Scholars Bulletin
(A Multidisciplinary Journal)
An Official Publication of "Scholars Middle East Publishers",
Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Website: http://scholarsbulletin.com/

ISSN 2412-9771 (Print)
ISSN 2412-897X (Online)

Understanding Consumer Decision during Shopping Food and Grocery in Hypermarket: Demographic and Trip Characteristic

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Abstract: Retail environment in Malaysia was changed especially in food and grocery segment when hypermarket format was introduced by foreign retailer in 1993. In this paper we tried to understand consumer decision during shopping food and grocery either hypermarket is a main location or not. An empirical study, which was carried out in Shah Alam with 400 grocery shopper as respondent showed no significant relationship between shopping decisions and demographic characteristic except marital status. On the other hand, only two out of five trips characteristic showed significant relationship namely trip frequency and companion during shopping in hypermarket.
Keywords: shopping, food and grocery, hypermarket, demographic, trip.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, Malaysia retail environment has change drastically when new and modern retail format was introduced and competing with traditional retail format [1]. One of the segments affected is food and grocery when new and big hypermarket format was introduced by foreigner retailer in 1990s. Traditionally, Malaysian consumer shopping food and grocery from traditional retail format like 'mom and pop' grocery shop, wet market, morning market and night market.

There are many research conducted about food and grocery shopping in various topic such as format choice [2-4], store attribute [5], store loyalty [6], shopping trip [7,8], consumer satisfaction [9.10], online shopping [11,12] comparison between online and offline [13,14] and others.

Furthermore, the trip to the grocery is one of the most basic elements of consumer behaviour [15]. Consumer prefers large scale retail format like hypermarket and supercenter during shopping food and grocery because of lower price and various goods offered less than one roof. Understanding consumer shopping behaviour within the format will be critical to the success of retailer operating in the industry [3]. The objective of the current study is to understand consumer decision for shopping food and grocery in foreign hypermarket. We attempt to find the relationship between demographic and trip characteristic with respondent decision either hypermarket is a main location for shopping food and grocery or not.

Hypermarket in Malaysia

History and Development Hypermarket in Malaysia

A hypermarket is a store concept implemented for the first time in France in 1963 by Carrefour and its basic principle can be summarized as 'Everything under the same roof' [16]. Hypermarket is a large scale store that food and non-food offered less than one roof. The size is vary from one country to another, for instance in France hypermarket is the store with a selling space over 2,500 m^2 [16], in China over 6,000 m^2 [17], in Croatia over 2,000 m^2 [18] and in United State over 70,000 square foot [19]. Hypermarket offered wide assortment of product, more than 40 000 item under one roof include national manufacture brand as well as store brand and private label brand.

According to Ministry of Domestic Trade, Co-Operatives and Consumerism, hypermarket is a standalone self-service distribution store with sale floor area of 5,000 square meters or more, selling a variety of mainly consumer goods, comprising a mix a food and non-food products, in a range of transaction sizes and qualities and in different forms of packaging [20]. Hypermarket in Malaysia was introduced by HSV Holding from Netherland when first Makro Cash & Carry outlet was set up in Shah Alam in 1993. A year later Carrefour Limited from France was opened first Carrefour hypermarket in Subang Jaya. Unfortunately, Makro Cash & Carry and Carrefour were pulling out from Malaysia market in 2006 and 2012 respectively. Currently three foreign retailers were operated hypermarket in Malaysia which are Dairy Farm

International (Giant) from Hong Kong, Tesco Limited (Tesco) from Britain and AEON Limited (AEON Big) from Japan.

The number of foreign hypermarket outlet were rose by year to year from 22 in 2002 (Lim et.al, 2003), 58 in 2007 [21] to 124 in 2014. To date, Tesco has the higher numbers by outlet (50), followed by Giant (49) and AEON Big (26) respectively. Klang Valley Region involves Selangor, Kuala Lumpur Federal Territory as well as Putrajaya Federal Territori is a main location with 57 outlets. It's followed by Johor with 18 outlets, Perak (11) Penang (9), Kedah (8), Negeri Sembilan and Sabah (5), Melaka and Sarawak (4) and one each in Kelantan, Pahang and Terengganu. And there are no foreign hypermarket located in Perlis and Labuan Federal Territory.

