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GENDERED DIFFERENCES IN CONSUMER SHOPPING CHOICE, MOTIVATIONS AND BEHAVIOUR: A STUDY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMER SUPERMARKET SELECTION IN MUTARE

BY

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Abstract

This research focuses on the gendered differences in consumer shopping choice, motivations and behaviour zeroing in on studying factors that influence consumer selection of retail supermarkets in Mutare. Four major retail shops, namely OK, SPAR, Pick n Pay and Choppies Supermarkets were targeted for this research. Descriptive research design was adopted for this research using a mixed methods research approach of both quantitative and qualitative methods. Non-probability sampling technique was used to randomly select the sample of 80 shoppers from a population of 400 shoppers and used as research subjects on a voluntary basis at their convenience. Primary data was collected using questionnaires and structured interview guides whilst desk research was used for secondary data. The data collected was coded to SPSS version 20 software and analysed. The study showed that there are notable differences in male and female shopping behaviours, ranging from frequency of shopping, motivations surrounding acceptable store atmospherics, level of customer service employed by staff and influence of marketing tools on store choice. It also showed that not all customers were influenced by the several marketing tools available to retailers except for sales promotions which appealed more to quick sales turnaround and instant customer satisfaction, especially among female shoppers, through the rewards accompanying sales promotions. On the other hand, men were seen to be more of utilitarian shoppers not influenced by bargains. Female shoppers were more concerned with service that is personalised such as grocery packing and assistance in ferrying groceries to their vehicles and having their complaints resolved than ignored and shelved. The study further revealed that female customers valued cleanliness, product variety and instore ambiance that is captivating and has sensory appeal whilst male shoppers were more concerned with product quality, durability and product knowledge. The implications are that for retailers to be effective in implementing strategies to attract customers to their stores, a lot has to be done in the areas of identifying male and female motivations and behaviours detrimental to attract and increase store traffic. Retailers must be willing to invest in their staff, customers' needs and preferences, in other words, spend money to make money on the people who give and make money. The study recommends that retail supermarkets should continually improve their marketing efforts and customer service level to curb customer exits but rather attract and increase customer traffic. Improvement in product assortment and freshness, investment in store upgrades, equipment and facilities such as air conditioning, refrigerators and point of sale systems all contribute to the competitive advantage of each store over the others. Areas of further research entail provision of credit facilities to regular customers as well as rebranding and mergers with multinational retail brands such as Woolworths to gain competitive edge and enhance brand loyalty.

Keywords: Gendered difference, Store atmospherics, Sales promotion, Customer service, Consumer

Declaration Page

I declare that this dissertation is my original work except where sources have been cited and acknowledged. The work has never been submitted, nor will it ever be submitted to another university for the award of a degree.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my family Rudolph and Nokutenda Mukombe. I also dedicate this to my parents, Nyembesi Pipi Dapira and the late Kuda Naboth Dapira as well as Pastor Ennie Mukombe and Pastor Dianah Mlambo, for the encouragement and support you gave me to commence and successfully complete this EMBA.

Definition of Key Terms

Store atmospherics - This refers to the environment that is created by combining a set of visual attributes of the physical store environment (colours, displays, decorative features, ease of movement etc) and stimulation of senses (smell, condition of the air, music, lighting) enabling an aesthetic customer feedback (Babin & Darden, 1996).

Sales Promotion – Short term incentives to encourage the purchase or sale of a product or service (Armstrong & Kotler,2012)

Customer Service - The assistance and advice provided by a company to those people who buy or use its products or service (Performance in People, 2016)

Consumer – A person who uses a product or service and is habitually called and end user (Ramaprabha, 2017)

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The Zimbabwean retail sector faced an overwhelming turbulent environment and as a result, tremendous changes, though this also brought many opportunities for those retail companies prepared to make the necessary changes (Chazuza, Mapira, Negwaiya & Tembo, 2013). Five years after dollarisation in 2009, and more stable currencies adopted by Zimbabwe, the retail sector however continued to struggle. Problems in the retail sector continued despite policy shift, leaving the industry players wondering what had to be done to keep afloat. Because of low barriers to entry, many retail companies bowed down to stiff competition from the smaller players, and this saw the once giant retailers such as Red Star and Jaggers closing 11 branches in 2011. However, with the growing population in Zimbabwe over the years, the increase in demand for goods and services followed and took a resounding upshot. People spend daily on basic goods in order to survive despite the low disposable incomes and high unemployment level. Goods such as groceries are on high demand in Zimbabwe since they are basic and consumed daily in people's lives.

1.2 Background to the Study

According to the Zimbabwe Environmental Law Association and Danish Institute for Human Rights (ZELA & DIHR), (2015) the retail sector is amongst the largest employers in Zimbabwe. The sector being dominated by OK Zimbabwe, TM and Spar Supermarkets. Although the business activity in this sector is often seriously constrained by liquidity challenges and shrinking disposable income, the (Zimbabwe

Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (ZIMASSET), 2013) identified retail as an important sector for driving employment creation and development of small and medium enterprises in Zimbabwe. Although retailers have existed in Zimbabwe for a long time, the introduction of global brands and outlets after the multi-currency system in February 2009 kick-started the sector, forcing local retailers to expand their operations to compete with their larger international competitors.

With the manufacturing industry in Zimbabwe still struggling to recover from years of economic downturn during the hyper-inflationary period, the retail sector became heavily reliant on imports and international brands resulting in low margins and high-volume strategy for most supermarkets. Small local retailers were slowly increasingly shelfing private label products to compete with more expensive branded products or imported goods (ZELA & DIHR, 2015). Such private brands include Shoppers Choice labels for OK, PNP label for Pick N Pay, Choppies brands and SPAR brands. These strategies have allowed retailers to expand their networks, with more outlets opening in various locations countrywide to match customers' needs. To take Thomas Meikles (TM) as an example, it has seen explosive year on year growth of 11.29% with its supermarket division, Pick n Pay leading its expanding revenues and footprint through its 52 stores country wide (Meikles Limited, 2015). In its 2016 financial year, TM added 3 major stores and $6.5 million was budgeted for refurbishments to meet customer satisfaction and expectations across the country whilst in 2015 achieved turnover of US$360 million and gross profit increased by 8.5% to US$64 million indicating an increase in market share. On the other hand, Choppies Zimbabwe, established in 2013 through acquisition of existing Spar network, runs 32 outlets in

Zimbabwe to date (Choppies, 2018). Spar coverage comprises of 37 independently operated retailers nationwide (Spar, 2020) and lastly OK Zimbabwe with its 48 stores nationwide, presents it with quite an advantage over its peers (Ok Zimbabwe, 2017). Market experts say at least \$1.5 billion is turned over by local retailers each year though this is achieved through extensive innovative and customer centric marketing strategies, fully taking into account customer needs, buying behaviour and purchasing patterns whilst not forgetting competitor analysis and international retail trends ZELA & DIHR, (2015). The ultimate competitive game for retailers is to attract and retain loyal customers, who will purchase and refer more customers convincingly. The question is, how?

