



**Supermarket Image on Consumer Purchase Intention in the Gampaha District,
Sri Lanka**

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Abstract

Multiple factors impact consumers' purchase intentions at supermarkets, including product pricing, brand trust, merchandise quality, and consumer perception. However, the supermarket retail sector currently lacks a unified theoretical framework that comprehensively explains how these elements collectively influence consumer buying decisions in this specific retail context. This study explores the impact of supermarket image on customer purchase intention within the Gampaha district of Sri Lanka, focusing on key dimensions such as Shopping Experience, Location, Friendliness, and Promotional Activities. By examining these elements, the study aims to provide insights into how supermarkets can improve their image to drive customer loyalty and increase sales. Data for this study was collected from 289 respondents, using a structured questionnaire distributed among supermarket customers in the Gampaha district. The study evaluated the relationship between the independent variables and Purchase Intention through correlation and regression analysis, focusing on how these factors influence customer decision-making processes. The final results revealed that Promotional Activities had the strongest positive impact on Purchase Intention while Shopping Experience and Friendliness, while Location had a significant influence. These findings suggest that supermarkets can boost customer satisfaction and loyalty by enhancing their promotional efforts, improving store environments, and ensuring excellent customer service.

Keywords: *Shopping Experience, Friendliness, Promotional Activities, Location, Consumer Behavior.*

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Introduction

Purchase intention represents a critical construct in marketing literature and has been widely utilized by companies as a predictive variable for new product sales or repeat purchases of existing products (Watanabe et al., 2019). It signifies the likelihood that consumers will plan or be willing to purchase specific products or services in the future. Rather than being limited to simplistic dimensions, purchase intention is influenced by multiple variables. In this study, supermarket image is considered a key determinant of purchase intention due to its direct impact on consumer perceptions and shopping behavior in supermarket settings.

The retail landscape has evolved significantly in response to increasing consumer demands for comfort, product variety, competitive pricing, and enhanced conveniences. This evolution has transformed traditional outlets into modern supermarkets, which now constitute a substantial segment of the retail sector. Despite fluctuations in purchasing power, consumers consistently seek to fulfill their essential needs through market transactions. The market environment remains indispensable to consumers as it facilitates the exchange of both essential and complementary goods (Irfan et al., 2023).

Supermarket image encompasses the overall perception consumers develop from store layout, product assortment, service quality, employee interactions, and promotional activities (Watanabe et al., 2019). Drawing on the Stimulus

Organism Response framework, supermarket image acts as a stimulus that influences consumers' internal evaluations, such as perceived value, satisfaction, and trust, which in turn drive purchase intention (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). For example, high-quality service and appealing store environments enhance perceived value and trust, ultimately strengthening consumers' intentions to purchase.

Customer loyalty and repeat patronage are closely linked to purchase intention. Empirical evidence shows that a positive store image increases consumer trust and loyalty, which subsequently encourages continued purchasing behavior (Khalaf Alharthey, 2019). In the context of highly competitive retail markets, maintaining a favorable supermarket image is crucial for sustainable business growth. By focusing on key image dimensions such as service quality, product assortment, store layout, and promotional strategies, supermarkets can influence perceived consumer value and shape favorable purchase intentions.

In the contemporary market, where consumers face abundant shopping alternatives and higher service expectations, businesses must understand the factors influencing purchase intention to develop effective marketing strategies, retain customers, and improve market positioning. This study, therefore, examines the impact of supermarket image on consumer purchase intention in the Gampaha District, Sri Lanka, providing insights relevant for both

retail practitioners and researchers in consumer behavior.

Problem Statement

Consumer loyalty manifests through a consistent intention to purchase products from a particular company despite the availability of competing alternatives, resulting in repeated acquisition of the company's products over time. The contemporary product marketing environment has evolved significantly, characterized by diverse product offerings designed to meet varied consumer needs and intense competition among sellers of similar merchandise. The proliferation of comparable supermarket chains necessitates strategic consideration among business practitioners to effectively reach target markets and optimize sales potential. Companies facing intense competition, such as supermarkets, are compelled to formulate marketing mix strategies as a means to achieve organizational objectives (Agustiana et al., 2023).

The Sri Lankan retail industry, particularly the supermarket segment, has experienced remarkable growth in recent years. According to the Department of Census and Statistics (2023), the retail trade sector contributed approximately 23.5% to the country's GDP, with supermarkets accounting for over 36% of organized retail sales. The Gampaha District is a pertinent setting for this study, ranking among the top three districts in Sri Lanka in terms of supermarket density and consumer purchasing activity, making it ideal for examining consumer behavior in the grocery

retail sector.

