

# Impact of Organized Retail Strategy on buying behavior – A Case Study of Saudi Arabian Region

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## Abstract

*This research unveils the facts and figures about organized retailing in Saudi Arabia and its influence on consumer behavior. This study reviews the literature about different initiatives taken by the retail sector to enhance sales in the retail store. Here, the focus is on how retail strategy has an impact on the buying intention of the consumer. The main aim of this research is to endorse, the various strategies taken by the retail stores and their impact in context to demographic variables. Consequently, the research results point to the fact that organized retail has a significant impact on the buying decision of consumers. It could be said that recent changes in the retail strategy in the kingdom has made a significant impact on the buying intention of the consumer and it has been observed that sales pattern has been increased significantly.*

**Keywords:** *Organized Retail, Consumer Behavior, buying intention, Retailing, Saudi Arabia, Buying Behavior*

## Introduction

Retailing in Saudi Arabia started approximately 2000 years ago (Kokku et.al 2015). The establishment of organized retail in Saudi Arabia is found to be in recent years (Yavas et.al 1983). During the last decade, Saudi retail is considered as the fastest growing industry in the Kingdom's economy. It has been defined as the third attractive retail destination. But still, the organized retail sector is in the nascent stage which is still less than the percent of the total retail industry (Ravindran, Ram & Kumar, 2009; Talwar, 2010). It has been recorded that there was rapid growth from 3.3 million square feet in 2001 to 31 million square feet in 2006. Due to recent changes in lifestyle, increase in the net disposable income, increase in purchase power, urbanization, a growing population of the young changing preferences due to the effect of the

west the Saudi retail industry is growing at a speed of 13 percent annually (Kokatnur 2009; Syed et.al, 2014). There are other factors that also affected the growth of the Saudi retail sector such as the liberalization of the economy, attributes of retail stores, strong marketing strategies have helped to developed strong hold of organized retail in the market (Arshad & Hisan, 2008). It has been also noticed that despite the great potential of the growth of the organized retail sector in the Saudi market the organized retail faced great challenges to penetrate the market. A few of the severe challenges faced by the big retail players are taxation, trouble in aligning retail chain, legal issues, high real estate rent etc.

Reichheld & Schefter (2000) has mentioned that retaining an existing customer and satisfying the customer are five times more profitable than adding a new customer to the chain. So customer perceived value is one of the important indicators of their continued intention and hence the loyalty incentives provided by the store. To retain the existing customer, the store makes retail strategies so that their business could flourish. How the retail

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strategy plays role in buying behavior? The present paper is based on examining the retail strategy and its impact on consumer behavior and in addition this study also focuses on the relationship between factors with consumer satisfaction and their loyalty. Satisfaction plays a vital role in building loyalty with the retail store (Dimple, 2017; Syed et.al, 2017) and service (Ritesh, 2020). The study will throw light on the different marketing strategies that are being framed by the major retail players in penetrating the organized retail market. By examining these factors, the empirical study would shed light on the different market strategies that could be adopted by the major players in penetrating the organized retail sector. In order to examine these factors, the study first undertakes a review of the existing literature on various factors that affect consumer buying decisions and its strength of the relationship in predicting customer loyalty and satisfaction. The methodology of the framework is being followed for the research.

## Review of Literature

In the Kingdom, where cinema and music were banned earlier and recently got the acceptance, the retail & lifestyle leisure industries differ from their counterparts elsewhere in the globe (Jane, 2018). Single men entry to malls was not permissible earlier during most of the weekends which meant young single male customers could not access these facilities easily, was lifted and evenings and on weekends with condition that they would not "misbehave with shoppers and follow security regulations" (Alexandra, 2012). In June 2018, the Saudi Government uplifted the ban on driving and now women are allowed to drive which enhances their reach and access to shopping (Jim et.al 2018). The government is encouraging the designing of new developments that can offer a diverse environment to provide an opportunity to shop, play, and work within the vicinity of one another.