Globalisation has led to an increase in competition with every food retail supermarket trying to attract customers, ensure customer satisfaction, retention and loyalty. This will lead to customers repeat purchases from the same retail supermarket. Retail managers world over believe that improving customer satisfaction leads to improved business results in terms of company sales and profitability. The consumer behaviour purchasing decision process then becomes the centre of this study so as to examine and determine what influences the consumer's decision choice on which of these supermarkets best satisfied their need and ultimately layout any other influential marketing tools the retailers may need to implement to maximise store traffic, customer retention and repeat sales. A consumer is defined as a person who uses a product or service and is habitually called an end user since he or she is that last stop and does not generally shift or sell the item purchased to a different person. Consumer buying behaviour therefore becomes the study of how individuals, groups and organisations select, buy, use and dispose of goods and services, ideas, or experiences

to satisfy their needs and wants (Ramaprabha, 2017). The subject of shopper behaviour effects on individuals and the factors that impact their decisions to spend their resources on consumption related items becomes key. The concepts and theories of shopper behaviour have also drawn upon a wide variety of disciplines as psychology, sociology, social psychology, cultural anthropology and economics.

Consumer behaviour emphasises on understanding the purchase decision process of individual consumers regardless of gender and how they utilise their existing resources such as time, money and effort to get a product or service (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007). According to Shamsher (2015), in order to establish a competitive advantage in the marketplace, retailers have had to focus on creating favourable images about their brand in the minds of consumers to influence their purchase behaviour. The result of consumer persuasive inclination to store selection will ultimately have an impact on the level of customer traffic of any retail supermarket.

Mohanty and Sikaria (2011) suggested that the shopping experience of the customer, which is considered the most important aspect for the success of a retail store, is completely dependent on innovation. Enhancing the customer satisfaction, that is, to add value to the entire shopping experience, becomes the basic principle in customer satisfaction. In their study of the Indian retail market, Mohanty & Sikaria (2011), laid down 3 elements which completed the shopping experience and influenced a customer's decision to select a store to affect the "wow" factor, and these were: -

a) Merchandise
b) Customer Support

c) Store Ambiance

Other scholars recognised store atmospherics as essential predictors of consumer behaviour (Hosseini, Jayashree & Malarvizhi, 2014), whilst others identified perceived value by individual gender personalities and sales promotion as probable influencers of common consumer behaviour (Andreti, Zhafira, Akmal & Kumar, 2013). In another study in Malaysia, the findings revealed that the store environment or as others put it, store atmospherics and ambiance, played an important role in affecting consumer purchase behaviour and store choice decision especially in female shoppers (Hanaysha, 2017).

The four major retail supermarkets in Mutare, namely Choppies, OK, SPAR and Pick n Pay, who seem to have survived the economic waves, therefore need to implement retail marketing strategies to stay afloat as well as their customer traffic at profitable levels to achieve the necessary revenue for survival and competitiveness (Chazuza et al., 2013). Centrally and conveniently located in the Mutare Central Business District (CBD), OK, Choppies, Pick n Pay and SPAR supermarkets posed as the ideal case studies for the researcher's expedition. All four retailers are situated along the Mutare main street of Herbert Chitepo Street, close to the nearest banks and mode of transport as well as surrounded by convenient parking areas which enhance a customer's shopping experience. None of the store's location gives them an unfair advantage over the others thereby creating the ideal neutrality needed in this research.

However, the question for the retailers remained, "what is it that influences the customers' decision to select our store over others?" and therefore build brand loyalty.

They ponder on more questions such as "is it influenced by gender of customer, is it the store attributes, sales promotion or simply the quality of customer service by employees that keep customers coming?" so that efforts are put on these areas for continued business and profit making and sustainability. The researcher's objective using the appropriate methodology and data analysis methods was to examine the influence of gender differences, store attributes, marketing tools and customer service on consumers' store selection in an effort to boost customer traffic and hence increase sales revenue and profits at sustainable levels.

It is with this background that the researcher embarked on a quest to examine the factors that influence a Zimbabwean consumer's decision to select a retail store to satisfy his/her needs, referencing the study on OK Zimbabwe, Choppies SPAR and Pick n Pay Supermarkets in Mutare.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The consumer goes through a laborious decision- making process before a final decision is reached to select a store in order to fulfil his/her shopping needs. It is the duty of the marketer to focus on the whole purchasing process because the customer experiences different phases before reaching their conclusion (Basil, Etuk & Ebitu, 2013). The different phases include need recognition by the consumer as to what problem needs to be solved, followed by information search which includes what and how the need can be satisfied and thereafter, evaluating the different available options presented to the consumer, leading to outlet selection. However, any post purchase

decision by any consumer is highly influences by his or her prior experience with the service provider, in this case, retail supermarket experience.

Additional responsibility for the marketer is to determine whether gender differences have any contribution towards male and female decisions in store selection. This includes shopping habits and preferences exhibited by both men and women, their budget and time involved in shopping as well as motivation behind the drive to shop in order to satisfy a specific need. Over and above, retailers take cognizance of store attributes such as ambiance, lighting, merchandising, which customers highly take note of and consider when selecting a store. The right implementation of various selected sales promotion activities and quality of customer service influence the consumer purchase decision and hence complete the purchasing process. In addition, besides increasing the retailers cost efficiency, there is need to evaluate shoppers' assortment perceptions so that the store actually offers tailor-made service that meets the customers' needs and expectations.

A study conducted in South Africa on instore shopping environment and impulsive buying by Mariri and Chipunza (2009) and another one on store image factors influencing store choice by Dhurup, Mafini and Mathaba, (2013) revealed that store image factors and layout influences South African consumer store choice and purchasing behaviour. Similar studies were conducted in Ghana on key selection attributes and demographic effects on shop selection at the mall by Anning-Dorson, (2018) with results showing similar results of store image and layout as influencers in consumer behaviour. However, in Zimbabwe there had been no mutual agreement

towards the factors conditioning consumers' purchase decision and motivation behind consumer behaviour in store selection. Several factors do in fact influence consumer behaviour in purchasing decisions and hence the need for this study to zero in on such factors in an attempt to determine their possible levels of influence from a Zimbabwe market perspective. The research will endeavour to unveil the mysteries surrounding Zimbabwe consumer purchasing behaviour, case studying selected Mutare retailers.