Given the abundance of similarly positioned supermarket chains such as Keells, Cargills, and Arpico, consumers are increasingly influenced by subtle differences in store layout, promotional strategies, staff behavior, and location convenience. These factors cumulatively form the supermarket image, which acts as a stimulus influencing consumers' perceived value and attitudes, ultimately shaping purchase intention.

The current business environment is characterized by extreme competitiveness, volatility, and fragmentation. Retailers strive to deliver superior service quality within their establishments to cultivate trust-based relationships with consumers, enhance loyalty, and establish market positioning. Trust holds particular significance within the grocery retail sector, which frequently faces criticism regarding unethical business practices and substandard service quality factors that negatively impact consumer satisfaction and purchase intention.

Consumer perceptions of supermarkets significantly influence purchase intentions. Positive perceptions enhance purchase intentions, while negative perceptions contribute to their decline. Against this backdrop, this research addresses the following central question: "What is the impact of supermarket image on customer purchase intention in the Gampaha District of Sri Lanka?"

Significance of the Study

This study carries significant value for various stakeholders. Theoretically, it anchors the investigation within the Stimulus Organism Response framework, where supermarket image dimensions' act as stimuli, perceived value/attitudes as the organism, and consumer purchase intention as the response. This theoretical lens allows clear connectivity between the study's constructs and the research questions/hypotheses, addressing the existing gap in understanding how image dimensions' influence purchase behavior in emerging markets.

For the supermarket industry, it presents useful insights into how different aspects of supermarket image such as customer service, shopping experience, promotional activities, and location influence consumer purchase intention. The study further identifies the relative salience of these image dimensions in an emerging market context, providing empirical justification for prioritizing certain managerial actions over others.

Practically, the findings can be translated into two concrete managerial levers targeted promotions to enhance store appeal and perceived value, and two service training programs to improve employee-customer interactions and overall shopping experience. These strategies help supermarket managers to shape initiatives that meet customer expectations, build loyalty, and increase competitiveness in a crowded market.

Competitors can also gain from this study by recognizing successful practices used by leading supermarket chains, which can serve as a reference for improving their own business strategies in line with consumer demands.

The study is also meaningful for the academic community, especially for future researchers, as it adds empirical evidence on the connection between supermarket image and consumer behavior in the Sri Lankan context, specifically in the Gampaha District. It highlights theoretical gaps, particularly the lack of research on emerging market consumers and the mediating role of perceived value/attitudes, encouraging further research that incorporates technological trends, online shopping behavior, or demographic differences.

In this way, the study contributes to both theoretical knowledge and practical application in the fields of marketing and consumer behavior.

Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)

TRA by Fishbein and Ajzen suggests that behavior is determined by an individual's intention, which is shaped by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived control. Intention is considered the best predictor of behavior and arises from the belief that a specific action will lead to a desired outcome (Metropolitan et al., 2021). In consumer behavior, purchase intention is a pre-thought

decision indicating future buying actions. A positive attitude towards store attributes such as pricing, layout, or atmosphere enhances the intention to purchase (Khalaf Alharthey, 2019). Consumers often align store image with personal values, increasing loyalty and purchase likelihood.

Social Learning Theory of Consumer Lifestyle

This theory explains that individuals learn behavior by observing others, particularly in social settings (Metropolitan et al., 2021). Satisfying shopping experiences often lead customers to repurchase and recommend stores, boosting purchase intentions (Sadikoglu et al., 2022). Sharing such experiences within social networks can influence others' shopping decisions. Lifestyle influences include buying based on social class, recommendations, or trends that reflect status and interests (Watanabe et al., 2019).

Howard and Sheth Model of Consumer Behavior

This model views consumer decision-making as a complex process involving inputs (e.g., product info), perceptual and learning constructs, and outputs (actual purchase) (Metropolitan et al., 2021). In green marketing, factors such as environmental awareness, product quality, and brand communication play key roles (Yu, 2023). Additionally, store atmosphere cleanliness, lighting, scent, layout significantly affects purchase intention (Watanabe et al., 2019).

Thus, advertising, brand identity, and in-store design help shape consumer behavior.

