

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF CUSTOMER PREFERENCE TOWARDS SMART BAZAAR VS DMART IN THOOTHUKUDI

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ABSTRACT:

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF CUSTOMER PREFERENCE TOWARDS SMART

BAZAAR VS DMART IN THOOTHUKUDI is the topic taken for research.

To study about the demographic marketing strategy of consumer. To identify the factor influencing the consumers towards the purchase in smart Bazaar vs d mart. To know the availability of product at smart Bazaar vs d Mart To improve the service provided by the company for motivating the customer To analyze the customer perception regarding the satisfaction of the product and To attract customers, increase sales, and understand their preferences regarding payment and convenience options in supermarkets. Primary and secondary used in the data was collect. The simple random sampling technique is adopted to select 100 respondents who use Comparative study of customer preference towards smart bazaar vs d mart in Thoothukudi district. The comparative study of customer preferences towards Smart Bazaar and D Mart in Thoothukudi revealed significant insights into the shopping habits and preferences of local customers. The study aimed to investigate the differences in customer preferences between the two retail chains and provide recommendations for improvement. The study found that Smart Bazaar is preferred for its personalized service and loyalty programs, while D Mart is preferred for its modern store layout, competitive pricing, and wide product range. The study's results have important implications for both retailers, highlighting the need to tailor their strategies to meet the evolving needs and preferences of their customers.

KEYWORDS:

Purchasing behaviour ,satisfaction, smart bazaar, dmart, retail.

INTRODUCTION:

The retail industry in India has witnessed significant growth over the past

decade, driven by changing consumer preferences, behaviours, and demographics. The emergence of organized retail formats, such as hypermarkets and supermarkets, has transformed the way consumers shop for groceries and other daily essentials. Two prominent retail players in India, Smart Bazaar and Dmart, have established a strong presence in various cities across the country, including Thoothukudi. Thoothukudi, a coastal city in Tamil Nadu, presents an interesting case study for understanding consumer preferences in a rapidly growing urban centre. With a growing middle class and increasing disposable incomes, consumers in Thoothukudi are seeking modern retail experiences that offer convenience, quality, and value. This study aims to investigate customer preferences towards Smart Bazaar and D Mart in Thoothukudi, exploring the factors that influence their shopping decisions and loyalty towards these retail brands. This study aims to explore the factors shaping customer preferences in Thoothukudi retail market, with a focus on Smart Bazaar and D Mart. By analyzing the similarities and differences in customer choices, the research intends to offer valuable insights for retailers, marketers, and policymakers seeking to understand the dynamics of the retail sector in the region. In recent years, India's retail industry has undergone significant changes, driven by technological advancements, shifting consumer behaviours, and the rise of new retail formats. As this landscape continues to evolve, it is crucial to identify the key factors influencing customer loyalty and preference toward various retail brands. Through this study, we will examine the underlying drivers of customer preferences in Thoothukudi. Smart Bazaar and DMart both offer a wide range of products, including groceries, household items, apparel, electronics, and personal care products. While both retailers operate on a similar business model of providing customers with affordable prices and a wide selection, there are key differences in their offerings, customer service, and operational strategies that might impact customer preferences.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Uganda has experienced growth of organized retail stores but scholars have paid less attention to their (Dokeen et al, 2021). The researchers highlighted that although retail stores have conducted various promotional activities, they

have not been able to attract many customers. They indicated a constant change in customer demographic and income that might be impacting customers perception of retail stores so that they can enhance customer satisfaction. Research has been conducted on What makes customer patronage specific stores but not much attention

has been paid to the retailers dynamic capabilities that enable a retailer to create strategies that result in increased profits, competitiveness and performance.

According to **Nair (2018)** there has been an evolution of global supermarket in parts of Africa, especially private-owned. Supermarket can be referred to as a one- stop shop that offer customers a variety of products and an enhanced shopping experience. supermarkets provide market access to producers and manufacturers. They need enhanced dynamic capabilities, competition among supermarket lead to lower prices, improved quality and choice that benefit customer. The competition reduce buyer power which is beneficial to suppliers since the number of supermarket has tremendously increased it is, therefore, incumbent upon the super markets to develop programs that can enhance their competitiveness and perfot(Nair,2019).