1.4 Research Objectives

The objectives of this study were to: -

1.4.1 Ascertain the gender sensitivity of shopping experience and store choice.

1.4.2 Identify instore attributes that influence consumer store choice.

1.4.3 Establish the effectiveness of marketing tools in consumer store choice

1.4.4 Describe the extent to which customer service and support influence consumer supermarket selection.

1.4.5 Suggest ways in which retailers can retain customers that would have completed the shopping experience

1.5 Research Questions

The following questions guided the study: -

1.5.1 Does the gender of shopper affect the shopping experience and store choice?

1.5.2 Do the store attributes influence a consumer's supermarket choice?

1.5.3 Are marketing tools a contributory factor to the consumer store choice

decision?

1.5.4 Does customer service and support influence a consumer's decision to choose

a supermarket?

1.5.5 What can retailers of supermarkets do to retain those customers that would

have completed the shopping experience?

1.6 Assumptions

The following assumptions were used in expediting this research: -

- All retail supermarkets stocked the same products available to the consumer, had the same convenient shopping times and flexible payment methods and the management and staff of the retailers were not involved in the research

- All retail supermarkets adhered to the Government price control regulations and that there were no abnormal variations in the pricing of commodities, (except for sales promotions being run instore).

- The buying power of all consumers was considerably enough to purchase what they need.

1.7 Significance of the Study

1.7.1 To the Retail Industry

Through ascertaining the magnitude of the influence store attributes, marketing efforts and customer service have on consumer purchase decision, the retailers benefit

immensely as this knowledge is used to prescribe how best they can exploit the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) concept in all forms to obtain and sustain greater competitive advantage. This is then used to leverage the organisations as leading retailers in Zimbabwe and Southern Africa through increased efficiency, enhanced customer traffic and inevitably, increased revenue and profits as they can now design and implement marketing efforts towards customer satisfaction, retention and customer loyalty. Finally, retailers are able to strategically train their employees on customer service and enhance its Customer Relationship Management philosophy.

1.7.2 To the Customers

The customers benefit through impeccable superior customer service from retail personnel and provision of high-quality products which are shelved by the retailers owing to the findings of the research. In other words, value is added to the customer's entire shopping experience. Zeroing in on what makes a customer "tick" becomes the golden ticket for every retailer's success.

1.7.3 The Government

The government generally benefit through increased Gross Domestic Product (GPD) of the nation, contributed by the retail sector as revenue and business boosts following the implementation of the findings and results of the research. The government is able to streamline retail standards for the benefit of its citizens through engagement of the Consumer Council of Zimbabwe.

1.7.4 The Researcher

The researcher benefits by graduating with an Executive Master's Degree in Business Administration upon completion of the research and aids in researching in other areas needing further study. In addition, the researcher developed an in-depth knowledge of the retail sector which may assist in creating inroads career wise.

1.8 Delimitations of the Study

This study was restricted to only the analysis of the customers of Zimbabwe's Mutare supermarkets, namely SPAR, Choppies, Pick n Pay and OK Supermarkets. The management and staff of these companies were not interviewed to prevent biasness in the research.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

The study was affected to a certain extent as some data was inaccessible. This pertained to the actual daily average customer traffic per store to determine the population and the sample size. In addition, research participants were not so patient to fill in questionnaires as anticipated therefore this may have created unsatisfactory submissions due to rushing in filling in data collection instruments. Responses could be prejudiced as the research was conducted in an open marketplace where numerous variables such as moods and feelings act on research settings. As the consumer is the focal point in the research, their buying motives are difficult to judge precisely and accurately.

These limitations were overcome by using estimates and experience from management as well as literature of similar lines of businesses. In addition, participants were pleaded with and encouraged to be patience and participate in the research without any reward being awarded to them. The importance of the results of the research were also explained to them resulting in a more cooperative attitude being achieved.

1.10 Layout of the Research

The research comprises of five chapters. The introduction and purpose of the research including the background of the study which is briefed in the first chapter and summarised in the problem statement. The research objectives and questions were laid out as well as the significance of the study. Chapter two covers the review of related literature including any supporting theories bringing out the relevance on theoretical framework on the factors under study. The methodology and research design of the study were looked at in chapter three whilst chapter four looked at the analysis of collected data, discussion and interpretation of the findings. The research results were presented graphically and in tabular form. Chapter five concludes by summarising the importance of and the stages of the study, highlighting recommendations necessary to the relevant stakeholders concerned and areas for further studies are postulated.

1.11 Summary

Chapter one introduced the research and outlined the problem. The background to the research justified the need for the research. The research questions which guided the research were spelt out whilst the statement of the problem which outlined briefly the problem was clearly stated. The assumptions that preluded the study were tabled and

were similar for all retail supermarkets. The limitations of the study were itemised, and possible solutions given. The delimitations set the boundaries for research whilst the significance of the study justified its purpose. The chapter ended with a chapter summary.

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

The chapter examines the conceptualised framework of the study, being the basis upon which the study anchored on. The chapter proceeded to review literature related to the study concepts and topics to ensure complete understanding of the problem under investigation.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Consumer buying behaviour can be defined as the decisions-making process and physical activity involved in acquiring, evaluating, using and disposing of goods and services (Khan, 2007). The study of consumer buying behaviour of shoppers was vital to the research as it had a detrimental impact on the decisions made by consumers regardless of gender or age. How each consumer views a shopping experience points to the very essence of retail success. The study showed that every customer has an inclination towards products and services regardless of genders. Their interest is generally nothing more than just willingness of consumers to purchase products and services as per their need, taste and budget. Individuals buy products mainly to satisfy a need, for social status or simply, for gifting purposes. On the other hand, they do not buy for various reasons such as budget constraints, taste or simply, there is no requirement for the product at that time. Most purchases are triggered by or arise due to a special occasion such as festive season preparations, birthdays, anniversaries or daily necessities in the household. The concept of consumer behaviour has helped explain why male and female consumers buy a product, when they buy and lastly how

they buy a product. The ultimate goal of every retailer is to lure customers, make them stay in the store longer, influence their buying decisions and possibly turn them into return customers (Lewis, 2020).