Table-1: Hypermarket Location by State

State	Giant	Tesco	AEON Big	Total
Johor	8	6	4	18
Kedah	2	6	-	8
Kelantan	-	1	-	1
Melaka	2	2	-	4
Negeri Sembilan	1	3	1	5
Pahang	-	-	1	1
Perak	4	7	-	11
Perlis	-	-		-
Penang	2	5	2	9
Sabah	5	-	-	5
Sarawak	4	-	-	4
Selangor	20	15	12	47
Terengganu	1	-	-	1
Kuala Lumpur F.T	-	5	4	9
Labuan F.T	-	-	-	-
Putrajaya F.T	-	-	1	1
Total	**49**	**50**	**26**	**121**

Future prospect and development of hypermarket in Malaysia is bright. Base on one newspaper report, Lulu Group a major retailer from United Arab Emirates (UAE) will open their first *halal*-only hypermarket concept in Malaysia by end of 2015 [22]. Other newspaper report suggested that Tesco is on the card to invest in Sabah and Sarawak [40]. Furthermore, there are many location that hypermarket not fully operates especially in Eastern of Peninsular, Sabah and Sarawak as well other second tier town across the country. Currently, Giant is the only foreign hypermarket has an outlet in Sabah and Sarawak.

On the other hand, local retailers were not exception to operate hypermarket. Major local retailer like The Store Berhad and Mydin Holding Berhad has their own hypermarket brands which are Pacific Hypermarket and Departmental Store and Mydin Wholesale Hypermarket. Currently there are eight outlets of Pacific Hypermarket and Departmental Store and 16 Mydin Wholesale Hypermarket across the country. Other local retailer operate hypermarket are Econsave Sdn. Bhd. (Econsave Hypermarket) and Pantai Timur Hypermarket.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Consumer Demographic and Shopping Decisions

Demographic characteristic of consumers always influence their consumption behaviour. Previous study has revealed a connection between demographic characteristic and shopping decisions in different retail format [23,3,15]. Carpenter and Moore [3] compared the demographic characteristic in four different retail formats namely speciality grocers, traditional supermarket, supercentres and warehouse clubs. They found significant differences between speciality grocers with income; traditional supermarket with household composition; supercenter with income, household composition and education level; and warehouse club with income and household size. Bawa and Gosh [15] indicated that shopping frequencies has a relationship with number of household working, family size, ages and income. For household have more household working, big family size, headed by individual 55 year and above and higher income earner tend to make frequent trip to grocery store.

In India, Prasad and Aryasari [23] in study of effect of shopper attribute on retail format choice for food and grocery found that age, gender, occupation, education, monthly household income, family size and distance have signification association with retail format choice decision. On the other hand Martinez and Montaner [24] tried to profile store brand consumer in Spain. The results of the study show that socio-demographic are not powerful in identifying store brand consumers. However, psychographic traits are much more related to this behaviour. For examples, these consumers are characterized by being market mavens, store loyal and price conscious but are not quality conscious.

Furthermore, other researchers were focused on one demographic characteristic which are gender [25-28], ages [29], ethnic group [30], marital status [31, 28] and income [32].

Shopping Trips and Shopping Decision

The decisions to shopping are combination of many factors which are geography factor (location, distance), store attribute (facilities, convenience, environment), merchandise (price, variety, quality) and others.

Functions of geography proximity as a major factor during shopping were reported in many researches. According to Brennan and Lundsten [33] consumer choose the shop in the town because of its proximity to where they life, because they live in the town and distance. This geography reason far overshadows other reason such as large merchandise variety and low price. In Netherlands, Veenstra *et al.* [7] and in Beijing, China [4] found, distance is a major factor that influence consumer during shopping food and grocery. Consumer's preferred short distance because they can reduce travel cost, travel time and afford.

For store attribute, cleanliness was reported in many researches as a main factor affected consumer decision [3]. For consumer use personal transport, availability of parking and distance parking lot to supermarket is important factor [34]. According to Marques et.al, [35] store environment including lighting, layout and design, assortment, display and help from employee influence customer satisfaction

For merchandise, price and large variety of products always attracted consumer when shopping in large scale retail format [36]. Large retail format like hypermarket can offer lower and discount price to their customer because they buy in bulk from the producer compare to the small retailer were buy from wholesaler. Furthermore, hypermarket able to offer consumer large variety of product from difference size, type, brands and quality. For example there are more than 30 difference size, types, brands or qualities of rice were sold in hypermarket. These situations tend to influence consumer from difference socio class background to shopping at hypermarket.

Hypermarket and Large Store Shopping Decision

Large store format like hypermarket and supercentre always chose by consumer during shopping food and grocery [37, 8, 36]. Hypermarket and supercentre often appeal to lower income and large household because of their ability to offer lower price. In addition, time-pressed consumers are attracted to the format because of its one-stop shopping convenience. This type of consumer always purchases goods in large amount. Gable and Fiorito [41] were list why consumer chose large scale format which are lower price, convenient location, variety of merchandise categories, wide assortment of merchandise within a category, continuity of supply, personal services and well-known's brand.

