

## Evaluating the Factors Influencing Consumers' Choice of Shopping Destination: A Study of Bhatbhateni Supermarket, Bharatpur, Nepal

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### Abstract

When deciding on where to shop, multiple factors play a crucial role, which can be broadly categorized into three main groups: tenant mix, access convenience, and ambience. This research paper evaluates factors influencing consumers' choice of shopping destination, focusing on Bhatbhateni Supermarket in Bharatpur, Nepal. A survey of 120 respondents shows that consumers prioritize product quality, price, location, store layout and design, customer service, and promotions when selecting a shopping destination. The choice of shopping destination is notably linked to demographic factors such as age, caste, place of residence, educational attainment, and income source, while factors such as gender and marital status did not emerge as significant indicators. The results of this research paper have practical implications for retailers seeking to attract and retain customers in competitive markets like Nepal. By understanding consumers' preferences and decision-making processes, retailers can develop effective marketing strategies and enhance customer satisfaction. The study also provides insights for future research on this topic, emphasizing the importance of further understanding consumers' shopping behavior in the retail sector.

**Keywords:** shopping destination, customer choice, tenant mix, access convenience, ambience

## **Introduction**

The shopping behavior of consumers is a complex process that involves various factors, including convenience, price, availability, quality, and perception of price-quality tradeoffs (Holtz, 2020). It is crucial for retailers to understand these factors to develop effective marketing strategies that cater to the preferences and needs of consumers (AssignmentBro, 2022). In the context of marketing and management, it is essential to comprehend the shopping behavior of customers and their selection of shopping destinations to increase sales and profitability. Retailers can attract more customers by offering a wide range of stores and services, making their locations easily accessible by public transportation, and creating a pleasant atmosphere and environment. When deciding on where to shop, multiple factors play a crucial role, which can be broadly categorized into three main groups: tenant mix, access convenience, and ambience (Esposito, 2021; Porral, 2018). Tenant mix refers to the range of shops and services available at a shopping destination. According to Kushwaha et al. (2017), a broad selection of stores and services can increase the attractiveness of a shopping destination and influence consumer choice. For example, a shopping mall with numerous stores and services is likely to attract more customers than one with a limited selection. Another factor that can impact consumer choice is access convenience, which refers to the ease of reaching a shopping destination, such as the availability of parking and public transportation. Hor and Ng (2019) found that access convenience can positively affect consumer choice. For instance, a shopping mall that is readily accessible by public transportation is more likely to attract customers than one that is not. Ambience is a further factor that can influence consumer choice, referring to the overall atmosphere and environment of a shopping destination. As Tijerina (2023) discovered, ambience can positively influence consumer choice, for example, a shopping mall with an appealing atmosphere and environment is more likely to attract more customers than one.

This study aims to evaluate the factors that influence consumers' choice of shopping destination, with a particular focus on Bhatbhateni Supermarket in Bharatpur, Nepal. When deciding on where to shop, consumers consider multiple factors, which can be broadly categorized into three main groups: tenant mix, access convenience, and ambience. The purpose of this study is to examine the relative importance of these factors and to identify any demographic characteristics that may be associated with consumers' preferences for particular shopping destinations. By analyzing data collected through a questionnaire survey using a five-point Likert scale, this study seeks to provide insights into the factors that influence consumer behavior in the context of retail shopping in Nepal.

The research by Chamhuri & Batt (2013) explored Malaysian consumers' preferred place to buy fresh meat. Participants in focus groups identified five key variables that influence their choice of purchasing location: freshness, Halal assurance, retailer relationships, competitive price, and a pleasant shopping environment. A survey of 250 respondents validated these findings, revealing that traditional markets remain the preferred place to buy fresh meat despite

the growth of modern retail formats. The study provides insights into local market dynamics and the importance of understanding consumer behavior when developing retail strategies.