The research highlighted four types of buying behaviours to get a concise understanding of the consumer buying behaviour process. Shma (2012) differentiated the types of buying behaviour on the basis of involvement while purchasing any product. Involvement was classified as high for expensive and luxury goods or low in the case of lowly priced goods, and whether there were significant differences in brands or store preferences. Firstly, there is Complex buying behaviour. This is a behaviour in which individuals bought high value brands and researched a lot of information before the actual purchase was made, for example, purchasing a motorcycle. In this scenario, the marketer's responsibility is to provide detailed information regarding the product attributes. On the other hand, Habitual buying behaviour is one in which individuals bought products out of habit, for example, purchasing of a newspaper or toothpaste. There was low involvement of the consumer and few differences between brands in this scenario. Variety seeking buying behaviour focused on individuals who preferred to shop around and experimented with various products, for example, shopping around for breakfast cereals due to the need for variety in the mornings. In this case, the consumer involvement was low while buying the product but there were significant differences between brands. The responsibility of the retailers is to encourage the consumer to purchase the product by offering the discounts, free samples and extensive advertising. Lastly, Dissonance reducing buying behaviour where the buyers were highly involved with the purchase of the product as it was expensive or infrequent in nature. However, there were a few differences that

existed between brands under scrutiny, for example, purchasing floor tiles which had a few differences between brands though the application was the same.

Through analysing the consumer behaviour framework and types of behaviours, retailers are armed to fully comprehend the psychological effect and impact of various socio-cultural factors, attitudes and experiences on consumers' decision to select a preferred retail store compared to its competitors and their decision to return to that same store for repeat purchases. It also enables the marketers to create customer value by focusing on various marketing efforts unique to each type of consumer behaviour in order to capture consumer interests and hence lure them to their stores. These consumer behaviour factors, summarised below, clearly show the intensity of the mind joggling process consumers go through before store selection.
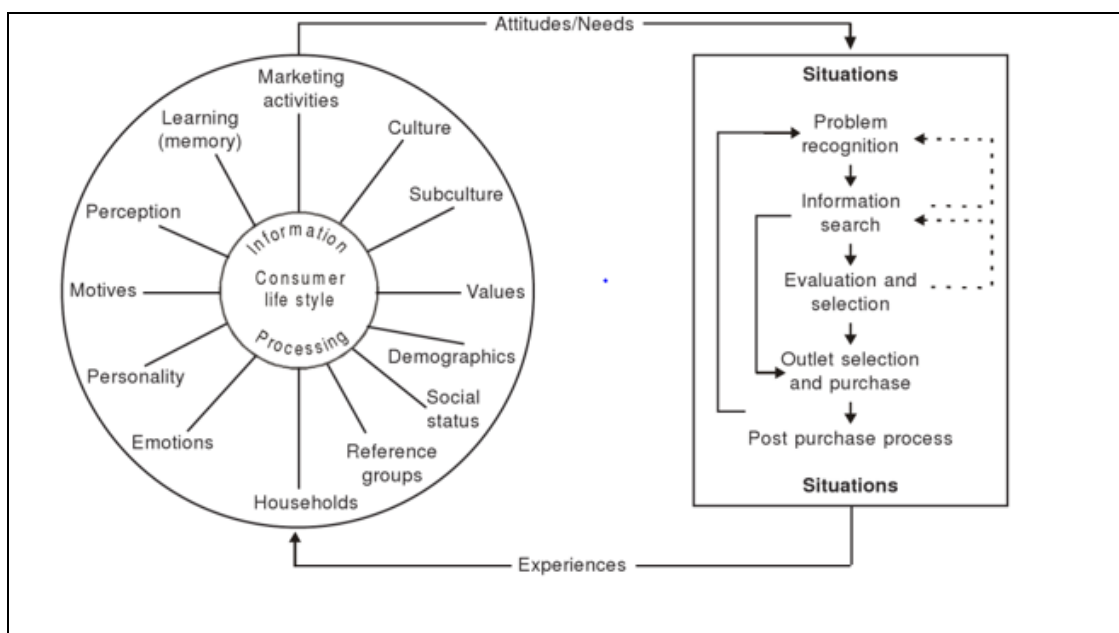
Figure 2. 1 Framework for studying consumer behaviour (Khan, 2007, p. 3).

In Figure 2.1 Khan (2007) defined superior customer value as "the difference between this total benefit and total cost" that consumers obtain from the desired product. He

also maintained that as a result of definitive marketing strategy formulation on product or brand characteristics, the total product creates an image in the mind of the customer, who undergoes a decision process. It is then the responsibility of the marketer to capitalise on the brand characteristics and pull customers towards selecting their store over competitors'.

In his theory, Khan (2007) believed every consumer's shopping experience influences how information is processed, including the lifestyle led by the consumer and factors such as one's culture, personality, social status, household composition, values and so on as detailed in Fig 2.1. The consumer's attitude needs inevitably prompted a problem identification, that is, a need recognition to solve a problem or rather in this case, satisfy a need. The consumer then searched for information on how this problem could be solved from personal, commercial and public sources, and in the process, take into consideration the various options that were readily available to him or her. Thereafter, a gruesome process of outlet selection and purchase is then undertaken which inevitably results in post purchase process of evaluation of decision made to solve the problem and prompt and repeat purchases or influence next store selection decision or yet again, referral to another consumer.

2.2.1 Stages in the consumer buying decision process

Juneja (2020) supported Khan (2007) in that a consumer goes through several stages before purchasing a product or service. The initial stage began with problem / need identification where needs were the catalyst which triggered the buying decision of individual and by far, the most important factor which led to the purchase of a product

or service. For example, an individual buying a coke was as a result of a need to satisfy thirst. Where and what will satisfy this need was deduced from information search which is the second stage. When an individual recognised his/her need for a product they gathered as much information as possible either from personal sources such as friends, family colleagues or acquaintances. Commercial sources such as advertisements, and public sources such as newspapers, magazines also formed sources of information. However, the most reliable source being experiential sources, based on the individual's own experience and prior handling of a product or service encounter.

The consumer then evaluated the various alternatives available in the market and attempts to choose the best option available as per his need, preference, taste and financial capability. Men and women tend to evaluate alternatives quite differently. Scientifically, studies have shown that there are many physical differences between male and female brains and their thought line. According to Scientific America as reviewed by Lewis (2020), women have thicker corpus callosum which is the bridge of nerve tissue that connects both sides of the brain and allows women to use both sides of their brains to solve problems quicker, while men predominantly use only the left hemisphere of their brains (grey matter). This means women generally have a better means of identifying and controlling their emotions, while men are task focused. In addition, men have a larger size brain by 10% but women have substantially more nerve endings and connections than men. In the consumer buying behaviour context, the different brain structure leads men to be mission and task-oriented shoppers while women are more discovery-oriented shoppers, who can easily adjust their original objectives or choices if it results in a more satisfying outcome. Thereafter, a consumer

makes a decision of his store outlet selection and purchase. This stage is the actual decision to select the store that will enable the customer to finally purchase the product. At this stage, the marketer would have won the consumer over its competitors leaving the next stage of the post purchase process where the consumer conducts a post purchase evaluation.