Empirical Evidence

Supermarket Image

Characteristics perceived by customers through store experiences are known as store attributes, which constitute critical components of overall supermarket image. Based on personal attribute preferences, consumers evaluate store groups and patronize the most favorable option. Research has identified significant features influencing supermarket selection. Essential store choice attributes include location, price, assortment, expedient cash registers, courteous and friendly service, and comfortable environment. Additionally, store cleanliness, competitive pricing, and helpful staff service represent paramount aspects for customers (Sadikoglu et al., 2022). Multiple studies indicate that store image attributes such as pleasant environment and atmospheric cues positively influence retail shopper purchase intention and generate repeat patronage (Shamsher, 2016).

Cleanliness is essential for successful customer experiences both indoors and outdoors, influencing customer repurchase intentions. Social factors may elicit customer stimulation, promoting increased purchase intention. Ratings demonstrate the importance of social conditions within shopping environments to customer emotion and specific behavioral traits (Sadikoglu et al., 2022). Store ambience relates to environment

design, including physical characteristics, providing comprehensive visual experience and establishing customer store image (Balaji & Maheswari, 2021).

Customer supportive behaviors toward specific stores depend entirely on mental store image. Enhanced store image correlates with increased store loyalty. Store image positively relates to customer satisfaction, particularly regarding grocery stores. Grocery store image elements such as service, variety, and pricing have been predominantly associated with customer satisfaction. Previous research emphasizes the significant connection between store image and store loyalty. Store image frequently functions as a predictor of consumer behavior and store performance, necessitating comprehensive understanding of store image. Rather than representing a singular feature, store image constitutes a general consumer perception of a store, alongside psychological conception of consumer consciousness through comparison with additional stores (Khalaf Alharthey, 2019). Consumers evaluate store image based on physical environment, location, product assortments, service quality, and pricing. Positive evaluation across these dimensions enhances consumer perceived value and purchasing decisions (Hanaysha et al., 2021).

Supermarkets should persuade consumers regarding value-for-money pricing to encourage patronage. Store image mediates the relationship between consumer perceptions of supermarkets based on product

quality. Supermarkets must stock quality portfolios to project positive perception, as consumer perception of risk associated with supermarket products develops negative store image and reduces purchase inclination. Supermarkets must project strong image through professional service and offered brands to attract consumers. Conversely, negative consumer opinions develop unfavorable supermarket attitudes, redirecting purchases to competitors. This frequently occurs when consumers experience dissatisfaction with issues such as extended checkout lines, congested/dark/unlabeled aisles, limited product range, unfriendly/unsupportive staff, and poor product/store hygiene. In such circumstances, retailers must expeditiously address issues generating negative sentiment to prevent business loss. Through effective communication regarding store characteristics, customer service, and product features, supermarkets can establish positive store image, encouraging frequent shopper patronage.

Shopping Experience

Excellent customer experience management can enhance brand and store preference through varied perspectives, increase profits through higher sales, build customer loyalty through cherished and enjoyable store environments, and reduce costs by minimizing dissatisfied customers (Tlapana et al., 2009). Previous research indicates that regardless of products and services offered,

customers experience excellent, indifferent, or negative experiences. Time and money expenditure in stores and purchase quantity may exceed consumer intentions due to the noticeable effect of enjoyable customer experiences stimulated by store environmental elements. With busy lifestyles, customers choose supermarket interaction for time efficiency, which has demonstrated decreased pre-planned purchases (Shantha et al., 2021). Businesses frequently cannot completely manage experiences, as these events unavoidably directly affect customer perception, emotions, feelings, and unforeseen behavior. Store managers must better understand customers to provide positive experiences (Sadikoglu et al., 2022).

Research findings indicate that three service quality dimensions significantly and completely link to favorite store satisfaction and store loyalty. Personal interaction emerges as the strongest predictor of satisfaction and loyalty among these dimensions. Additionally, personal interaction is identified as a significant element promoting store image and purchase intention.

To enhance consumer purchase intention, service quality is mandatory alongside store reputation. Consumers willingly purchase products from stores offering superior service quality. Service quality and purchase intention visibly elucidate their relationship; extraordinary service quality provides elevated positive consumer purchase intention regarding grocery stores. Study

findings demonstrate that service quality directly impacts consumer purchase intention. Improved service quality leads to constructive behavioral intention, increasing consumer purchase intention and store visit frequency. Moreover, good service quality enhances customer satisfaction. This relationship indicates that superior store service quality increases consumer store satisfaction and purchase intention. Additional research findings suggest that good service quality generates customer satisfaction. Results propose that satisfaction represents a dominant originator of future customer purchase intentions, indicating that superior service quality positively impacts customer satisfaction, which subsequently promotes consumer purchase intention, demonstrating satisfaction's mediating role between service quality and purchase intention (Khalaf Alharthey, 2019).

