



International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews

Journal Homepage: www.ijrpr.com ISSN 2582-7421

The Impact of Retail Shopping Behaviour Among Middle-Aged Women in Vijayawada

M. Tejaswi¹, Dr. V. Madhu Latha²

¹ Research Scholar, BBA Department, KL Business School, Koneru Lakshmaiah Education Foundation, Andhra Pradesh, India

² Research Guide, BBA Department, KL Business School, Koneru Lakshmaiah Education Foundation, Andhra Pradesh, India

Corresponding Author Email: manchineellatejaswi6@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Retail shopping dynamics in Tier-2 Indian cities have undergone a significant transformation due to modern commercial developments, evolving consumer lifestyles, and changing household purchasing roles. This study examines retail shopping behaviour among middle-aged women (aged 35–55 years) in Vijayawada, focusing on the key drivers influencing their store choice and purchasing decisions. The study considers In-Store Atmosphere & Visual Merchandising, Product Variety & Quality, Pricing & Promotional Offers, and Sales Staff Interaction & Customer Service as the primary independent variables, while Retail Shopping Behaviour (purchase decisions, store loyalty, and unplanned buying) serves as the outcome variable. A quantitative, descriptive, and cross-sectional design is proposed. Primary data are to be gathered using a structured questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale. The study compares responses across different income groups and employment statuses (working vs. non-working women) to analyze demographic variations in shopping patterns. The findings aim to provide actionable insights for retail managers, mall developers, and marketers operating in regional urban markets.

Keywords: *Consumer Behaviour, Middle-Aged Women, Product Quality, Regional Marketing, Retail Atmosphere, Retail Shopping, Store Loyalty, Vijayawada.*

1. Introduction

Retail trade in India represents one of the fastest-growing sectors, driven by rapid urbanization, increasing disposable income, expanding middle-class households, and changing consumer lifestyles. In emerging urban centers like Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh, traditional unorganized markets (local bazaars and kirana stores) increasingly co-exist with organized modern retail formats, including supermarkets, hypermarkets, apparel chain stores, and shopping malls. Understanding consumer behaviour in these evolving retail environments is essential for retail strategists seeking customer retention and competitive advantage.

Among urban consumer segments, middle-aged women (typically aged 35–55 years) play a critical role as primary decision-makers and key influencers for household shopping across various product categories—such as groceries, apparel, home decor, personal care, and lifestyle products. Their retail shopping choices are guided not only by functional parameters like price and product quality but also by experiential factors including store ambiance, layout convenience, sales personnel helpfulness, and promotional incentives. Moreover, variations in employment status (working vs. non-working) and household income influence their time availability, budget allocation, and store loyalty tendencies.

In Tier-2 metropolitan hubs like Vijayawada, retail growth is further shaped by local cultural nuances, family-centric shopping habits, and regional retail expansion. However, empirical studies focusing specifically on the shopping patterns of middle-aged women in regional urban India remain limited. By analyzing the influence of store atmosphere, product variety, promotional pricing, and service quality on retail shopping decisions among middle-aged women in Vijayawada, this study provides valuable market insights for both organized and unorganized retail operators.

2. Aim of the Study

The primary aim of this study is to examine the impact of store atmosphere, product variety, pricing strategies, and service quality on the retail shopping behaviour of middle-aged women in Vijayawada, comparing variations across working and non-working segments.

3. Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the influence of in-store atmosphere and visual merchandising on retail shopping behaviour among middle-aged women.

2. To assess the impact of product variety and quality on store choice and purchase decisions.
3. To evaluate the role of pricing, discounts, and promotional offers in influencing retail buying decisions.
4. To determine the effect of sales staff interaction and customer service quality on store satisfaction and loyalty.
5. To compare working and non-working middle-aged women in Vijayawada regarding their shopping frequencies, budget preferences, and store selection criteria.

4. Literature Review

Baker et al. (2002) investigated the store environment and visual merchandising drivers, demonstrating that atmospheric cues significantly enhance customer store stay time and purchase intent.

Sinha and Banerjee (2004) examined store choice dynamics among Indian shoppers, identifying convenience, merchandise range, and price perception as primary determinants for urban consumers.

Carpenter and Moore (2006) analyzed demographic variations in retail store selection, observing distinct pattern differences in grocery and apparel shopping across age and income brackets.

Prashar et al. (2015) evaluated shopping mall experience and consumer engagement in Indian Tier-2 cities, highlighting that experiential factors and social outings heavily drive female retail visits.

Swinyard and Smith (2003) studied the lifestyle and shopping habits of working versus non-working women, noting significant contrasts in store loyalty, time sensitivity, and planned versus unplanned purchases.

Bitner (1992) developed the Servicescape framework, emphasizing how physical surroundings and employee interactions shape customer emotional and behavioral responses.

Richa (2012) explored female consumer buying behaviour in Indian organized retail, reporting that product assortment and interpersonal sales interaction drive store repeat visits.