This evaluation process refers to a customer's analysis of whether the product was useful or not and whether the product fulfilled his/her need. Failure to meet one's needs results in a negative post purchase experience which may result in failed repeat purchases or referrals whilst the opposite brings positive feedback, referrals and repeat purchases. Every retailer aims to ensure customer satisfaction attainment and therefore increase revenue through repeat sales of satisfied customers. Robert (2013) points out that the consistency of a consumer's orientation towards a certain product is grounded in past experiences and projected into the future such that consumers develop negative or positive attitudes as a result of these accumulated experiences with the product or brand. These experiences may lead to a development in a preference towards the product or brand such that the consumer eventually feels a sense of loyalty to the brand and starts to see themselves in the brand. Statistics presented by V12 (2018) revealed that 54% of retailers pointed out customer experience is their most important area of focus, way ahead of cross-channel marketing at 16%, data driven marketing at 14%, mobile at 11% and programmatic buying/optimization at 4%. This therefore insinuates that customer experience drives repeat purchase and hence retail sales.

Prasad and Reddy (2007) also proposed that demographic characteristics such as the age, income, education and location of residence affected the shopping behaviour of consumers. The level of income as well negatively caused an impact on both the consumer attitudes and purchase intentions (Ioannis, Constantine & Magdalini, 2010). However, most behaviour was motivated by multiple elements regardless of demographics. The consumer's purchasing decision to select a retail store is highly motivated by the hierarchy of needs. Basing on the hierarchy of needs, all human beings are forced to decide to buy any product as a result of a need that must be satisfied, whether be it for personal or family reasons and at times, whether they desire to or not (McLeod, 2018). Lewis (2020) highlighted that shopping was the driver of a nation's economy and claimed that Americans considered shopping as an affirmation of faith in their country. Shopping brings a moral, physical and economic reason for citizens though rules exist to safeguard against abusive pricing of products that did not completely fulfil their needs and wants.

Khan (2007) consumer behaviour theory cements the consumer purchasing behaviour and process from problem or need recognition to final store outlet selection of the consumer regardless of gender differences or motivations. Consumer behaviour theories predict how consumers made habitual purchasing decisions and showed retailers how best to maximise on predictable behaviours. Though impulse purchases are a significant part of buying patterns, rational decision-making processes dominate consumer behaviour and affect marketing theory. Knowledge of the fact that habits drive most buying decisions and consumer behaviour enables retailers to also focus on the initial buying decision to gain an advantage before a habit is established, thereby ensuring that their products are beneficiaries of eventual habit formation.

2.3 Relevance of Theoretical Framework of the Study

All research should be centred on theoretical frameworks or some conviction. Without these, findings will have no anchors to lean on. The research is based on gendered differences in consumer shopping choice, motivations and behaviour, zeroing in on store attributes, sales promotion and customer service level as influencers to ultimate consumer choice selection.

2.3.1 Gender differences in shopping experience, motivation and behaviour

Research has come to show that not all customers shop for the same reasons. As a matter of fact, both male and female needs are fulfilled by different sources of enjoyment (Cox, Cox & Anderson, 2005). For many consumers, however, factors such as a lack of time, crowding, shop travel distance or even the "sameness of malls" might have a negative influence on their perceptions of shopping being a pleasurable experience (Berman & Evans, 2009). Just as women differ with their opposite sex in almost all characteristic features, shopping is no exception as both men and women differ in their thinking, perceptions and decision making (Prabhu, 2015). Though the reason for the differences continues to be debated, retailers have adopted their marketing programs to account for these differences from everything such as advertising style, message, and media, to product design, store layout, sales training and customer service policies which have been designed to appeal specifically to both sexes. Failure to address the idiosyncrasies of gender can have real financial outcomes for retailers (Lewis, 2020).

Kim and Kim (2007) on the other hand, revealed that recent studies in this field encompassed many sources or reasons why people find shopping enjoyable. Firstly, shopping people find shopping to be social activity where individuals get an opportunity to socialise and have interactions. It is also a bargain hunting activity in which shoppers go searching for specials or promotions and take advantage of such. For the entertainment seekers, shopping is just the activity for them. This is seen mostly with women who find pleasure in the act. Shopping gratification, stimulation as well as for others and for adventure is typical of women agenda. Last but not least, many people shop to browse or to exercise. This is also supported by Thrassou, Kone and Panayidou (2008) who viewed women as more active shoppers than men and as women enjoying shopping and actively plan on browsing as part of their experience while most men claim to dislike the activity and half report making time to shop and browse. In addition, they also affirmed three motivations for people, especially women, for shopping. These included interactions with family, utilitarian and last but not least, shopping as pleasure

Otnes and McGrath (2001) supported the notion that men and women differ in their attitudes towards shopping as a social activity and therefore concluded that men and women shoppers are motivated by different sources of shopping enjoyment and in their strategies for information processing and decision making. Women tend to be more comprehensive while men tend to favour objective information. This however does not mean that men do not value other people's opinions and experiences, rather, men use experiences to form their own opinion unlike women who would want to know the reasons and motivations behind the purchase and whether their situation is comparable before considering their decision-making. In addition, men tend to follow utilitarian

and more logic-based approach to shopping, that is, they shop to get something done. In contrast, women are mostly hedonic shoppers who shop because of personal enjoyment, meaning, to appeal to women, one has to create emotive shopping experiences that resonate with them. In essence, women make decisions on a more emotional level whereas men approach decision-making with facts and data Zoovu (2015). This explains why Prabhu (2015) emphasised that women when in a depressed mood, tend to rely on retail therapy and shop for clothes and related articles whilst men tend to shop for food items and drinks when in a depressed state.

According to Zoovu (2015), a study by Erasmus University showed that men are loyal to brands whilst women to good service therefore retailers need to use marketing to build a personal relationship with female customers while when marketing to men, highlighting the advantages and benefits of products. Therefore, once men find a brand that works for them, they are likely to stick to it whilst women's loyalty is derived from receipt of good service.

The way a woman shopped at the age of 18 years old is the same way she is going to shop when she is 43 years old, meaning it is a lifelong mind-set (Lewis, 2020). This insight was unexpected as most observers anticipated women's shopping habits to change with age. Over and above this, women fall into four distinct mind-sets which dictate their respective shopping patterns. The first being woman who are labelled as social catalysts. These represent one-third of women who tend to be planners, organisers, taking pride in their friendship status and consider themselves experts within their social circle. These are the influencers and consider a night out in the town

was money well spent though they often seek out bargains in order to keep up with the latest trends. The second group, Natural hybrids, represents stable and poised women. They tend to operate in a continual equilibrium state, knowing time and place for everything. This is why their shopping centres between safe, practical purchases and splurges. Their shopping is mainly for classic products that are not too trendy. The next group are Content responsible women who represent about 20% of women. They treat shopping as an errand or chore, rather than fun experience or an adventure though they tend to be life long and increasingly loyal customers who crave a hassle-free shopping experience just like men. Lastly, Cultural artists. These women are considered super shoppers who are constantly trying different things and starting new trends. Cultural artists are quite ideal for companies that actively seek for new products.