The article by Razu and Roy (2019) explored the factors that influence consumer behavior in the retail sector, focusing on the Sylhet region in Bangladesh. The study used a structured questionnaire to collect data from 350 respondents and employed PCA to reduce 23 variables to 6 factors. The identified factors influencing consumer choice of retail stores include problem-solving, physical environment, customer service, customer trust, commitment, and product accessibility.

The Research by Ying and Aun (2019) conducted to understand the factors that influence consumer choice of shopping malls in the Klang Valley area of Malaysia, considering factors like tenant mix, access convenience, and ambience. The study collected 393 responses using a convenience sampling method and distributed the questionnaire online. Out of the total responses, 384 were applicable for analysis. The study found that the three independent variables had a positive significant impact on consumer choice, with ambience being the highest degree of influence. The study suggests that mall operators and retailers need to focus on improving the supported factors to provide a brand-new shopping experience to entice customers to visit the mall.

Based on the review of previous research there seen to be a lack of research on consumer behavior and the factors that influence their choice of shopping centers in Bharatpur. While the studies provide valuable insights into consumer behavior and the factors that influence their purchasing decisions, they focus on different regions and variables. Therefore, there is a need to investigate the specific factors that influence the choice of shopping centers in Bharatpur and how they compare to the factors identified in previous studies.

## **Methodology**

This study employs a quantitative research design to evaluate the factors influencing consumers' choice of shopping destination in Bhatbhateni Supermarket, Bharatpur, Nepal. The study uses a structured questionnaire as the primary data collection tool to gather data from a random sample of 120 respondents. The questionnaire was developed based on a review of the existing literature on consumer behavior in the retail sector and was pre-tested on a small sample of respondents to ensure its reliability and validity.

**Sampling Technique:** The sampling technique used in this study is systematic random sampling. The target population for this study is customers who have shopped at Bhatbhateni Supermarket, Bharatpur, Nepal. To ensure that the sample represents the population, the researcher visited the supermarket at different times of the day, including morning, day, and evening, during a four days sampling period. The researcher then selected every third customer who entered the supermarket during the data collection period to participate in the study. The systematic random sampling technique was chosen because it provides a more representative

sample of the population than convenience sampling, which may introduce bias into the sample selection. Additionally, the use of systematic random sampling ensures that the sample is selected in a consistent and unbiased manner, which increases the generalizability of the results. To increase the diversity of the sample, the researcher ensured that customers of different demographic groups, including age, gender, income, and education level, were included in the sample.

**Data Collection:** Data was collected using a field survey conducted at Bhatbhateni Supermarket in Bharatpur, Nepal. The survey was developed based on a review of the existing literature on consumer behavior in the retail sector and was pre-tested on a small sample of respondents to ensure its reliability and validity. To record the respondents' responses, KoboToolbox, a data collection app, was used on a mobile device. The use of field survey and KoboToolbox provided a practical and efficient way to collect data from a large sample of respondents in a short period of time. The use of KoboToolbox also enabled the researcher to analyze the data more efficiently, reducing the time and resources required for data entry and cleaning.

**Data Analysis:** In this research, cross-tabulation and chi-square test of association are used to examine whether there is an association between customers' choice of destination and their demographic characteristics. Cross-tabulation is a statistical technique that allows us to analyze the relationship between two categorical variables by creating a frequency table that displays the number of cases that fall into each combination of categories. The chi-square test of association is then used to determine whether there is a significant relationship between the two variables.

To conduct the analysis, demographic characteristics such as age, gender, income, and education level are identified as independent variables, while the choice of destination is the dependent variable. The frequency of each combination of the two variables is then tabulated, and the expected frequency for each cell is calculated based on the assumption of independence between the two variables. The chi-square test of association is then used to determine whether the observed frequencies differ significantly from the expected frequencies. If the chi-square statistic is significant, this indicates that there is an association between the two variables, and the strength and direction of the relationship can be explored further.