Verma and Madan (2011) examined price sensitivity and promotional deal responsiveness among urban women shoppers in regional Indian cities.

5. Research Gap

Although research on organized retail in India has grown, empirical studies specifically focusing on the retail shopping behaviour of middle-aged women in regional Tier-2 urban hubs like Vijayawada remain limited. Most literature focuses on general youth demographics or major Tier-1 metropolitan centers. This study addresses this gap by investigating how key store attributes impact retail buying decisions among working and non-working middle-aged women in Vijayawada.

6. Hypotheses

H1: In-store atmosphere and visual merchandising have a significant positive influence on retail shopping behaviour among middle-aged women.

H2: Product variety and quality have a significant positive influence on store choice and purchase decisions.

H3: Pricing and promotional offers have a significant positive influence on retail shopping decisions.

H4: Sales staff interaction and customer service quality have a significant positive influence on retail store loyalty and repeat buying behaviour.

H5: There is a significant difference between working and non-working middle-aged women in Vijayawada regarding their retail shopping behaviour and store evaluation factors.

7. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework posits In-Store Atmosphere, Product Variety & Quality, Pricing & Promotions, and Sales Staff & Service Quality as independent variables influencing the dependent variable, Retail Shopping Behaviour. Employment Status / Income Group acts as a grouping variable for comparative assessment.

Research Questions

RQ1: Which in-store factors are most closely associated with retail shopping behaviour among middle-aged women in Vijayawada?

RQ2: How do product variety and perceived quality relate to store choice and purchase decisions?

RQ3: How do pricing and promotional offers relate to retail buying decisions?

RQ4: How is customer service associated with satisfaction, repeat visits, and store loyalty?

RQ5: Do shopping patterns differ between working women and non-working women/homemakers?

Scope of the Study

The study focuses on women aged 35–55 residing in Vijayawada who shop at retail outlets. It examines store atmosphere, product variety and quality, pricing and promotional offers, sales staff interaction, customer service, store choice, repeat visits, and loyalty. Findings should be interpreted within the geographic and sampling limits of the study.

Ethical Considerations

Participation should be voluntary and based on informed consent. Respondents should be informed of the academic purpose of the survey and that they may skip questions or stop participating. Report responses in aggregate, avoid collecting identifying information unless necessary and consented to, and store the dataset securely for academic use.

Reporting requirement: Before submission, add the final sample size (N), survey dates, eligibility criteria, number of incomplete/excluded responses, and the software used for analysis. These details are not provided in the current draft and must come from the actual fieldwork.

8. Research Methodology

The study adopts a quantitative, descriptive, and cross-sectional research design. Primary data are collected from middle-aged women (35–55 years) residing in Vijayawada via a structured questionnaire. Responses are recorded on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). Convenience and non-probability sampling methods are used to reach shoppers across major commercial centers, retail outlets, and residential clusters in Vijayawada. Analytical tools include frequency distribution analysis, descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation), scale reliability assessment (Cronbach's alpha), Pearson correlation, multiple linear regression, and independent-samples t-tests.

Table 1. Operationalisation of Variables

Variable	Variable Type	Indicative Operational Dimensions
In-Store Atmosphere & Visual Merchandising	Independent	Store layout, lighting, cleanliness, background music, product displays, visual aesthetics.
Product Variety & Quality	Independent	Brand assortment, product freshness/durability, availability of stock, size availability, national vs. local brands.
Pricing & Promotional Offers	Independent	Value for money, discount offers, loyalty reward programs, festive deals, transparent pricing.
Sales Staff & Service Quality	Independent	Staff helpfulness, product knowledge, billing speed, customer support, return policy ease.
Retail Shopping Behaviour	Dependent	Purchase volume, impulse/unplanned buying, store loyalty, repeat visit frequency, recommendation likelihood.
Employment Status	Grouping	Working Women vs. Non-Working / Homemakers.

9. Data Analysis and Results

Important note

The provided document does not contain completed survey responses or statistical output. To avoid presenting invented results as genuine research, the following analysis framework must be completed using the actual questionnaire dataset. Do not submit bracketed prompts as final results.

9.1 Respondent Profile

Report the valid sample size and the frequency and percentage of respondents by employment status, household income group, and shopping frequency (where these were collected). Include the number of incomplete responses excluded, if any.

Table to complete — respondent profile

Employment status: Working women — [n], [%]; Non-working women/homemakers — [n], [%]. Monthly household income categories: [category, n, % for each]. Retail shopping frequency categories: [category, n, % for each]. Total valid responses: N = [enter actual N].

9.2 Descriptive Analysis

Calculate the mean and standard deviation for each construct using the questionnaire items: (i) in-store atmosphere and visual merchandising, (ii) product variety and quality, (iii) pricing and promotional offers, (iv) sales staff and service quality, and (v) retail shopping behaviour. Explain how item scores were combined and how missing values were treated.