Store formats are based on physical stores where vendors interact with customers. These formats constitute the mix of variables retailers utilize for business strategy development, including assortment, price, transactional convenience, and experience (Tlapanana et al., 2009). Extensive goods availability ranks higher as a store choice attribute among supermarket shoppers compared to traditional grocery store patrons. Moreover, variety and assortment differ between supermarkets (Piumali & Rathnayake, 2020). Store selections are mediated by context, and shopping represents an element of consumer ordinary habits and complex daily life. Research indicates that store atmosphere

comprises conscripted "atmosphere factors" including music, scent, and colors, which retailers manipulate to modify consumer behavior. Store physical surroundings influence consumer purchase decisions. Well-designed shopping mall interiors increase purchase probability. Consumers appreciate pleasant shopping environment odor and prefer large retail stores, particularly malls with decent scent (Hafissou, 2020).

Customer Friendliness

Retail employees are essential for developing store image in shopper mindsets, as shop floor sales personnel directly communicate with customers and embed retail quality through characteristics such as friendliness, assistance, customer greeting, and uniform wearing (Perera et al., 2024). Service quality perceptions and customer excitement sensations may relate to personnel. For example, stores with friendlier floor staff demonstrate relatively high service quality intrusion. Previous research measured personnel knowledge, friendliness, and helpfulness (Sadikoglu et al., 2022). Employee friendliness and politeness facilitate close customer engagement. Sales personnel merchandise knowledge significantly contributes to attracting shoppers for product selection. Store selection decision-making importantly features services provided to shoppers by retailers, which directly relate to employees (Balaji & Maheswari, 2021).

Store cleanliness, competitive pricing, and helpful staff service represent

crucial customer aspects, discovered as top three key attributes. Staff friendliness, merchandise variety, and expedient checkout are also considered necessary. Social indications of human factors within store environments involve employees and other customers, including characteristics such as total number and behavioral patterns. Service quality significantly influences retention probability and repurchase motivation within general store environments (Sadikoglu et al., 2022).

To stimulate behaviors transforming service recipients into loyal customers, retailers must offer high-quality services. Contemporary consumers seek value, choice, and exceptional customer experience. Current retail literature emphasizes service experience's critical role and suggests retailers should create theatrical retail environments, emphasize fun, excitement, and entertainment, and encourage increased customer participation in retail service experiences. Reactive value refers to situations where customers appreciate physical shopping environments or respond positively to service personnel. Conversely, active value results from customer efficient manipulation of shopping resources to satisfy functional or affective needs (Thilina & Liyanage, 2018).

Promotional Activities

Most design factors identify indications regarding store significance and behavioral patterns, requirements, and expectations. These

factors are measured concerning spaciousness, color, appeal, cleanliness, comfort, aisle organization, product spacing, interior quality, and layout organization. Design factors positively influence customer store enjoyment, ultimately affecting purchase intention. Competitive pricing and helpful staff service represent paramount customer aspects. Certain factors demonstrate significant direct effects on consumer behavior through shopping center design factors, which have proven more important in determining consumer behavioral responses compared to social and ambient factors (Sadikoglu et al., 2022).

Loss-leading turkey pricing in supermarkets encourages complementary product purchases, offsetting turkey promotion losses and maximizing overall profits. Each consumer maintains a planned shopping basket, and cross-product promotions more likely reduce planned shopping basket expenditure compared to single-item promotions. As promoted item quantity increases, price-sensitive consumer attractiveness increases, generating greater promotional item sales increases. Regarding promotional item sales and consumption, consumers may purchase promotional products for storage or deferred consumption, shifting future consumption to present, particularly concerning products with extensive shelf life and convenient storage. Price promotions frequently yield significant promotional effects, enhancing current-period performance. Price promotions positively impact promotional item

sales and somewhat promote non-promotional item sales (Niu et al., 2024).

Sales promotion encourages product purchases, increasing off-season sales. Additionally, it persuades current customers to repeat purchases, enhancing customer loyalty (Rathnayaka & Madhuhansi, 2017). Promotion's most important application involves building demand by convincing customers to purchase or purchase larger quantities. Research mentions two critical sales promotion characteristics: timing and value. Product quality represents a critical competitive factor. Quality, defined as meeting or exceeding expectations, is dynamic and relates to products, services, people, and environments. Supermarkets promote product freshness and quality to attract customers and increase purchase intention (Gantulga & Ganbold, 2022).