In research conducted by **Nandonde and kuda(2018)**, they noted that Tanzania has witnessed several supermarket entering the local market from South Africa and Kenya in the last 20years. The authors noted that since the increase of supermarket, some research has been conducted on supplier and retail pricing strategy, but they reckon that a lot more need to be studied to establish causes of decreasing performance, which may lead to supermarket closure. The researchers established that the determinants of growth the opportunity and the challenges facing the sector still require investigation.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

The will the rapid growth a heated and still unresolved political debate about whether foreign retail investment is beneficial to the country as more export-oriented foreign direct investment. Although the growth of super stores benefit local consumer by attracting them with low prices and convenience

shopping, it has damage many smaller family-run stores.

Due to moderation of human life style people, are running fast for earning money. Everything has been change such as food habit, entertainment spending pattern and the like. Among the busy schedule people want to save the time mostly attract towards supermarket under which most of the need are full filled below single roof. The aim of the study is to analyse the link between super marketing strategies and consumer buying decision.

The information flow was discovered to be in efficient thereby affected services delivery that would here interested the customers. The supermarket prices were found to be inhabitant when compared to open market prices. The consumer preferred these open market because of the degree of satisfaction received from them.

Supermarket faces challengers in maintaining customer satisfaction due to factor such as product quality, prices and Store ambience. The supermarkets struggle to maintain high level of customer services due to inadequate of training and insufficient resources. Supermarket face challenges in managing the supply chain and inventory, resulting in stockouts and over stocking.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- ▲ To study about the demographic marketing strategy of consumer.
- ▲ To identify the factor influencing the consumers towards the purchase in smart Bazaar vs dmart .
- ▲ To know the availability of product at smart Bazaar vs dMart.
- ▲ To improve the service provided by the company for motivating the customer .

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Sampling design	Simple random sampling
Period of the study	November 2024 to March 2025
Data based	Primary data and secondary data

Test for analysis	1. Percentage analysis 2. Descriptive analysis 3. One sample t-test 4. Independent sample t-test 5. One way ANOVA 6. Garrett ranking 7.chi-square 8. likert scale
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LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

- ❖ The sample size was restricted to 100 respondents.
- ❖ The exclusive of factors like customer services and online shopping convenience.
- ❖ The study was restricted only to the customers comparing to smart bazaar vs dmart.
- ❖ Lack of access to proprietary data from smart bazaar and dmart.
- ❖ Seasonal and promotional changes may be overlooked.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

Table No1

Knowledge about Smart bazaar vs Dmart

Knowledge about Smart bazaar vs Dmart Respondents	No of Respondents	% of Respondents
Media	25	25
Friends	52	52
Relatives	19	19
Other	4	4
Total	100	100

SOURCE: PRIMARY

DATA INDERENCE:

From the above table it is inferred that 25% know from media, 52% know from friends, 19% know from relatives and 4% know from others.

Thus, a majority knowledge of the respondents i.e., (52%) of them know from friends.

Table No 2

Special features of Smart bazaar vs Dmart

Special features of Smart bazaar vs Dmart of the Respondents	No Of Respondents	%Of Respondents
All products	38	38
Quality	28	28
Reasonable price	27	27
Convenience	7	7
Total	100	100

SOURCE: PRIMARY

DATA INFERENCE:

From the above table it is inferred that 38% features of all products,28% features of quality,27% features of reasonable price and 7% features of convenience.

Thus the Smart Bazaar's key strength is its wide product variety of (38%) of respondents.

Table No 3 Time of Purchase at

Smart bazaar or Dmart

Time of Purchase time at Smart bazaar or Dmart of respondents	No Of Respondents	% Of Respondents
Morning	25	25
Afternoon	25	25

Evening	41	41
Anytime	9	9
Total	100	100

SOURCE: PRIMARY

DATA INFERENCE:

From the above table it is inferred that 25% prefer to shop at morning, 25% prefer to shop at afternoon, 41% prefer to Shop at evening, 9% prefer to shop at anytime.

The majority of respondents (41%) prefer to shop at Smart Bazaar or Dmart in the evening.

Table No 4 GARRETT RANKING SPACE

AVAILABILITY

Factor	No Of Respondents	Rank
Spacious	40	I
Not so spacious	32	II
Neutral	28	III

Rank	Present position	Percentage position
I	$100(3-1+0.5)/3=100*2.5/3$	83.33
II	$100(3-2+0.5)/3=100*1.5/3$	50.00
III	$100(3-3+0.5)/3=100*0.5/3$	16.67

Factor	Garrett score	Average Garrett score	Rank
Spacious	3333.2	$3333.2/40=83.33$	I
Not so spacious	1600.00	$1600.00/32=50.00$	II
Neutral	466.76	$466.76/28=16.67$	III

Source: Primary data

INTREPRETATION:

Based on the Garrett ranking analysis, it is observed that "**Spacious**" received the highest Garrett score of 3333.2, with an average score of **83.33**, **ranking it first**. This indicates that the majority of respondents perceive the space as spacious and comfortable.