**Ethical Considerations:** This study adheres to ethical standards and guidelines for conducting research with human subjects. The respondents were provided with a consent form that informed them of the purpose of the study, their right to privacy and confidentiality, and their voluntary participation.

## **Result and discussion**

The data collected using Kobo Toolbox is extracted into an Excel format for further analysis. After performing data cleansing to ensure accuracy and consistency, the data is imported into SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) for analysis.

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the customers in the study, with information about their age, gender, caste, residence, marital status, educational level, and source of income. The table is organized in columns that display the different demographic categories, with each row representing a particular category or subcategory of customers. The table includes the number of customers in each category and the percentage of customers in each category.

**Table 1**

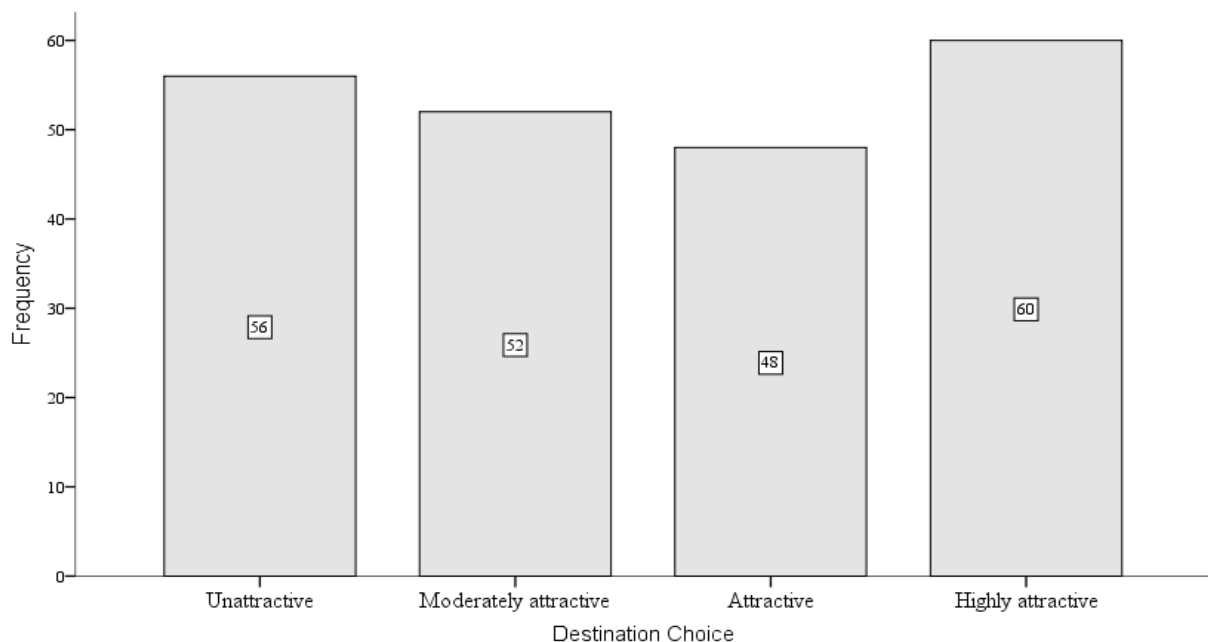
Demographic Profile of Respondents

Demographics	Categories	Number of Customers	Percentage
Age	Below 20 years	36	16.7%
	20 to 30 years	68	31.5%
	30 to 40 years	44	20.4%
	40 to 50 years	32	14.8%
	Above 50 years	36	16.7%
Gender	Male	104	48.1%
	Female	112	51.9%
Caste	Bhramin	72	33.3%
	Dalit	32	14.8%
	Janajati	28	13.0%
	Kshetri	52	24.1%
	Madhesi	8	3.7%
	Muslim	8	3.7%
Residence	Other	16	7.4%
	Rural	48	22.2%
	Semi Urban	48	22.2%
Marrital Status	Urban	120	55.6%
	Single	84	38.9%
	Married	116	53.7%
	Divorced	12	5.6%
Educational Level	Widowed	4	1.9%
	Illiterate	0	0.0%
	Literate	56	25.9%
	Secondary	92	42.6%
	Bachelor	52	24.1%
Source of Income	Masters	16	7.4%
	Above Masters	0	0.0%
	Own Business	36	16.7%
	Stay at home parent	44	20.4%
	Private Job	48	22.2%
	Government Job	24	11.1%
	Student	28	13.0%
Other	Other	32	14.8%
	Real State Business	4	1.9%