Sales promotion timing, whether instant or delayed, may affect consumer promotion use. Coupons, discounts, point-of-purchase incentives, premiums, refunds, and free samples exemplify instant-reward sales promotion techniques. Advertising and customer contests represent delayed-reward sales promotion tools. Sales promotion value incentives may be monetary or non-monetary. Non-monetary incentives include tangible or intangible presents given before or after purchases, while monetary incentives include discount coupons, price discounts, and rebates (Youssef Samir et al., 2023).

Location

Most customers utilize store environment as a supermarket selection criterion, helping differentiate from competitors. Store environment represents the most significant marketing tactic wherein online sellers face increased competition. Establishing satisfactory store environments to stimulate customer spending and time investment represents prominent retailer challenges. Layout, facility aesthetics, digital displays, seating convenience, and cleanliness, alongside widely available layouts, attractive facility interiors, and service cleanliness, positively impact perceived quality (Sadikoglu et al., 2022). Customers focus on evaluating alternatives based on important criteria aiding purchase decisions. Criteria depend on consumer conditions such as time and location. Additionally, situational factors including physical environment—comprising location, ambience, and weather—impact purchase decisions (Hanaysha et al., 2021). Research revealed that store location features, including travel time, location convenience, proximity to complementary outlets, and store visibility, represented important factors implying store location significance in store selection (Shamsher, 2016).

Enhancing current supermarket attributes to attract and retain customers is vital, as managers must concentrate on target customer importance. Supermarkets face local and international competition,

necessitating customer retention strategies. Store attribute value has been extensively discussed regarding supermarket selection. Most customers utilize store environment as a selection criterion, helping differentiate from competitors. Analysis indicated supermarkets demonstrated greater interest in product quality, shopping convenience, and post-purchase satisfaction (Tlapana et al., 2009). Simultaneously, grocery store consumers expressed concern regarding product mixing processes, cleanliness, and shopping facilities. Important consumer attributes included freshness, cleanliness, price, and quality. Based on retail store research, store environment encompasses three primary factors: ambient (music, lighting, fragrance, relative humidity), design (interior decoration, wall hangings, scale shape, signs, assortment, layout), and social (other customers and staff). These apparent signs differently influence customer perceptions; consequently, retailers should understand store environmental cue significance while establishing innovative environments attracting target audiences.

Design factors primarily impact retailer eligibility requirements including commodity reliability and interpersonal service standard perceptions, influencing sales volume and subsequent patronage. Ambient factors and consumer emotional responses in retail stores demonstrate positive influence, positively affecting consumer purchasing impulse. However, related research findings demonstrated environmental factor

importance in significantly impacting customer minds beyond emotions (Sadikoglu et al., 2022).

When determining shopping location, location and price factors demonstrate significance. Shopping decisions typically require considerations benefiting buyers, such as location and price factors. Buyers tend to select supermarkets with strategic locations (Irfan et al., 2023). One-stop shopping solutions represent convenience aspects when studying customer store choice and supermarket consumer attraction compared to traditional grocery stores. Beyond one-stop shopping solutions, exclusive parking facilities, air conditioning, and ATM or banking facilities represent convenience aspects enriching supermarket convenience (Piumali & Rathnayake, 2020).

Purchase Intention

When deciding on supermarket selection for grocery shopping, literature identifies numerous influential factors, including convenience, variety, assortment, product quality, price, private label, store image, store atmosphere, service quality, and additional factors (Piumali & Rathnayake, 2020). Emotional state may influence shopping behavior if customers have decided to shop. Purchasing behavior encompasses several facets, including total time spent, money spent, transaction quantity, and repurchase intentions. Experience plays crucial roles in evaluating customer preferences, affecting purchasing decisions. Beautiful shopping

experience generation results in numerous positive outcomes; for example, customers with shopping experience may repurchase products and recommend retailers to relatives and friends. Consequently, a relationship likely exists between customer experience and purchase intentions (Sadikoglu et al., 2022).

Purchase intention indicates that consumers would monitor mental needs, examine external environment data, evaluate alternatives, make purchase decisions, and conduct post-purchase understanding. Intention represents the primary behavior predictor and essentially constitutes cognitive representation of willingness to accomplish given behavior. Additionally, if customers demonstrate keenness and contentment to purchase certain products, they exhibit purchase intention (Khalaf Alharthey, 2019). Customers focus on multiple supermarket patronage reasons, including competitive or attractive pricing, product quality, supermarket convenience, and product variety and assortment, which collectively direct consumers toward supermarkets (Piumali & Rathnayake, 2020).