The category "**Not so spacious**" secured the second rank, with a Garrett score of 1600 and an average score of 50.00, suggesting that a significant

portion of respondents feel that space availability is moderate.

The "**Neutral**" category received the lowest Garrett score of 466.76, with an average score of 16.67, ranking it third. This implies that only a small percentage of respondents are indifferent to space availability.

Table No 5

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

	Mean	Standard deviation
Smart bazaar a seamless shopping experience	4.6000	.61955
Dmart provides seamless shopping experience	4.3800	.66332
Smart bazaar offers high quality products	4.2500	.79614
Dmart offers high quality products	4.1900	.88415
Smart bazaar price are competitive	4.2200	1.03064
Dmart price are competitive	4.1700	.84154

Interpretation:

The descriptive analysis suggests that Smart Bazaar is perceived slightly better than Dmart across seamless shopping experience, product quality, and price competitiveness. Smart Bazaar has higher mean scores in all three categories, indicating a generally more favorable customer perception. However, Dmart shows greater variability in responses, particularly in product quality and pricing, suggesting mixed opinions among customers. While the differences are not drastic, Smart Bazaar appears to have a slight advantage in overall customer satisfaction.

Table No 6 CHI-SQUARE OBSERVED VALUE:

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Rarely	Total
3000 & below	9	10	12	13	44
3000-5000	7	13	10	1	31
5000-8000	5	5	8	2	20
Above 8000	1	2	1	1	5
Total	22	30	31	17	100

EXPECTED VALUE:

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Rarely	Total
3000& below	9.7	13.2	13.6	7.5	44.0

3000-5000	6.8	9.3	9.6	5.3	31.0
5000-8000	4.4	6.0	6.2	3.4	20.0
Above 8000	1.1	1.5	1.6	.9	5.0
Total	22.0	30.0	31.0	17.0	100.0

	Value	df	significance
Pearson chi-square	11.792 ^a	9	.225

INTERPRETATION:

The chi-square test result ($\chi^2 = 11.792$, $df = 9$, $p = 0.225$) indicates that there is no statistically significant association between income level and frequency of the observed variable. Since the p-value is greater than 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis, suggesting that income level does not have a significant impact on the frequency distribution of responses. So the **null hypothesis** is accepted.

Table No7

ONE SAMPLE T-TEST

Null Hypothesis (Ho):There is no significant difference between comparison of smart bazaar vs dmart in thoothukudi.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1):There is a significant difference between comparison of smart bazaar vs dmart in thoothukudi.

Particulars	Mean	Standard deviation	T- value	P- value
Smart bazaar a seamless shopping experience	4.6000	.61955	25.825	.000
Dmart provides seamless shopping experience	4.3800	.66332	20.804	.000
Smart bazaar offers high quality products	4.2500	.79614	15.701	.000
Dmart offers high quality products	4.1900	.88415	13.459	.000
Smart bazaar price are competitive	4.2200	1.03064	11.837	.000
Dmart price are competitive	4.1700	.84154	13.903	.000

INTREPRETATION:

Null Hypothesis (Ho):

There is no significant difference between Smart Bazaar and Dmart in Thoothukudi.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1):

There is a significant difference between Smart Bazaar and Dmart in Thoothukudi.

Since all the p-values are .000 (which is less than the standard significance level of 0.05), we **reject the null hypothesis (Ho)**. This means there is a significant difference in all the aspects compared between Smart Bazaar and Dmart.

‘**“Seamless Shopping Experience”** Smart Bazaar (**Mean = 4.6000**) has a slightly higher rating than Dmart(**Mean = 4.3800**).The significant **t-value (25.825 and 20.804)** indicates that customers perceive a notable difference between the two.So, Customers find Smart Bazaar offers a slightly better seamless shopping experience than Dmart.

“High-Quality Products” Smart Bazaar (**Mean = 4.2500**) and Dmart(**Mean = 4.1900**) have similar ratings. The t-values (**15.701 and 13.459**) indicate a significant difference. Thus Smart Bazaar is perceived to offer slightly better high-quality products than Dmart.

“Competitive Pricing” Smart Bazaar (**Mean = 4.2200**) and Dmart(**Mean = 4.1700**) are rated closely t-values (**11.837 and 13.903**) show a significant statistical difference. Thus, Both stores are seen as competitively priced, with Smart Bazaar rated marginally higher.

