

6.10 Consumer Characteristics and Supermarket Selection Criteria

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ABSTRACT

In Sri Lanka, the intensity of competition among supermarket chain stores has increased. But a vacuum exists on literature and research findings in this particular area of marketing in Sri Lanka. Therefore this study attempts to explore the relationship between consumer characteristics and Supermarket selection criteria in Sri Lanka. Since an abundance of global literature exists on various formats of stores, this study utilizes variables identified in such literature.

Previous research has revealed a connection between demographic characteristics and choice of retail format (Carpenter and Moore, 2006). Arnold (1997) provided empirical evidence that the demographic profile of consumers who shop at the large format stores is different from the profile of the non-shoppers (Baltas and Papastathopoulou, 2003). A field study by Zeithaml (1985) to examine the effects of five demographic variables on supermarket variables revealed that changes in the family unit would drive changes in grocery patronage in the USA (Carpenter and Moore, 2006). Stone (1995) found that demographics of warehouse club members and supermarket shoppers differ significantly (Baltas and Papastathopoulou, 2003). Using consumer characteristics as an independent variable should increase our standing on shopper behavior and provide insight to marketers in this field.

A questionnaire was developed based on the evidences of literature and undergraduates were used as researches to collect data from shoppers that visited supermarkets in Kiribathgoda between 4. 00 p.m. and 6. 00 p.m. during weekdays and weekends. Data were collected from 100 shoppers that visited supermarkets in Kiribathgoda and it reveals that significant demographic characteristics exist among shoppers visiting different supermarket stores.