**Product Assortment:** Customers prefer to purchase where they find large assortments having a large range of products (Reilly, 1931; Huff, 1964; Brown, 1989; Baumol, et.al, 1956; Messinger et.al, 1997; Abu et.al, 2015). **Store image** has a significant impact on buying intention (Finn et.al, 1996) whereas **product attributes** influence buying patterns Hoch, 1999; Boatwright, 2001. (Keller, 2003) mentioned availability of products **under one roof** has a significant influence on consumer behavior. Availability of private label products can bring loyalty among the consumer as it provides a significant margin over price (Steenkamp et.al 1997; Hoch, 1998). Store display, store layout, and aesthetics influence buying behavior (Pun et. al, 2014). **Retail store music influences** and stimulates buying patterns (Michon et.al 2006; Jain et. al 2011). Retail **store music** stimulates the consumption pattern in the consumers; it develops cognitive and emotional attachment whereas improving the attitude (Jain, 2011). Slow and tempo music perceives positive influence and low arousing cues effecting on consumer's perception whereas fast tempo music and loud arousing cues have an indirect effect on consumer perception (Michon et.al, 2006). The store environment plays a vital role in consumer attitude towards retail brands (Marika et.al 2018). **Store atmosphere** significantly builds a positive image about the quality of the product (Oh et.al 2006; Shaheed et.al 2015; Silva et.al 2010; Zeynep et.al, 2011). **Soft light** creates a pleasant and soothing mood (Meer 1985). Pleasant light has a positive impact on buying behavior (Mehrabian et.al, 1976; Areni et.al, 1994; Wanninayake, 2007; Banat et.al, 2012; Deepika et.al, 2012; Justine et.al, 2019; Muhammad, 2019). The choice of **store location** has a deeper impact on the business of a retail operation (Arnold et.al 1981; Zentes et.al 2017). Shopping and spending at the departmental store, retail outlets were found to be highly sensitive to the travel time (Lodish, 2004).

Store location plays a strategic role in the choice of purchase (Hendra et.al 2020). Organized retail stores in general display products in the retail outlets in a manner that attracts the consumers (Raiz et.al, 2015). **Product display** in the retail stores' stimulus consumer buying intention (Lunardo et.al 2013; Kumar, 2014; Marike et. al 2018). Appropriate display of enhancing customer movement in the store, helps the consumer to stay more in the store, more the customer stays in the store, more purchase is increased. Retail stores with proper layout and product display build loyalty with the customer (Wanninayake et.al, 2007; Panna et.al, 2015; Fiore et.al 2000).

**Visual merchandising** is another important strategic tool by which retail stores communicate a store value and quality image to the customers (Ajith et.al 2018; Syed et.al, 2016). Visual merchandising also leads to impulse buying (Mehta et.al 2012; Wong et.al, 2012; Syed. et.al, 2016). Theodoridis et.al (2009) state store atmosphere is created by adding up a number of the visual elements of the store environment which include colors and decoration elements, hence it makes an impact on buyers' behavior and later named as visual merchandising elements. Social commerce also plays an important role in buying behavior (Jia, 2019; Samir, 2020).

## Retail Sectoral Report

### Retail Sector Report

Saudi Arabia | September 2019



**Table 1: Top 5 Retail Players in Saudi Arabia**

Retailers	Stores	Sales area (m2)	Average Sales (m2)	Grocery Sales (USD) in Million	Market Share in %
Panda	144	628500	4365	1742	4.2
Bin Dawood	30	205000	6833	929	2.3
Al Othaim	108	162440	1504	879	2.0
Carrefour	17	107000	6294	683	10.7
Farm	43	115850	2694	327	0.8
Total	324	1218790	4344	4560	11.9

Source: A. T Kearney 2011 GRDI; Kokku et.al 2015

## Methodology

The main purpose of this study is to reveal the impact of organized retailing strategy on the buying intention of the consumer. A cross-sectional study is designed to examine the impact of organized retail strategy on buying behavior. Since the focus is to examine the retail strategy and its impact on the consumer buying decision, the explanatory study design was taken into consideration with a quantitative research strategy. The study is based on primary and secondary data.

## Sampling

To identify the impact of strategy on the buying behavior of consumers, consumers with age above 18 years were selected. Data were collected from the customers of five different cities of Saudi. Data were collected randomly from selected 500 respondents who were involved in shopping at the chosen retail store in selected cities of Saudi Arabia. A structured closed-ended questionnaire was framed and given to the customers who voluntarily participated in the study. Likert Scale is used to collect responses.