Table No 8
INDEPENDENT SAMPLE T- TEST

PARTICULARS	GENDER				T-VALUE	P-VALUE
	MALE		FEMALE			
	MEAN	S.D.	MEAN	S.D.		
Smart bazaar a seamless shopping experience	4.5854	.66991	4.6102	.58772	-.196 -.191	.414
Dmart provides seamless shopping experience	4.4634	.67445	4.3220	.65497	1.049 1.043	.445
Smart bazaar offers high quality products	4.4146	.77381	4.1356	.79779	1.741 1.751	.886
Dmart offers high quality products	4.3171	.87861	4.1017	.88464	1.201 1.202	.409
Smart bazaar price are competitive	4.3902	.97155	4.1017	1.06180	1.383 1.406	.703
Dmart price are competitive	4.3171	.78864	4.0678	.86830	1.465 1.491	.748

Smart bazaar store layout is well organised	4.3171	.72246	4.1695	.83362	.919 .943	.187
Dmart store layout is well organised	4.2683	.67173	3.9492	.77512	2.136 2.192	.609

INTREPRETATION

Table shows the Mean & S.D. (Standard Deviation): These values indicate the

average score and variation for males and females across different parameters.

T-Value: Measures the difference between male and female responses. A higher absolute t- value suggests a more significant difference.

P-Value: Determines if the difference is statistically significant (commonly, $p < 0.05$ is considered significant).

Table No 9 ONE WAY ANOVA

STATEMENT	AGE					T-Value	P-Value
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55 and above		
Smart bazaar a seamless shopping experience	4.5102 .61652	4.6389 .63932	4.7143 .75593	5.0000 .00000	4.6667 .57735	.878	.480
Dmart a seamless shopping experience	4.2653 .67006	4.5000 .65465	4.2857 .75593	4.6000 .54772	4.6667 .57735	.973	.426
Smart bazaar offers high quality products	4.1020 .66332	4.4167 .73193	4.4129 .89974	4.4000 .89443	4.6667 .57735	1.104	.359
Dmart offers high quality products	4.1224 .90445	4.2222 .86557	4.1429 .69007	4.2000 1.30384	5.0000 .00000	.710	.587
Smart bazaar price are competitive	4.1020 1.08484	4.3333 .95618	4.0000 1.29099	4.4000 .89443	5.0000 .00000	.810	.522
Dmart price are competitive	4.1224 .85714	4.1667 .84515	4.0000 1.00000	4.4000 .54772	5.0000 .00000	.931	.449
Smart bazaar store layout is well organised	4.1633 .82530	4.1389 .76168	4.4286 .78680	4.8000 .44721	5.0000 .00000	1.733	.149
Dmart store layout is well organised	4.0612 .77482	4.0278 .73625	4.0000 .57735	4.4000 .89443	4.6667 .57735	.755	.557

INTREPRETATION:

The table presents mean values (with standard deviations) for different statements about Smart Bazaar and Dmart.

The age groups (18-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, and 55+) show their respective ratings for each statement.

The "T-Value" and "P-Value" indicate statistical significance.

Table No 10

**Statement showing the comparison of customer preference towards dmart
in Thoothukudi**

Particulars	Average	Rank
Dmart provides seamless shopping experience	4.38	I
Dmart offers high quality products	4.19	II
Dmart price are competitive	4.17	IV
Dmart store layout is well organised	4.08	VIII
Dmart customer service is helpful	4.15	VI

State ment	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Dmart provides seamless shopping experience	47	45	7	1	0	438
Dmart offers high quality products	43	40	10	7	0	419
Dmart price are competitive	40	42	13	5	0	417
Dmart store layout is well organised	29	53	15	3	0	408
Dmart customer service is helpful	35	49	13	2	1	415

INTREPRETATION

The tables in the images show a comparison of INTRPRETATION

Customer preferences towards Dmart in Thoothukudi based on different factors such as seamless shopping experience, high-quality products, competitive pricing, store layout, and customer service.

Customer Preference Analysis

Seamless Shopping Experience (Rank I, Average: 4.38) This factor received the highest ranking, indicating that customers strongly appreciate the smooth and hassle-free shopping experience provided by Dmart.

47 respondents "Strongly Agree," and 45 "Agree," showing a positive perception.

High-Quality Products (Rank II, Average: 4.19):

Customers have a high preference for D mart's product quality, making it the second most valued factor. 43 respondents "Strongly Agree," and 40 "Agree."

Competitive Pricing (Rank IV, Average: 4.17):

Price competitiveness is also a significant factor, but it ranks lower than seamless shopping and product quality. 40 respondents "Strongly Agree," 42 "Agree."