The same study described men as "pragmatic shopper" who considered success as leaving the store with what they came in for and having experienced a logical and efficient shopping process. This showed that men are not comparison shoppers and are willing to pay more to speed up the process than to hunt down bargains as women do. This is the reason why men shop alone, have no consideration for sales, colour, rarely compare prices and quality unless where tools are concerned. Therefore, retail stores in order to cater for these men, need to understand these tendencies and focus marketing on inventory depth, technical features and efficient payment processes. This is why men are unlikely to search for bargains or use coupons but would accept a less than ideal product as long as they avoid another shopping trip.

Sit, Merrilees and Birch (2003) also identified notable differences in the case of gender in different shopping centre segments. Most of the shoppers in the serious section, who are concerned with the utilitarian value of shopping, were older females. Middle aged women were identified as convenience shoppers being motivated to fulfil the shopping obligation. They also added that apathetic shoppers (represented mainly by older men) perceive shopping as a liability. The entertainment seeking shopper (mainly teenage single men with low annual income) placed higher importance on store ambiance and leisure. On the other hand, Prabhu (2015) viewed that single men tend to shop more on alcoholic drinks while single women prefer to shop for beauty and health care items. Paulins and Geistfeld (2003) found that age and marital status affects the store choice and time spent on the shopping activity.

Other researchers Lee, Ibrahim and Hsueh-Shan (2005) found that men enjoy the shopping experience more when the store or shopping centre is clean, the level of service quality is unquestionable, and salespeople had good knowledge of the products stocked in-store. Today's men are more involved in child rearing and family buying decisions and thus, also more engulfed in shopping experiences. Blackwell and Mitchell (2006) conceded and added that young men are more involved in shopping and many product categories once seen as female, for example, fashion magazines and skin care, now have male products. They also highlighted that more research could be directed towards male shoppers of their newly evolved interests in shopping as a result of lifestyle, cultural and household role changes. The benefits both sexes can obtain from this research is immense. From a shoppers' perspective, female consumers though considered better shoppers would benefit by prioritising purchases. Not every purchase requires a marathon of store visits or extensive comparison (Lewis, 2020).

However, alignment of shopping method and source to the cost and use of product saves time and energy since some products are commodities with little difference in utility or price and extensive effort is not justifiable in the decision to purchase one item over another. Another benefit a female shopper can obtain through the analysis of shopping differences is that they can be able to resist impulse purchases. This is because normal habits of comparison and evaluation are ignored as retailers trigger emotional purchase with store design, display and pricing, and often to the detriment of the impulsive shopper, who then purchase a product which is either inferior in quality or priced exorbitantly and of little or no use to the consumer. On the other hand, male consumers would benefit by being more price conscious and less time sensitive. By applying the same technique, they use in making business purchases such as understanding the product use, features and what is offered at different price points, the results bring out a more effective product purchase though the process may take longer. In addition, men should be able to anticipate future needs just as women shop based on future needs for example, food for next week. Men do tend to purchase when need is immediate, limiting the ability to compare or take advantage of discounts, deals and out of season commodities.

Bakewell and Mitchell (2004) had earlier alluded that men generally see themselves as being competent shoppers though they dislike the experience and process. For those that did enjoy shopping, they were not only prepared to spend time shopping, but also bought impulsively and without consideration of budget. On the other hand, women enjoyed shopping for several reasons. They took pride in their ability to shop, view the shopping process as a leisure activity and generally visited more shops per shopping trip than men to evaluate pricing and product quality options. In addition, women

included social interactions as an important part of the shopping experience and shopped to express their love for families and other people (Hart, Farrel, Stachow, Reed & Cadogan, 2007). Gustafson (2015) supports this saying woman view going to the mall as more of a social event and are therefore most likely to move in flocks. They are even more likely to browse at their leisure, thus making them an optimal target for impulse purchases though when they are on a hunt for a particular item, they tend to be more determined to find it than men would. This is most likely why women are likely to search for a replacement product if they are unable to find the exact brand they were searching for from the onset whilst men tend to be destination shoppers, that is, they look for something similar but do not spend much time on it. Bastos (2009) added on to say life situations often influence how much or how little women enjoy shopping. For example, some women love shopping more when they are in a tighter financial position. The satisfaction is greater when they get a good deal or bargain when they have less money at hand. Shopping can then be therapeutic for women which is why for them, it is an enjoyable and leisurely exercise.

In another independent study done in India, Kuruvilla, Joshi and Shah (2009) perceived women had a better attitude towards almost all aspects of malls, although significance is indicated only in the attitude towards parking availability and convenience, quality of products, ambiance and amenities. Men had better perception of mall store prices and mall safety, but they were not seen to be significantly different from the view of the women. With relation to time spent at the mall, it was observed that male shoppers spent more time and money at the mall than female shoppers whilst on frequency of visits male shoppers visited more frequently. Sauls and Seock (2008) in their research found out that significant differences also existed in shopping

orientations between males and females with female shoppers having had greater shopping confidence and price consciousness than male shoppers.

Dholakia (1999) highlighted that though men played a significant role in shopping activities, particularly shopping for household groceries, shopping remained a gendered activity, but was not a pleasure less activity. The research viewed the supermarket as likely to be the retail setting where the changing roles made the greatest impact. In order to curb this paradox, retailers have an important role to appeal to the needs of both men and women. Marketing strategies to be implemented should reveal a form of gender sensitivity to allow for both men and women to fully experience their shopping activity without feeling under pressure or spotlight. By considering distinctive differences between male and female shoppers, retailers can effectively enhance customer engagement, conversion into sales and loyalty. However, marketers also need to take into consideration that people are unique and want to be treated as unique individuals though there may be gender specific tendencies. Stereotyping will not work, but rather, retailers should try to understand individual shopper's expectations and motivates in order to give them the shopping experience they want. In closing Lewis (2020) concludes that these differences in men and women enable researchers to attract particular shoppers by aligning marketing efforts, product features, store layout and displays and customer service with expectations of the desired customers' gender and shopping characteristics. Being aware of the influence that gender exerts on the products bought as well as the price paid for the product can make customers discriminating buyers.

