *Multiple Regression Model Summary for Factors of Store Environment on Loyalty for the Preferred Store*

R square	Adjusted R square	R square change
.515	.500	.515

Table 6: *ANOVA*

Model	Sum of quares	D f	F	Sig.
Regression	125.417	7	33.671	.000
Residual	118.130	223		
Total	243.548	230		

Note. *** p < .01

Table 7: *Effect of Factors of Store Environment on Loyalty for the Preferred Store*

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(constant)		.497		-3.562	.000
Store Cleanliness	.755	.083	.519	9.070	.000
Sales Person Behavio	.256	.103	.134	2.493	.013
Store Display	.105	.065	.086	1.603	.110
Background Music	.104	.074	.071	1.394	.165
Pleasant Scent	7.407E-02	.045	.080	1.641	.102
Store Lighting	2.726E-02	.029	.046	.955	.341
Store Interior	.113	.064	.091	1.759	.080

Note. * p< .10, ** p< .05, *** p< .01

The results of the multiple regression indicate a strong R^2 of .515. The value of F is 33.671 which stands significant at .01 percent. The relatively high measure of R^2 (.515) indicates that the predictor variables performed well in explaining the variance in brand loyalty. The F ratio indicates that the results of the equation could hardly have occurred by chance. The relative effect of predictor variables was examined by comparing the magnitude of regression

coefficients. The first factor with the greatest effect on overall store loyalty was "store cleanliness" (ß = .519) and it showed to have significant positive relationship with store loyalty. This is also supported by Makhitha (2014) where important attributes for choosing supermarket among the South African University students was examined. Another study by Biswal and Sreekumar (2011) discovered that cleanliness and tidiness of the store is very important for the Indian shoppers. Likewise "sales persons behavior" (ß = .134) and "store interior" (ß = .091) affected on overall store loyalty. As such, Hypotheses 1, 2 and 7 were supported respectively. However, negative effects on store loyalty was found with "store display" (ß =.086, p>.10), thus hypothesis 3 was not supported. Negative association was equally observed with "background music" (ß = .071, p>.10), "pleasant scent" (ß = .080, p>.10), and "store lighting" (ß = .046, p>.10), which voided hypothesis 4, 5 and 6.

Implications, Limitations and Future Research Agenda

Store environment is a very essential part that retail store owners should be aware of for developing the loyalty of customers. Retail manager should be more concerned to ensure a clean environment, better behavior of the sales person and improve the ground of store interior which showed strong priority for the store loyal customers respectively. Additionally, the store managers should widen other ambience factors like background music, pleasant scent, lighting alongside improving the display of products to capture the attention of the store's loyal shoppers.

This study suffers from some limitations. First, it was conducted only in Chattogram city which rarely symbolize the whole depiction of the state as long as store loyalty is concerned. Thus, in future, researchers might do this study on a much larger and wider ground. Second weakness of the study is its small sample size due to which results may have been affected. Future researchers, in this regard, should consider collecting larger samples to avoid sampling error. The study was confined to only supermarkets, though more shopping is done in the traditional retail stores and bazaars in Bangladesh. In view of this fact, the same study can be conducted on the traditional retail stores of the country in future. Apart from that, a comparative analysis regarding the loyalty status of traditional retail stores and superstores can be kept in mind by future researchers. Additionally, the behavioral characteristic of shoppers could have been extended with the insertion of some other aspects such as consumer perception, consumer shopping experience and knowledge, consumer attitude, changing consumer preferences and the like. The findings of the study are expected to be useful for strategic policy making by superstore retailers as a way to developing customer loyalty.

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