When products were affordable, discounts generated greater impulse purchase intention compared to bonus packs. Conversely, with expensive products, bonus packages represented more effective sales promotion compared to discounts. Attention, interest, desire, and action represent possible purchase intention measurements. Various factors affect consumer purchase intention,

including customer knowledge and awareness resulting from business interaction and exchange, combining information, experience, value, and insight. Customer knowledge, gathered from diverse sources and channels, represents one of the most complicated knowledge types. Customers possess various product knowledge and awareness, including price awareness, green knowledge, quality knowledge, product knowledge/familiarity, and social awareness. Retailer commercial image, including customer perceptions of product variety, service excellence (such as payment plans, free parking, and product returns), and product quality, constitutes factors affecting retailer commercial image (YOUSSEF SAMIR et al., 2023).

Store image elements including atmospherics, convenience, product quality, employee services, and physical facilities represent supermarket image elements potentially influencing Pakistani youth purchase intention (Pervaiz & Khan, 2015).

Conceptual Framework

The literature review selected the independent and dependent variables to create the conceptual framework which has been developed as a combination of above -discussed research findings of the literature review.

To achieve research objects, researchers have developed four hypotheses as follow as;

H1: There is a positive impact of Customer Friendliness on consumer purchase intention.

H2: There is a positive impact of customer shopping experience on consumer purchase intention.

H3: There is a positive impact of promotional activities on consumer purchase intention.

H4: There is a positive impact of location on consumer purchase intention.

Methods

This study employed a quantitative, deductive research approach under a positivist paradigm to investigate the impact of supermarket image on consumer purchase intention in the Gampaha district of Sri Lanka. The target population included supermarket consumers aged 20 to 65, representing the active purchasing segment. A sample of 289 respondents was selected using stratified random sampling to ensure representation across key demographics.

Data were collected through a structured, self-administered questionnaire distributed via Google Forms, consisting of demographic items and 26 attitude statements measured on a 5-point Likert scale. The questionnaire captured data on four independent variables shopping experience, customer friendliness, promotional activities, and location and one dependent variable, consumer purchase intention. Statistical analyses, including descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple linear regression, were performed using SPSS version 27 to assess relationships and test

hypotheses. Reliability was confirmed through Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha > 0.70$), and validity was ensured through content validation, normality testing (Q-Q plots), multicollinearity checks (VIF and tolerance), and the Durbin-Watson test for independence. A cross-sectional design was adopted to provide a snapshot of consumer behavior during the study period.

Results

The following table shows the demographic profile of the respondents, offering a clear overview of their gender, age, educational level, income, and divisional distribution relevant to the study.

A reliability test was conducted to assess the internal consistency of each construct using Cronbach's alpha. All variables recorded alpha values above the acceptable threshold of 0.70, indicating strong reliability. As shown in Table 06, the alpha values were: Shopping Experience (0.881), Location (0.813), Friendliness (0.888), Promotional Activities (0.837), and Purchase Intention (0.858). These results confirm that the survey items are consistent and reliable for further analysis.

Table 03 shows that all KMO values exceeded the acceptable threshold of 0.6, ranging from 0.796 to 0.869, indicating sampling adequacy. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ($p = 0.000$) for all variables, confirming the suitability for factor analysis. Factor loadings and communalities met the required cut-off points, validating the inclusion of all items for further analysis.

The mean values (4.0369–4.2076) indicate that respondents generally rated supermarket image factors positively. High median and mode values support this trend. Standard deviations (0.63325–0.74136) show moderate variability, with more diverse opinions on Friendliness and Promotional Activities. All variables are negatively skewed, suggesting most responses were on the higher end of the scale. Kurtosis values indicate that responses were clustered around the mean, especially for Shopping Experience and Purchase Intention. Overall, the results highlight positive perceptions of supermarket image, with Shopping Experience, Location, and Friendliness significantly influencing purchase intention.

Correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships among Shopping Experience, Location, Friendliness, Promotional Activities, and Purchase Intention. Pearson correlation coefficients showed positive and significant associations between all variables at the 0.01 level. Promotional Activities had the strongest correlation with Purchase Intention ($r = 0.826$), followed by Friendliness ($r = 0.820$), Shopping Experience ($r = 0.811$), and Location ($r = 0.586$). These results suggest that improvements in any of the independent variables are associated with increased purchase intention.