However the impacts to the consumer are varies in deferent country and places. In rural Thailand of Ubon Ratchathani, hypermarket have succeed in converting lower-income consumer but not poor, despite their lower price policy, comfortable store layout and engaging entertainment option [37]. In Portugal [38] found that consumer shopping in deferent format during shopping food and grocery. Consumer prefers traditional retail store when shopping perishable goods such as meat, fish and vegetable; and preferred hypermarket during shopping other groceries. Beside that in United State, consumers choose to shopping food and grocery at large store format because lower price and large variety of goods [33, 19].

On the other hand, Reutterer and Teller [8] were identifying store format choice when consumer conducts fill-in or major trip to buy grocery. They found, consumer shopping at small scale retail format such as small supermarket during fill-in shopping trip and large scale retail format such as discounter and hypermarket during major shopping trip. Consumer choose large scale retail format during major shopping trip because of superior expectation about assortment, price and discount or special offers, i.e. merchandise-related store format attribute. For fill-in trip consumer preferred small retail format because of personal services and store atmosphere.

METHODOLOGY

Sampling Method

A Sample of 400 respondents was used for this study across Local Council of Shah Alam City, Selangor. Sampling element was individual that known their household food and grocery purchase during shopping in hypermarket. Sampling method was convenience where respondent were selected in various location across study area. Future respondent was asked to joint this survey and respondent were agreed will be give a questionnaire.

Analysis

SPSS software was used to analysis the data. Chi-square test for independent were applied to see a relationship consumer decision either hypermarket is a main location for shopping food and grocery or not with demographic and trip characteristic.

RESULT

Sample Characteristic

Examination of the respondents (*N = 400*) indicate a majority of female (68 percent) compare to male (32 percent). Ages of respondents range from 17 to 60 years, with 78.5 percent are young population. About 62 percent of the respondents were Malay, 26 percent were Chinese and 12 percent were Indian. Marital status of respondents are married (59.5 percent), single (38.5 percent) and widowed (2 percent). Majority household sizes of respondents are between 3 to 5 members (66 percent) indicate a young family (parent with young child).

Monthly household income of respondent shown majority of respondent earn RM 5 000 and above (38 percent), 25 percent indicating between RM 4 000 to RM 4 999, 18 percent indicating between RM 3 000 to RM 3 999, 14 percent indicating RM 2 000 to RM 2 999, 5 percent indicating between RM 1 000 to RM 1 999 and 1 percent indicating income below RM 1 000. This income pattern has a correlation with type of work and number of household work. For type of work, majority of respondent are clerical (28 percent), followed by management (22.5 percent), service and sale (14 percent), production (13 percent), professional (10 percent), education (5 percent) and other (7.5 percent).

Table-1: Demographic Sample Characteristic

Variabel	Level	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	129	32
	Female	271	68
Age	Below 20	6	1.5
	20 – 29	183	46
	30 – 39	130	32.5
	40 – 49	65	16
	50 and above	16	4
Ethnic group	Malay	247	62
	Chinese	104	26
	Indian	49	12
Marital Status	Single	154	38.5
	Married	238	59.5
	Widowed	8	2
Household size	1	13	3
	2	38	10
	3 – 5	264	66
	6 and above	85	21
Income (monthly)	Below RM 1 000	2	1
	RM 1 000 – 1 999	21	5
	RM 2 000 – 2 999	54	14
	RM 3 000 – 3 999	72	18
	RM 4 000 – 4 999	98	25
	RM 5 000 and above	153	38
Type of work	Management	90	22.5
	Professional	39	10
	Education	21	5
	Service and Sale	57	14
	Production	52	13
	Clerk	111	28
	Others	30	7.5

Shopping Decision

Current research showed 63.75 percent respondent were chose hypermarket as a main shopping format whereas 36.25 percent respondent chose other retail format namely sundry shop, mini market, supermarket, local hypermarket and other. Respondent chose hypermarket as a main location to shopping food and grocery because large scale retail format offered variety of merchandise, special price and discount, as well as one stop centre under one roof. This finding is in line with finding of similar study in the literature [8, 38].