The data reveals that the largest group of customers falls between the ages of 20 to 30, and the majority of customers are between the ages of 20 to 40. In terms of gender, slightly more than

half of the customers are female. The two largest caste groups are Bhramins and Kshetris, accounting for over half of the customers. Furthermore, more than half of the customers reside in urban areas, and the majority of customers are married. The largest group of customers have completed secondary education, with private job holders and stay-at-home parents comprising the two largest sources of income. The information presented in this table is vital for businesses to gain a better understanding of their customers and tailor their marketing and product development efforts accordingly.

As the study is based on the evaluation of shopping store selection, as discussed earlier it is mainly depends on tenant mix, access convenience and ambience, these factors are created by summated score of their indicators and then shopping destination score is calculated based on the average score of three factors. After that based on the score for destination choice, new variable is constructed whose categories were Unattractive, Moderately attractive, Attractive and Highly attractive. The categories were constructed based on the quartiles of summated average score for destination choice. Frequency distribution for this is shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1:** Distribution of Choice of shopping destination based on score from different factors

Figure 1 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of destination choice categories among the respondents in the study. The categories include Unattractive, Moderately attractive, Attractive, and Highly attractive. The data reveals that the most frequent response was Highly attractive, with 60 respondents (27.8%) selecting this option as their preferred destination choice. This was followed by Unattractive and Moderately attractive, with 56 (25.9%) and 52 (24.1%) respondents respectively. The Attractive category was the least selected option, with only 48 respondents (22.2%) choosing it.

To determine whether there is a significant difference in the number of customers based on their demographic profile and their choice of shopping destination, a cross-tabulation analysis is conducted. Categories with low frequency are excluded from further analysis to meet the assumptions of the Chi-Square test. The resulting cross-tabulation table is presented as Table 2. Subsequently, a Chi-Square test is performed as outlined in Table 3.

Table 2:

Crosstabulation of Demographic variables and Customers destination choice

Demographics		Destination Choice			
		Unattractive	Moderately	Attractive	Highly
<b>Age</b>	Below 20	12	8	12	4
	20 to 30	16	16	16	20
	30 to 40	8	4	8	24
	40 to 50	12	8	8	4
	Above 50	8	16	4	8
<b>Gender</b>	Male	24	24	24	32
	Female	32	28	24	28
<b>Caste</b>	Bhramin	16	28	20	8
	Dalit	4	8	8	12
	Janajati	8	4	8	8
	Kshetri	8	12	8	24
<b>Residence</b>	Rural	16	16	0	16
	Semi Urban	8	8	24	8
	Urban	32	28	24	36
<b>Marrital Status</b>	Single	24	20	24	16
	Married	28	32	24	32
<b>Educational Status</b>	Literate	20	20	4	12
	Secondary	20	16	28	28
	Bachelor	8	16	12	16
	Masters	8	0	4	4
<b>Source of Income</b>	Own	16	4	8	8
	Stay at	12	8	12	12
	Private Job	12	8	8	20
	Government	0	8	4	12
	Student	4	12	12	0
	Other	12	12	4	4

Table 3:

Chi-Square test of Independence between Demographic variables and Shopping destination