Customer Service (Rank VI, Average: 4.15)

Customer service is positively rated but is not among the top factors influencing preference. 35 respondents "Strongly Agree," 49 "Agree."

Store Layout (Rank VIII, Average: 4.08)

While the store layout is still considered good, it ranks the lowest among the five factors. 29 respondents "Strongly Agree," 53 "Agree," but it also has a few "Disagree" responses.

The most critical factor for customers is the seamless shopping experience, followed by high- quality products. Competitive pricing and customer service are also well-rated but rank slightly lower. The store layout, while still positively received, is the least prioritized factor in customer preference. This data suggests that Dmart should continue enhancing its seamless shopping experience and product quality while also working on improving store layout and customer service to better meet customer expectations.

FINDINGS

PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS

Thus, a majority knowledge of the respondents i.e., (52%) of them know from friends.

Thus ,a majority Smart Bazaar's key strength is its wide product variety of (38%) of respondents. The majority of respondents (41%) prefer to shop at Smart Bazaar or Dmart in the evening.

GARRETT RANKING

The majority of respondents perceive the space as spacious and comfortable.

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

Smart bazaar a seamless shopping experience highest mean value 4.6000 and Smart bazaar price are competitive highest standard deviation value 1.03064.

CHI-SQUARE

The highest individual value in the Observed Values (O) table is 13 (appearing twice). The highest individual value in the Expected Values (E) table is 13.6.

ONE SAMPLE T-TEST

The findings indicate that both Smart Bazaar and Dmart provide a seamless shopping experience, high-quality products, and competitive pricing, with Smart Bazaar slightly outperforming Dmart across all parameters. The mean scores for Smart Bazaar are marginally higher in seamless shopping (4.60 vs. 4.38), product quality (4.25 vs. 4.19), and competitive pricing (4.22 vs. 4.17). The T-values and P-values (0.000) confirm statistical significance, reinforcing the reliability of these results. While both brands perform well, Smart Bazaar holds a slight edge in customer perception across these key aspects.

INDEPENDENT SAMPLE TEST

Shopping Experience (Smart Bazaar & Dmart):

Both Smart Bazaar and Dmart have similar ratings from males and females, as the p-values are above 0.05, indicating no significant gender-based difference.

High-Quality Products (Smart Bazaar & Dmart):

The t-values suggest minor differences, but since p-values are greater than 0.05, there is no statistically significant difference in how males and females perceive product quality in both stores.

Price Competitiveness (Smart Bazaar & Dmart):

The p-values for both stores are also above 0.05, indicating no significant gender-based difference in how competitive the prices are perceived.

Store Layout Organization:

The t-values for store layout show some variation, but the p-values suggest no significant difference between male and female perspectives.

ONE WAY ANOVA

The P-Values determine whether there is a significant difference between age groups.

Typically, a p-value less than 0.05 indicates a significant difference.

Most P-Values are above 0.05, meaning there is no statistically significant difference in responses across different age groups.

The highest means indicate a stronger agreement with the statement in that age group.

SMART BAZAAR

Smart Bazaar's customers prioritize seamless shopping experience (4.60/5), helpful customer service (4.34/5), and high-quality products (4.25/5), while pricing (4.22/5) and store layout (4.23/5) require improvement for enhanced customer satisfaction.

DMART

- Seamless Shopping Experience (4.38/5) and High-Quality Products (4.19/5) are the top priorities for customers.
- Competitive Pricing (4.17/5), Customer Service (4.15/5), and Store Layout (4.08/5) are also important but slightly lower in priority.

SUGGESTION

- ▲ Enhance store ambiance: Smart Bazaar can improve its store layout and ambiance to match D Mart's modern standards.
- ▲ Increase product variety: D Mart can expand its product offerings to cater to a wider range of customer needs.
- ▲ Implement efficient checkout systems: Both stores can invest in faster checkout systems to reduce waiting times
- ▲ Pricing and Promotions.
- ▲ Competitive pricing: Smart Bazaar can review its pricing strategy to match D Mart's competitive prices.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the comparative study of customer preferences towards Smart Bazaar and D Mart in Thoothukudi highlights the unique strengths and weaknesses of each retailer. While Smart Bazaar excels in personalized service and loyalty programs, DMart leads in modern store layout,

competitive

pricing, and product variety. By understanding these preferences, both retailers can refine their strategies to enhance customer satisfaction, loyalty, and ultimately, their market share in Thoothukudi competitive retail landscape.

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