In term of store brand Giant has a most respondent visit for shopping food and grocery account 39 percent of respondent. It followed by Tesco (32 percent) and AEON Big (29 percent). This result because Giant has most outlets in the study area with 4 outlets compared Tesco (3) and AEON Big (2). But Tesco preferred as major shopping location for food and grocery by respondent visit it with 69 percent compared with Giant (61 percent) and AEON Big (60 percent) respectively (See Figure 2).

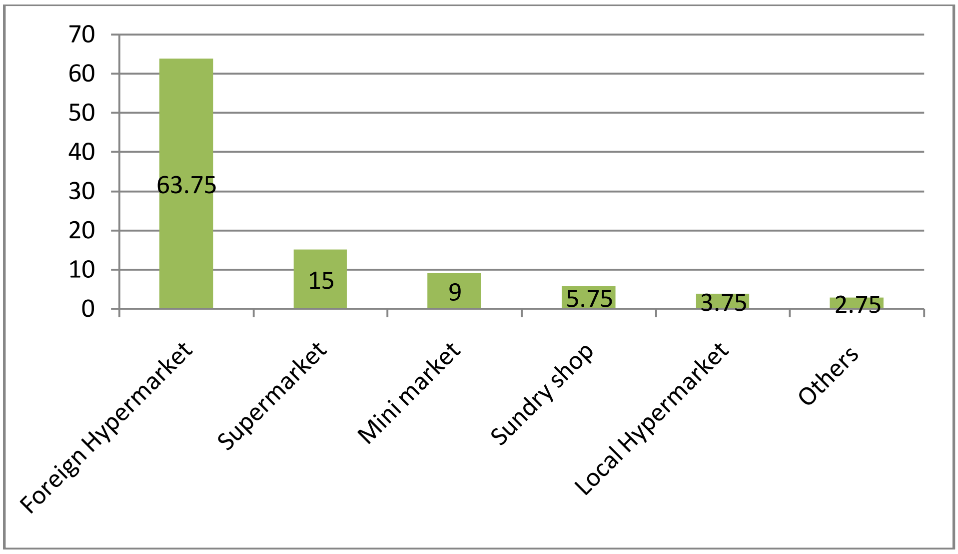

Fig-1: Retail Format Choice during Shopping Food and Grocery

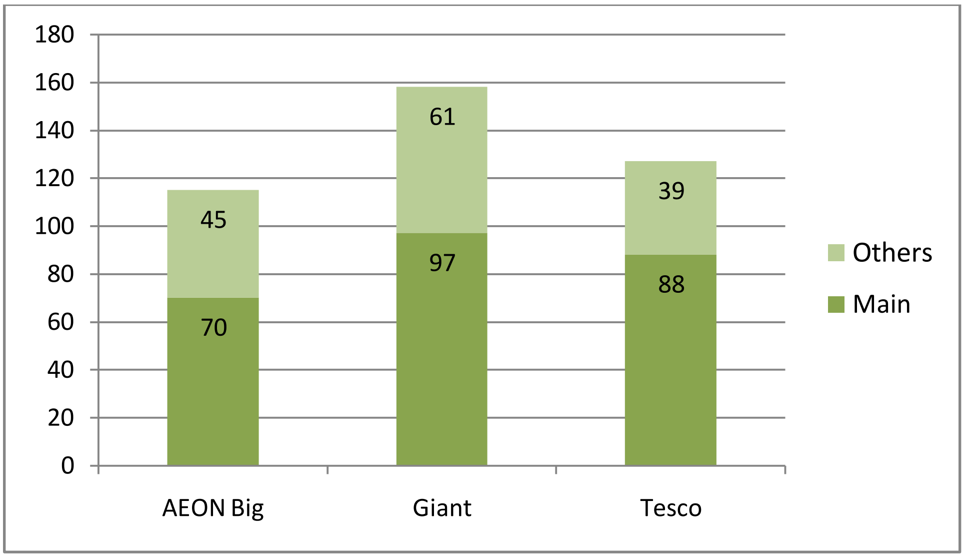

Fig-2: Hypermarket Brand Choice during Shopping Food and Grocery

Shopping Decision and Demographic Characteristic

The relationship between consumer decision and demographic variable including gender, ages, marital status, ethnic group, household size, types of work and household income were examined using Chi Square test for independent. From result shown in Table 2, marital status (X^2 = 4.730, $p < .05$) is the only demographic characteristic has a significant relationship with decision either hypermarket is a main location for shopping food and grocery or not. Other demographic characteristic indicate no significant relationship which are gender (X^2 =3.360, $p > .05$), ages (X^2 =7.160, $p > .05$), ethnic group (X^2 = 2.509, $p > .05$), household size (X^2 =3.318, $p > .05$), monthly income (X^2 = 6.722, $p > .05$) and type of work (X^2 = 11.574, $p > .05$).