Demographics	Destination Choice	
<b>Age</b>	Chi-square	36.744
	df	12
	Sig.	0.000*
<b>Gender</b>	Chi-square	1.423
	df	3
	Sig.	0.700*
<b>Caste</b>	Chi-square	24.780
	df	9
	Sig.	0.003*
<b>Residence</b>	Chi-square	35.939
	Sig.	.000*
<b>Marital Status</b>	Chi-square	3.370
	df	3
	Sig.	0.337
<b>Educational Level</b>	Chi-square	28.029
	df	9
	Sig.	0.0009*
<b>Source of Income</b>	Chi-square	52.570
	df	15
	Sig.	0.000004*

Table 3 The table presented displays the results of a Chi-Square test of association conducted to investigate whether there is a significant relationship between customers' demographic characteristics and their choice of shopping destination. The table is divided into sections for each demographic variable, including Age, Gender, Caste, Residence, Marital Status, Educational Level, and Source of Income. For each section, the table displays the Chi-Square value, degrees of freedom (df), and the corresponding level of statistical significance (Sig.). The Chi-Square value indicates the strength of the association between the demographic variable and destination choice. A higher Chi-Square value indicates a stronger association. The degrees of freedom (df) reflects the number of categories being compared for each demographic variable.

The significance level (Sig) shows the probability of observing the relationship between the demographic variable and destination choice by chance alone. If the significance level is less than 0.05, then the relationship between the two variables is considered statistically significant, indicating that the demographic characteristic is related to the shopping destination choice. Based on the results presented in the table, it can be seen that there is a statistically significant relationship between Age, Caste, Residence, Educational Level, and Source of Income and



shopping destination choice, while Gender and Marital Status are not significantly associated. These findings can be used to inform marketing strategies and target specific demographic groups when promoting shopping destinations. The cause for the significant association between age and shopping destination choice may be different age groups have varying preferences for shopping experiences. For example, younger shoppers may prefer to visit shopping centers with more trendy or fashionable brands, while older shoppers may prefer more traditional or established brands. Similarly, the significant association between caste and shopping destination choice may reflect cultural differences in shopping preferences. For example, individuals from lower castes may prefer to shop in smaller, local markets, while those from higher castes may prefer larger, more upscale shopping centers. The significant association between educational level and shopping destination choice may reflect differences in income or spending habits. Individuals with higher levels of education may have higher incomes and be more likely to visit upscale shopping centers or malls, while those with lower levels of education may prefer to shop in smaller markets or discount stores.

Punja (2011) had suggested that demographic variables income, education level and age of customer is significant association where as gender and education have insignificant association with with shoping behavior of customers. Also, Richa (2012) concluded that there is significant association of income, education and age of respondents with their shopping behavior. Similarly, Lubic (2018) found that gender and income of respondents are significantly associated with shopping destination choice however, not associated with education and age. Also, (Iqbal et al., 2023) concluded that there was significant association with age and store selection of customer and no association with gender and education with customers choice of store. Thus the findings of this study is somewhat similar and somewhat different with other researchers because of different situation of specific location.

## **Conclusion**

This study aimed to evaluate the factors that influence consumers' choice of shopping destination, focusing on the case of Bhatbhateni Supermarket in Bharatpur, Nepal. The results of the Chi-Square test of association indicated that certain demographic characteristics are significantly associated with shopping destination choice, including age, caste, residence, educational level, and source of income. Gender and marital status, on the other hand, were not found to be significant predictors. These findings suggest that understanding the preferences and habits of different demographic groups is critical for marketers and destination managers seeking to attract and retain customers. By tailoring their marketing strategies to specific demographic groups, they can enhance the shopping experience and increase customer satisfaction. Further research can build on these findings by exploring additional factors that may influence shopping destination choice, such as travel behavior, lifestyle, and psychographic variables. Overall, this study contributes to the understanding of consumer behavior in the context of shopping destination choice and provides insights that can inform marketing and management practices in the retail industry.

### **Authors' Contributions**

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Author JM designed the study, managed the literature searches, wrote the protocol and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. Author SCK collected the required data and performed the statistical analysis of the study. Both the authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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