Out of 500 respondents, only 412 respondents

participated in the study yielding a response rate of 82.4%. The data collected from the respondents were tested for reliability applying Cronbach's alpha test.

**Scope of the study:** The scope of the study is restricted to the geographic region of Saudi Arabia focusing on selected cities. The scope is also limited to the organized retail sector.

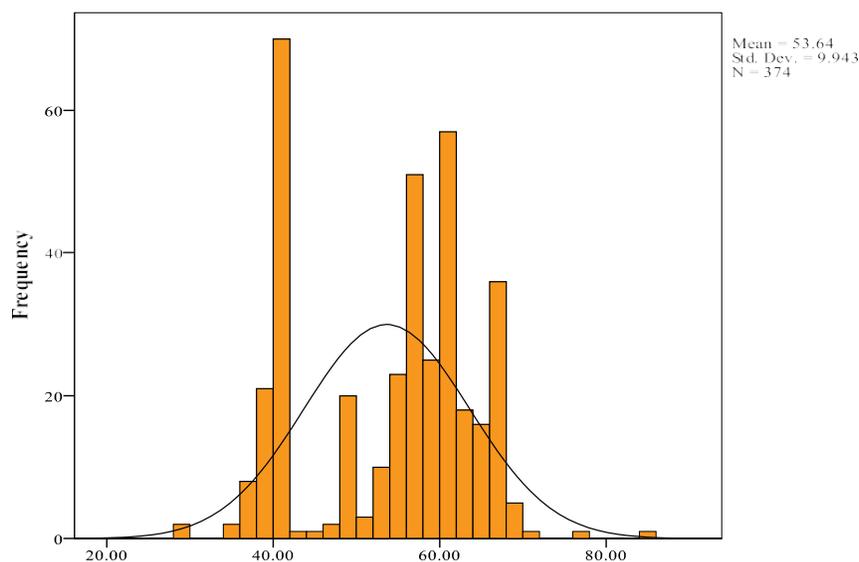
**Objective of Study:** The objective is to explore factors influencing the buying behavior of the consumer. This study will also highlight the strategies taken by organized retailers to influence the buying pattern of the consumer.

**Table 2: Return rate of the Questionnaire**

Description	N (%)
Questionnaire handed over in person	500
Completely filled questionnaire and further taken for the analysis	412
Response rate	82.4

The figure provides a general overview of the data with the help of a histogram which is simply a graphical test to check the normality when the data is large (David, 2019).

**Fig 2: Histogram of Retail Strategy**



## Data Analysis & Interpretation

**Table 3: Reliability analysis**

Variables	items	Mean	SD	Cronbach's Alpha
Retail strategy	21	52.09	10.99	0.905

In this research reliability analysis is developed using Cronbach's alpha test. The table represents the results of reliability analysis as well as the descriptive statistics. The study has revealed strong reliability with a coefficient alpha value ranging from 0.86 to 0.94 which depicts good reliability. The Cronbach's alpha value score shows above 0.7 which represents greater internal consistency while developing a questionnaire.

**Table 4: Results for Factor analysis of consumer behavior perception towards organized retailing**

Factors	Eigen value	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Alpha
Retail strategy	3.234	5.776	59.342	0.905

**Table 5: Summary Statistics for, Retail strategy**

<b>Organized Retail</b>	Mean	2.44
	Std. Deviation	0.51
	Skewness	-0.28
	Std. Error of Skewness	0.13
	Kurtosis	-1.05
	Std. Error of Kurtosis	0.26

**Table 6: Relationship between demographic variables and mean of retail strategy**

Demographic Variables		Mean	SD	F-value	p-value
Age (in years)	0-20 years	2.64	0.80	6.96	0.00
	20-30 years	2.39	0.56		
	30-40 years	2.45	0.45		
	40-50 years	2.56	0.53		
	50-60 years	2.88	0.02		
	60 and above	2.21	0.34		
Education	No schooling	2.95	.	5.95	0.001
	Secondary school	2.80	0.29		
	Under graduation	2.57	0.51		
	Post-graduation	2.41	0.53		
Income	Less than 5000	2.12	0.33	8.49	0.000
	5000-10000	2.37	0.45		
	10000-15000	2.57	0.51		
	15000-20000	2.40	0.54		
	Above 20000	2.67	0.57		
Marital status	Married	2.12	0.33	5.59	0.001
	Unmarried	2.37	0.45		
	Divorced	2.57	0.51		
Occupation	Student	2.35	0.47	7.26	0.000
	Business	2.47	0.59		
	Unemployed	2.74	0.21		
	Professional	2.60	0.15		
	Housewife	2.19	0.27		

Family size	0 to 1	2.46	0.19	3.73	0.005
	1 to 2	2.81	0.01		

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in the mean of the retail strategy and between education, age, income, occupation, marital status, and family size.