Table-2: Relationship between Shopping Decision and Demographic Variables

Variable	Pearson Chi-Square	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Gender	3.360	.067
Ages	7.160	.067
Ethnic group	2.509	.283
Marital status	4.730	.030
Household size	3.318	.345
Monthly income	6.722	.151
Type of work	11.574	.072

Trip Characteristic

From analysis in Table 3 shown travel distance is below 10 kilometres comprise 76 percent of the respondent whereby 41 percents are between 5 to 9.9 kilometres and 35 percent are below 5 kilometres. Travel time of respondent are below 15 minutes (48 percent), 15 to 29 minutes (50 percent) and 30 minutes and above (2 percent). Majority of respondent use own transport during shopping at hypermarket comprise car (84 percent), van/MPV (9 percent) and motorbike (6 percent). Another 1 percent of respondents are use public transport or walking. The lower proportion of respondent used public transport because an availability of connection between hypermarket and resident area are very low. Furthermore, the guideline by government that hypermarket is not allowed to operate within 3.5 kilometres of resident area and town centre affected.

In term of frequencies travel to hypermarket, 26 percent of respondent went to hypermarket once a week, 32 percent two to three times a month and 42 percent once a month. Day trip to hypermarket are on Saturday and Sunday comprise 52.5 percent and 35.5 percent respectively. Time trip are in morning (24 percent), afternoon (41 percent) and night (35 percent). Majority of respondent went to hypermarket with their family members (77 percent), 17 percent alone and 7 percent with their friend as a companion.

Table-3: Trip Characteristic

Varable	Frequencies	Percent
Distance		
Below 5 km	138	35
5 – 9.9 km	165	41
10 – 14.9 km	65	16
15 km and above	32	8
Travel time		
Below 15 minute	190	48
15 – 29 minute	201	50
30 minute and above	9	2
Mode split		
Motorbike	23	6
Car	337	84
Van/MPV	36	9
Others	4	1
Trip frequencies		
Once a week	106	26
2 – 3 time a month	127	32
Once a month	167	42
Day trip		
Saturday	210	52.5
Sunday	142	35.5
Other day	48	12
Trip times		
Morning	97	24
Afternoon	165	41
Night	138	35
Companion		
Alone	63	16
Family members	307	77
Friend	30	7

Shopping Decision and Trip Characteristic

The relationship between shopping decision and trip characteristic used Chi-square test for independent in Table 4 shown the significant relationship with trip frequencies and companion whereas (X^2 = .815, p < .05) and (X^2 = 7.111, p < .05) respectively. Distance (X^2 = 2.085, p > .05), travel time (X^2 = .815, p > .05) and trip time (X^2 = .770, p > .05) have no significant relationship with shopping decision.

Table-4: Relationship between Shopping Decision and Trip Characteristic

Variable	Pearson Chi-Square	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Distance	2.085	.555
Travel times	.815	.665
Trip frequencies	30.607	.000
Trip times	.770	.680
Companion	7.111	.029

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The summary of the research finding clearly shows that foreign hypermarket is a main location or retail format consumer preferred during shopping food and groceries. Out of 63.75 percent of respondent were choosing foreign hypermarkets as a major location for shopping compared to other retail format (local retailer). The result is not surprise because foreign hypermarket as a large scale format has many advantages such as prices; merchandise offered as well as functions as one stop centre compared to other local retailer. On the other hand hypermarket philosophy implies a mass marketing strategy addressed to the general public and linked the purchases of product of general consumption, difference nuances in the approach to marketing policies lead to a differentiated image of the rival companies [39].

From the result above shown that demographic characteristic except marital status is not important to determine respondent decision either hypermarket is a main shopping location/format or not. The test indicated that married respondent has higher proportions to choose hypermarket as a main retail format during shopping groceries and food. No significant relationship for gender, ages, ethic group, household size, monthly income and type of work meant, there are no specific consumers shopping in hypermarket. Consumers from various demographic backgrounds are shopping food and grocery in hypermarket (large scale format). Hypermarket offered

For the trip characteristic, only trip frequencies and companion during shopping show a significant relationship with shopping decision. Consumers were frequent to visit hypermarket and consumer were visit hypermarket with their family members tend to chose hypermarket as a major shopping location/format. Otherwise distance, travel time and trip time show no significant relationship with shopping decision. Unfortunately consumer will go to the closest hypermarket within 10 km and travel time below 30 minutes when shopping food and grocery.

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