The model summary shows a strong positive relationship between the independent variables and Purchase Intention, with $R = 0.896$ and $R^2 = 0.802$, indicating that 80.2% of the variance in Purchase Intention is explained by the model. The adjusted

$R^2 = 0.799$ confirms the model's reliability, and the significant F-value ($p = 0.000$) indicates the model is statistically significant. These results highlight the strong influence of supermarket image factors on consumer purchase behavior.

The table 06 shows that the regression model is statistically significant, as indicated by a p-value of less than 0.005. This means that the model as a whole provides a good fit to the data and This High F-ratio indicates that the model explains a large portion of the variance in Purchase Intention relative to the unexplained variance, further supporting the conclusion that the model is a good fit for the data.

Multiple regression analysis revealed that all four independent variables significantly and positively influence Purchase Intention. Promotional activities had the strongest effect ($\beta = 0.391$, $p < 0.001$), followed by shopping experience ($\beta = 0.280$, $p < 0.001$), friendliness ($\beta = 0.247$, $p < 0.001$), and location ($\beta = 0.084$, $p = 0.012$). These findings indicate that improvements in these factors—particularly promotions—enhance consumers' likelihood of purchasing from supermarkets.

Discussion

The findings of this study provide compelling evidence that supermarket image significantly influences consumer purchase intention, particularly in the context of the Gampaha district in Sri Lanka. This research confirms the theoretical proposition that various dimensions of store image—namely shopping

experience, location, friendliness, and promotional activities—positively affect customers' intention to purchase.

Among the four dimensions examined, promotional activities emerged as the strongest predictor of purchase intention. This finding aligns with previous literature suggesting that consumers are highly responsive to sales promotions, discounts, and special offers, which not only attract initial attention but also influence purchase decisions by increasing perceived value. The strong correlation ($r = 0.826$) and regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.391$) for promotional activities highlight the critical role of strategic marketing campaigns in driving customer behavior in competitive retail settings.

Friendliness was also found to have a notable positive impact on purchase intention. This supports the view that customer service quality, particularly through staff interaction, is a vital component of store image. A friendly and helpful service environment builds trust and enhances the overall shopping experience, which in turn fosters repeat patronage and brand loyalty.

Similarly, shopping experience demonstrated a significant effect on purchase intention. Consumers who perceive the store environment as clean, organized, and pleasant are more likely to develop a favorable impression of the supermarket, leading to stronger purchase intentions. This finding is consistent with the Howard and Sheth model of

consumer behavior, which emphasizes the influence of store atmosphere and experiential attributes on consumer decision-making.

Location, while the weakest predictor among the four, still showed a statistically significant positive impact on purchase intention. This result suggests that accessibility, proximity, and convenience remain important considerations, especially in urban areas like Gampaha where consumers seek time-efficient shopping solutions. Though less influential than service-related factors, location still contributes to the overall image and perceived value of the supermarket.

Overall, the model explained 80.2% of the variance in consumer purchase intention, indicating a high degree of explanatory power. These findings underscore the importance for supermarket managers to adopt a multidimensional strategy focused on improving customer experience, maintaining a convenient and accessible store location, investing in well-trained staff, and continuously running targeted promotional campaigns.

This study not only reinforces existing theories in consumer behavior and retail marketing but also provides practical insights specific to the Sri Lankan retail context. As consumer expectations evolve, supermarkets must continuously innovate and adapt their store image strategies to retain existing customers and attract new ones in a highly competitive environment.

Conclusion

The findings indicate that supermarket image significantly impacts customer purchase intention, with promotional activities, shopping experience, and customer friendliness exerting the most substantial influence, while location plays a moderately impactful yet essential role. To enhance purchase intention, several actionable recommendations are proposed for supermarkets to strengthen their competitive positioning: these include advancing promotional strategies, enhancing the overall shopping experience, prioritizing customer service training, and ensuring convenient location and accessibility. This study validates the impact of supermarket image on consumer purchase intention within the Gampaha District. Limitations of the study include the potential for respondents to misunderstand survey questions or fail to read the questionnaire thoroughly. Additionally, access to some publications and articles required payment, and the research focused on a single geographic area. Future studies could investigate additional variables such as brand loyalty, product availability, and digital marketing strategies to develop a more comprehensive understanding of factors affecting purchase intention. Longitudinal studies could also provide insight into the evolution of customer perceptions and behaviors over time.

This study has important implications for supermarket management and the broader retail industry. For practitioners, the findings emphasize

the need to focus on Promotional Activities as a key driver of purchase intention. Supermarket managers should develop targeted promotions, personalized offers, and loyalty programs to attract and retain customers. Furthermore, the significant impact of Shopping Experience and Friendliness underscores the need to maintain a pleasant in-store environment and ensure that staff are well-trained in customer service skills. Thus, the

study has many implications for several parties.