Alternative Hypothesis: There is a significant difference in the mean of the retail strategy and between education, age, income, occupation, marital status, and family size.

The F-value for the age in the given table is 6.96 and the p-value as derived is 0.00 which is less than 0.05 therefore we reject the null hypothesis. So we can say that there is a significant difference in the mean of retail strategy and between the ages. In retail strategy, as given in the age group of 50-60 years has a higher mean (2.88) as compared to another age group. Age plays a significant role in buying decision (Syed et.al 2015).

As shown the F-value for education is 5.95 and on the other hand the p-value is 0.001 which is also less than 0.05, therefore we reject the null hypothesis. So there is a significant difference in the mean of the retail strategy between education levels. Again, we can see that education level has a deeper impact on retail strategy with secondary education which is 2.80 as compared to others.

From the table 6, the F-value for the income is derived as 8.49 and the p-value is derived is 0.00 which is also less than 0.05, so we will reject the null hypothesis. So we can say that there is a significant difference in the means of the retail strategy and between income groups. Thus in retail strategy, the population with income group above 15000 has shown a higher mean (2.67) as compared to others.

The F-value for the marital status is derived at 5.59 and the p-value is shown as 0.001 which is greater than 0.05, hence we reject the null hypothesis in

this case, and we can say that there is a significant difference observed in the mean of retail strategy and between the marital status.

We can see that the F-value for the occupation is 7.26 and the p-value is derived is 0.00 which is also less than 0.05, hence we reject the null hypothesis. So we can say that there is a significant difference in the mean of the retail strategy and between the occupations. In the retail strategy, we see that the unemployed have a higher mean (2.74) as compared to others. As we see in the case of family size the F-value for the family size derived is 3.73 and the p-value is derived as 0.005 which is also less than 0.05 hence we reject the null hypothesis in this case. Therefore, we can say that there is a significant difference in the mean of the retail strategy and between the between family size. We can again find that the retail strategy with the family size 1-2 has shown a higher mean (2.81) compared to others.

Regression analysis is further being carried out on relationship between demographic variables and retail strategy in order to further reveal support for the overarching hypothesis whether the retail strategy is positively related to gender, age, education, income, occupation, and family size. In comparison to correlation, regression analysis is a more powerful and robust analysis as this will provide the strength of the association while the former does the only linear relationship. The regression procedure was employed because it provides the most accurate interpretation of the independent variable. The independent variables were expressed in terms of the unstandardized factor scores (beta coefficients) and r square were included. The significant factors that remained in the regression equation were shown in order of importance based on the beta coefficients

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between the retail strategy and demographic variables.

Alternative Hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between the retail strategy and demographic variables.

**Table 7: Relationship between demographic variables and retail strategy for organized retail**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Adjusted R Square	F Change	t	Sig
	B	Std. Error				
(Constant)	1.636	0.273	0.238	16.958	5.990	0.000
Gender	0.316	0.082			3.863	0.000
Age	0.198	0.032			6.152	0.000
Education	-0.247	0.040			-6.161	0.000
Income	0.165	0.029			5.766	0.000
Marital status	0.474	0.098			4.829	0.000
Occupation	-0.050	0.033			-1.532	0.127
Family size	-0.039	0.037			-1.044	0.297

**Dependent variable: Retail Strategy,**  
**Independent variable: Gender, Age, Education,**  
**Income, Occupation and Family size.**

In the above table-7 regression analysis is represented. It is clear from the above table that the linear regression analysis of the beta coefficient of regression of the retail strategy on the demographic variables is the significant gender is (beta=0.316, t=3.863, p<0.01), age (beta=0.198, t=6.152, p<0.01), education is (beta=-0.247, t=-6.161, p<0.01), income (beta=0.165, t=5.766, p<0.01) and the marital status is (beta=0.474, t=4.829, p<0.01). Hence the significance is less than that alpha of the 0.05 values, so the null hypothesis, in this case, will be rejected and therefore there is the support of the alternative hypothesis. So we can say that there is a significant association found between organized retail strategy and age, education, income, and marital status. We can again say that Independent variables together counted for 24% of the total variance (R square) which indicates that the retail strategy is a less significant predictor of demographic variables.