2.3.2 Influence of Store Attributes on store selection

The retail store has its own personality comprising of functional and psychological attributes. The focus of this part of the relative literature will predominantly lie on the relationship among variables constituting the retail image and their representation. Burt and Carralero-Encinas (2000) described store image as the consumer's evaluation of all salient aspects of the store as individually perceived and weighted. This includes the store atmospherics or ambiance, lighting, smell, aisle arrangements and merchandising. Of considerable interest is the ability of shop amenities' such as air conditioning and refrigerators to keep perishables fresh and keep bad odours at minimal if not zero levels. Lack of functionality of these facilities poses a great threat to customer enticement as lack of these result in customers opting for stores providing better facilities and offering.

Bell (1999) suggests that the image derived from consumers' perceptions on the functional qualities of the store present a stimuli and emotions that influences consumers' perception of retail image. These might include feelings of excitement, warmth, displeasure and arousal which have a detrimental impact on the consumers decision of store selection. The convenience or location of the retail area or store, availability of parking and other amenities, cleanliness, appearance and atmosphere of store are all dimensions that consumers are likely to adopt holistic evaluation of retail stores especially to the female shoppers. Tlapana (2009) viewed that factors such as location, service levels, pricing policies, merchandise assortment, store environment and store image affect the store patronage decision of a consumer. In her study, she also highlighted that the atmospherics could be tangible or intangible. Tangible

elements may include lighting, background music, colouring, goods display, point of sale posters employees and visitors. Intangible elements include temperature, odours, scent and other social factors such as gestures, attitudes and behaviour of store personnel as well as personal buying readiness and past experience. These elements will result in favourable consumer perception as well as other in-store shopping behaviours in a broad perspective.

The customer's perception on the quality of products and variety are positively related to the patronage of a store together with the perceived merchandise and customer value (Grewal, Baker, Levy & Voss, 2003). Male shoppers value product quality and durability of products as it brings satisfaction to their desire for value for their money. In addition, in a study conducted in Greece, product assortment and quality were found to be the key contributory factors of male consumers' decision or choice (Baltas & Papastathopoulou, 2003). In addition, Roy (2005) studied factors governing the consumers' choice of supermarkets and identified the benefits, general services, convenience and variety as influencers in store choice. Robert (2013) supported this notion stating that a retailer's desired image and the quality perception carried by the products should reinforce each other. The closer that retailer and product quality perceptions are, the more confidence shoppers have that their purchase decision will result in an appropriate decision. This information is also used by the shopper to discriminate between retailers when making shopping location choices such that the shopper with a history of positive outcomes when shopping at a particular retail store develops confidence in and preference for that particular retail store. More than likely, the same customer will refer others to "his/her" store.

In a study by Mortimer and Clarke (2011) where they identified store characteristics that male and female grocery shoppers consider as important as well the differences that exist between the levels of importance and the shopper's gender. The results revealed that male and female grocery shoppers do consider several important store characteristics differently. Men considered speed, convenience and efficiency to be the most important whilst women in contrast, reported price, cleanliness and quality as more important as determinants of store selection. In another study, Mortimer (2011) conducted a research on family grocery shopping where women accepted domain responsibility. From this particular research, it was identified that overall, male grocery shoppers considered supermarket store characteristics as less important than female shoppers. Income did not affect shoppers' level of associated importance, however respondents' age, education and occupation influenced perceptions of price, promotions and cleanliness. This goes to show the importance of cleanliness as a store characteristic in ascertaining store choice by shoppers.

Another important attribute of supermarket store image was store atmosphere. This refers to the environment that is created by combining a set of visual attributes of the physical store environment (colours, displays, decorative features, ease of movement etc) and stimulation of senses (smell, condition of the air, music, lighting) enabling an aesthetic customer feedback. Stores with a favourable atmosphere are likely to increase the positive buying experience and customer satisfaction (Babin & Darden, 1996). Over and above this, it also influences the time the customer spends in the store and the amount spent (Babin, Hardesty & Suter, 2003). Research findings on store atmospherics by Sabrina (2014) showed that customers perceived the background music as fit and develop positive experiences that lead them to browse store products

more favourably, spend more finances and time within the store. Additionally, the study established that retail stores whose background music was planned received high praises from customers than those without. Music can dictate the pace at which shoppers move in a store, define store image and attract or direct the attention of shoppers especially the young millennium male and female consumers interested in browsing and leisurely shopping. Apart from music, scented products attract enhanced valuations when compared to those that are not scented. As such, female customers are more pulled by scent in the store environment as it affects the shoppers' attitude towards the merchandise on sell as well as store (Olahut, El-Murad & Plaias, 2012). Retailers also need to alter their in-store lighting to enhance functional environment which can contribute to the consumers' brand perception of the store.

Consider a customer on a very hot day, desiring to go shopping. One would obviously opt for a retail store with conducive store attributes such as good music, air conditioning and refreshing atmosphere. Cele and McGrath (2001) highlighted that the format and ambiance of the store has its own impact on the shoppers. Its effect is seen in dressing patterns, language and interaction with store personnel as well as response to communication at the store. It is likely that even a shopping apathetic is bound to behave in the same way as a shopper who has a liking for shopping in a given store environment. It becomes obvious that even stereotype's behaviour changed when the store context changed.

In-store convenience represents an important attribute of store environmental stimuli. It refers to a store layout and design, which helps customers plan their trip in terms of orientation and direction. It develops their skills in understanding the various signs and

labels as well as controls their shopping exploration and trip (Bitner, 1990). This appeals more to male shoppers as they have no time for browsing and price comparison. Mulky and Nargundkar (2003) also support that convenience and merchandise assortment were the most important factors influencing retail store choice behaviour whilst Thang and Tan (2003) established that merchandising, accessibility, reputation, instore service and atmosphere influence customer store preference. The successful layout of a store depends on whether it has a clear and comprehensible concept, that is, one can easily find products and find them the first time on different store visit. The various labels, information posters and signs can contribute to the concept of the store layout design in creating a favourable and attractive store environment (Spies, Hesse & Loesch, 1997).

Osman (1993) postulated that consumers place different levels of value on certain store attributes. Therefore, to predict satisfaction with a retail store and its offer, it is necessary to look at whether the retail store meets the desired expectations of specific consumer segments in terms of store attributes. The prediction and the adaptation of the retail offer towards the consumer's expectation leads to satisfaction, which is a crucial determinant of the success of every retailer.

2.3.3 Influence of Sales Promotion on store choice

Stazzieri, Van Raaij and Woodside (2001) address the fact that many markets are saturated leading to increasing competition between brands and more product differentiation. As such, changes in marketing communication are needed to accommodate these trends. One of these is retention marketing which is managerial

approach to focus on retaining present customers. Marketing communications and sales promotions are not only used to attract new customers. But now more to reinforce and retain loyal customers which is the key to business success in the retail industry. The retail sector needs to be aware that in the global context of open economics, the consumer has become the king, enjoying a lot of freedom and operating through his/her autonomous power (Kumar & Das, 2009). With this power, they are in a position to influence the manufacturer or marketer meaning the market no longer remained the "sellers' market".