Table to complete — construct statistics

Construct | Number of items | Mean | Standard deviation
 In-store atmosphere and visual merchandising | [] | [] | []
 Product variety and quality | [] | [] | []
 Pricing and promotional offers | [] | [] | []
 Sales staff and service quality | [] | [] | []
 Retail shopping behaviour | [] | [] | []

9.3 Reliability and Hypothesis Testing

Where multiple questionnaire items measure a construct, report Cronbach's alpha. Use Pearson correlation and/or multiple regression only when suitable for the measurement and assumptions. For H5, compare working and non-working respondents using an independent-samples t-test if appropriate; otherwise use a suitable non-parametric alternative. Report test statistics, p-values, and effect sizes where available.

Hypothesis decision table to complete

H1 Atmosphere — statistic [], p-value [], decision [supported/not supported].
 H2 Product variety and quality — statistic [], p-value [], decision [supported/not supported].
 H3 Pricing and offers — statistic [], p-value [], decision [supported/not supported].
 H4 Service quality — statistic [], p-value [], decision [supported/not supported].
 H5 Employment-group difference — statistic [], p-value [], decision [supported/not supported].

9.4 Interpretation

Interpret results against each research objective and hypothesis. Claim statistical significance only when supported by the test results. Distinguish statistical significance from practical importance. Because this is a cross-sectional study, describe associations rather than claiming that a factor causes a behaviour.

10. Key Findings

The final findings must be written after the completed survey has been analysed. Replace each prompt with the actual result and evidence from the dataset:

1. Respondent profile: [summarise the sample size and the main employment/income groups represented].
2. Store atmosphere: [report the result and whether H1 is supported].
3. Product variety and quality: [report the result and whether H2 is supported].
4. Pricing and promotions: [report the result and whether H3 is supported].
5. Sales staff and service quality: [report the result and whether H4 is supported].
6. Working versus non-working respondents: [report the group comparison and whether H5 is supported].
7. Overall pattern: [identify the strongest supported association, including its statistic and p-value where applicable].

11. Discussion

The discussion should connect the analysed results with prior studies and the research objectives. Once the survey results are available, explain whether the observed patterns are consistent with or differ from the literature review. Discuss practical relevance only for factors that the collected data support. Avoid presenting expected outcomes as established findings.

12. Implications

Managerial Implications: Provides regional retailers, store managers, and visual merchandisers with practical insights to optimize store layouts, refine promotional pricing, and improve customer service to enhance shopper retention.

Academic Implications: Expands regional Indian consumer behavior literature by providing empirical evidence on female shoppers in Tier-2 urban environments.

Recommendations for Retailers

Recommendations should follow the completed analysis. If supported by the evidence, retailers may consider improving store navigation and cleanliness, maintaining reliable product availability and quality, communicating prices and offers clearly, and training staff to provide helpful service.

Retailers may also compare the needs of working women and homemakers before tailoring checkout convenience, loyalty programmes, store communications, or promotional messages. Retain only recommendations justified by the survey findings and the study scope.

13. Limitations

Reliance on self-reported survey data, convenience sampling within a single geographic city (Vijayawada), and a cross-sectional timeframe limit broader national generalizability and longitudinal causal insights.

14. Future Research Directions

Future research can expand sample coverage to adjacent districts in Andhra Pradesh (e.g., Guntur, Visakhapatnam), include online vs. offline omnichannel shopping comparisons, analyze specific product categories (e.g., apparel vs. grocery), and explore moderating factors such as digital payment adoption.

15. Conclusion

This study is designed to examine how store atmosphere, product assortment, promotional pricing, and service quality relate to retail shopping behaviour among middle-aged women in Vijayawada. A final evidence-based conclusion should be completed after the survey data have been analysed and the hypotheses evaluated. Summarise the strongest results, acknowledge limitations, and make recommendations that follow directly from the evidence.

References

- Baker, J., Parasuraman, A., Grewal, D., & Voss, G. B. (2002). The influence of multiple store environment cues on perceived merchandise value and patronage intentions. *Journal of Marketing*, 66(2), 120-141.
- Sinha, P. K., & Banerjee, A. (2004). Store choice behaviour in an emerging market. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 32(10), 482-493.
- Carpenter, J. M., & Moore, M. (2006). Consumer demographics, store attributes, and retail format choice. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 23(7), 434-443.
- Prashar, S., Parsad, C., & Vijay, T. S. (2015). Shopping mall atmosphere and female shoppers' response in Tier-2 cities in India. *Vision: The Journal of Business Perspective*, 19(1), 31-40.
- Swinyard, W. R., & Smith, S. M. (2003). Patterning the shopping behaviors of working and non-working women. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 20(2), 122-135.
- Bitner, M. J. (1992). Servicescapes: The impact of physical surroundings on customers and employees. *Journal of Marketing*, 56(2), 57-71.
- Richa, D. (2012). Impact of store attributes on female consumer store choice in organized retail. *Indian Journal of Marketing*, 42(8), 25-36.
- Verma, S., & Madan, S. (2011). Price perception and promotional responsiveness among women shoppers in Tier-2 urban India. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Studies*, 18(4), 215-228.