### **Conclusion:**

The major objective of this study was to understand the retailing strategies in Saudi Arabia. The research identified various factors associated with consumer buying behavior and in-store environment which can influence the buying intention of consumers. A previous similar study has been conducted in different parts of the globe but not addressed in Saudi Arabian context whereas significant change has been observed in government policies and guidelines in recent years which enhanced the retail landscape structure and lifestyle of the residents of Saudi Arabia. The trend of education has also been changed and the government is taking initiative to uplift education infrastructure in the kingdom and enhance education in the country. Many universities were established in the last decade and students are paid a stipend for continuing their studies from government universities. Women's are empowered in recent years (Syed et.al, 2018). The kingdom is providing quality educations to the students by amending various policies in the education system (Mohammad, 2017). Rapid economic development

is being observed in the past few decades which improved the balance of payments and improving the pattern of foreign trade of the kingdom. Industrial development has also played a vital role in developing the economy of the country (Hanaa, 2018). Saudi Arabia also provides an opportunity for foreign workers to work in the government and non-government sectors which makes Saudi Arabia a cross-cultural nation. This mixed demography has depicted a diverse lifestyle among the residents of the country. With the recent change in the policies, the major retail giants started to incorporate the international retail landscape in the malls and hypermarkets. The research advocates that retail strategy has a significant impact on to demographic variables of the country. The residents now started to learn which can be observed from their changing pattern of purchase behavior. There is also a significant change in the buying pattern of the consumer and now the consumers are aware of the products and services associated and make choices before making purchases. The retail strategy is bringing consumer paradigm shifts from traditional purchases to modern purchases.

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## Annexure - 1

Indicate your level of agreement with regard to retail functional factors in your chosen retail format

SA (Strongly Agree) A (Agree) N (Neutral) D (Disagree) SD (Strongly Disagree)

	SA	A	N	D	SD
There is a buildup on existing trust and goodwill in this retail outlet	<input type="checkbox"/>				
They always carry fresh products	<input type="checkbox"/>				
They always carry high quality merchandise	<input type="checkbox"/>				
They facilitate small pack/quantity purchases	<input type="checkbox"/>				
They always stock highly recognized brands	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The store layout and design makes me convenient to shop	<input type="checkbox"/>				
They stock a wide range of products	<input type="checkbox"/>				
They give competitive pricing in comparison to competitors	<input type="checkbox"/>				
They carry lower priced products	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The store location is convenient to reach	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The store ambience enhance my mood and purchase intention	<input type="checkbox"/>				
They stock local brands and non-branded products	<input type="checkbox"/>				
They have home delivery	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Indicate your level of agreement with regard to retail business strategy factors in your chosen retail format

SA (Strongly Agree) A (Agree) N (Neutral) D (Disagree) SD (Strongly Disagree)

	SA	A	N	D	SD
The stores retail customer loyalty through service	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The store has grown due to presenting effective service to new customers	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The stores has changed its focus to target particular customers	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The store provides a clear view of customers and what is offered	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The store has clear positioning in comparison to its competitors	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Coupon system is offered by the store	<input type="checkbox"/>				
There are a number of discounts offered in the store	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Attractive schemes are available in the store	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Indicate your level of agreement with regard to shopping outcome related factors in your chosen retail format

SA (Strongly Agree) A (Agree) N (Neutral) D (Disagree) SD (Strongly Disagree)

	SA	A	N	D	SD
I get satisfaction when I shop at this store	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I find that shopping in this store is interesting	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I am a loyal customer of this store	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I always prefer this store over other competitor stores	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I would always recommend this store to others	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Once people shop in this store I think they would come back	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I always says good things about this store to others	<input type="checkbox"/>				