Figures and Tables

Table 01: Sample profile of Respondents

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (N = 289)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	147	50.9%
	Female	142	49.1%
Age Group	20–35 years	92	31.8%
	36–45 years	124	42.9%
	46–55 years	67	23.2%
	56–65 years	6	2.1%
Education Level	Secondary	114	39.4%
	Degree/Diploma	146	50.5%
	MBA or above	29	10.0%
Monthly Income (LKR)	Below 25,000	25	8.7%
	25,001 – 45,000	101	34.9%
	45,001 – 65,000	88	30.4%
	65,001 – 85,000	54	18.7%
	Over 85,001	21	7.3%
Divisional Area	Mahara	65	22.5%
	Negombo	61	21.1%
	Ja-Ela	55	19.0%
	Kelaniya	49	17.0%
	Gampaha	59	20.4%

Table 02: Summary of the Reliability Test

Description	Independent Variable				Dependent variable
Variables	Shopping Experience	Location	Friendliness	Promotional Activities	Purchase Intention
Cronbach's Alpha	0.881	0.813	0.888	0.837	0.858
No of Items	7	4	6	4	5

Source: Survey data 2024

Table 03: Summary of the validity Test

Description	KMO & Bartlett's Test				Dependent Variable
Variable	Shopping Experience	Location	Friendliness	Promotional Activities	Purchase Intention
KMO's Value	.859	.800	.869	.805	.796
Approx. Chi-Square Value	995.144	368.182	951.016	453.392	755.789
Significant	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Items	7	4	6	4	5

Source: Survey data 2024

Table 04: Descriptive Statistics

Statistics					
	Shopping Experience	Location	Friendliness	Purchase Intention	Promotional Activities
Mean	4.1453	4.2076	4.0369	4.1945	4.0450
Std. Error of Mean	.03725	.03833	.04331	.03843	.04361
Median	4.4286	4.5000	4.3333	4.4000	4.2500
Mode	4.57	4.50	4.50	4.40	4.25

Std. Deviation	.63325	.65164	.73623	.65339	.74136
Variance	.401	.425	.542	.427	.550
Skewness	-2.128	-1.963	-1.839	-1.907	-1.533
Std. Error of Skewness	.143	.143	.143	.143	.143
Kurtosis	3.721	3.347	2.591	3.541	1.550
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.286	.286	.286	.286	.286

Source: Survey data 2024

Table 05: Correlations

Correlations		Shopping _Experience	Location	Friendliness	Promotional Activities	Purchase _Intention
Shopping Experience	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N	289				
Location	Pearson Correlation	.609**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000				
	N	289	289			
Friendliness	Pearson Correlation	.808**	.535**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000			
	N	289	289	289		
Promotional Activities	Pearson Correlation	.717**	.508**	.771**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		
	N	289	289	289	289	
Purchase Intention	Pearson Correlation	.811**	.586**	.820**	.826**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	289	289	289	289	289
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).						

Table 06: Model Summary

Model Summary							
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics		
					R Square Change	F Change	Sig F Change
1	.896 ^a	.802	.799	.29263	.802	287.960	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Promotional Activities, Location, Shopping Experience, Friendliness

Source: Survey data 2024

Table 07: ANOVA

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	98.632	4	24.658	287.960	.000 ^b
	Residual	24.319	284	.086		
	Total	122.951	288			

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

b. Predictors: (Constant), Promotional Activities, Location, Shopping Experience, Friendliness

Source: Survey data 2024

Table 08: Coefficients

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.361	.127		2.849	.005
	Shopping Experience	.289	.050	.280	5.715	.000
	Location	.085	.034	.084	2.515	.012
	Friendliness	.219	.045	.247	4.875	.000
	Promotional Activities	.345	.038	.391	9.092	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Source: Survey data 2024

Table 09: Testing of the Hypotheses

Hypotheses	Correlation value	Beta Value	Sig.	Decision
H ₁ : There is a positive impact of customer shopping experience on consumer purchase intention.	0.811	0.284	0.000	Accepted
H ₂ : There is a positive impact of location on consumer purchase intention.	0.586	0.086	0.012	Accepted
H ₃ : There is a positive impact of Customer Friendliness on consumer purchase intention.	0.820	0.247	0.000	Accepted
H ₄ : There is a positive impact of promotional activities on consumer purchase intention.	.826	0.391	0.000	Accepted

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