Armstrong and Kotler (2012) described sales promotion as short term incentives which encourage purchases or sale of a product or service . This comes as part of a company's promotion mix used to persuasively communicate customer value and build customer relationships. Ashraf, Rizwan, Iqbal and Khan (2014) regard sales promotion as numerous types of selling incentives and procedures which aim to yield the urgent sales effect. They are a set of stimuli that are presented intermittently working to strengthen the propaganda activities to purchase a particular product. They are an action focus-promoting occasion. Examples of sales promotion includes a wide range of tools such as coupons, sweepstakes, in-store competition, cents-off deals, premiums aimed at attracting customer attention and hence offer strong incentive to buy from that store. Sales promotions tend to invite and reward quick responses though the effects tend to be short lived. Online advertising has become one of the most effective ways to drive traffic to business locations.

Armstrong and Kotler (2012) further explained the purpose and use of each sales promotion tool by retailers in attracting customer to select their store for their shopping experience: -

a) Samples – These comprise of trial quantities of a new product offered by retailers aimed at creating excitement for the product

b) Coupons – These are incentives that give consumers a saving when they buy a specific product. These can come digitally or via mail.

c) Cash refunds or rebates – these are similar to coupons only that price reduction takes place post purchase instead of at the retail store

d) Price Packs / cents-off deals – customers are given savings off the normal price of a product for example, get two for one package.

e) Premiums – goods are offered either for free or at relatively very low cost as an incentive to buy a product. It can be in-pack or on-pack or in mail.

f) Point of sale promotions – these include displays and demonstrations that occur at the point of sale which encourage impulse purchase behaviour

g) Contests/Sweepstakes - these are games that give customers an opportunity to win something for example, cash, holiday trips but submitting an entry /name for drawing.

In a study done in India, Kumar and Das (2009) it was discovered that 20% of customers purchase more of their regular purchase due to sales promotion. In addition, retailers often give promotional benefits to stimulate store traffic, with direct price discount ranking at the top followed by buy one get one free and lastly buy one and get another product free. Kopalle, Mela and Marsh (1999) found that price promotions tend to enhance consumer price sensitivity which in turn increase short term brand sales.

According to Blattberg and Briesch (2010), sales promotions exist for 3 strategic reasons. Firstly, they coordinate activities within the marketing channel making sure that participants strive to maximise profitability for all firms. Secondly, sales promotion act as a competitive tool to temporarily steal market share from competitors, to protect their market share or create barrier to entry for new entrants or new brands, Lastly they exist to become a price discrimination mechanism against certain consumers, thereby raising the overall profitability of the firm. For example, shopper cards result in retailers rewarding loyal consumers by providing discounts on particular products whilst coupons are targeted at consumers who have time to clip and redeem coupons. Sales promotions also appeal to the impulse buyer as studies have shown that 61% of shoppers purchase on to three additional impulse items due to in-store promotions. The senior vice president of Integer, Craig Elston highlighted that all it shows is that if a particular shopper can be reached at the right moment with the right message, using in-store signage for example, to play into their desire to pamper themselves, it can end with that item being added to their basket, Thrivehive (2015). This is why end caps on grocery store aisles are strategically designed to catch one's attention with seasonal or specialty items. Buy one-get-one-free sales on merchandise are the most useful trick in creating impulsive behaviour.

In conclusion, sales promotions generate significant revenue as they offer customers an additional incentive to buy their products and then promote traditional means. They also appeal to the impulse shoppers as well as therapy seeking customer and stimulate their perception of bargain attainment. With the increasing cost of living currently being experienced in Zimbabwe, what motivates a customer to purchase is whether the sales promotion has an impact on the consumer's purchase basket and pocket. The

choice becomes easier if at the end of the shopping experience that customer gets financial value from the retailer. However, while these instore promotions can be very lucrative and may sound simple to do, it is also important for retailers to take time to plan for and calculate the cost of the promotion to ensure a good return on investment is received. If enough customers are not coming in to offset the cost of an in-store promotion, the loss in money is unrecoverable.

2.3.4 Influence of Customer Service and Support on store selection

Customer service can be defined as the assistance and advice provided by a company to those people who buy or use its products or service. Providing a good service and upholding a high level of customer satisfaction creates loyal customers who will consume more. In a study, Bell (1999) established that when anticipating future shopping behaviour, consumers are likely to consider the range and quality of stores as well as the products they have in-store, customer service levels, and the visual appeal of retail shopping areas in their decision. Consumers place a high importance on these attributes of shopping areas with which they anticipate an on-going relationship. Ultimately, it is to the retailer's advantage to develop long term relationships with their customer base due to the ease and lower costs of making additional sales to existing customers than making sales to a new customer (Gro¨nroos, 1994).

Nicasio (2019) states that while many things affect the in-store experience, customer service is always going to be one of the top factors that impact shoppers' perception on the retail store brand. Good customer service entails meeting the customers' needs

in a timely, efficient and pleasant manner. This can be directing shoppers to the right part of the store or assisting them with product issue. There are several ways retailers can level up on their customer strategies. This include retail store managers taking time and effort to remember and appreciate repeat customers. Here a good CRM that records customer details works quite well. Customers also appreciate retailers who make an effort to upsell and educate customers. This is attained through also training personnel to be able to upsell and cross-sell. Upselling and cross selling should not just be about pushing sales but seeing to it the shoppers know the benefits of the products being pitched and why they should buy them. Customers also value retail personnel who come up to them with the perfect greeting and who got out of their way to cheer up a shopper in distress. In addition to this, a retailer who finds a way around stock outs and offers substitutes to customers as well as a sincere apology when at fault and make an effort to compensate for what happened is most admirable to customers. Nacasio (2019) wrapped up the study in concluding that retailers were in an environment where consumers had more choices than ever before therefore how customers are treated is a huge differentiating factor which can turn customers into raving fans.

Statistics show that 33% of retailers cited targeting and personalisation of customer service to be among their top three tactical priorities, higher than for any marketing tactic V12 (2018). Of interest, a study by The Verde Group showed that 29% of women considered lack of help and expert advice from store personnel as a top problem when shopping and likely to be the top reason that stores lose business to women. On the other hand, for men, good service means helping them navigate through the aisles and get through check out quickly. Simply put, Customer Relationship Management

(CRM) matters. CRM refers to the principles, practices and guidelines that an organisation follows when interacting with its customers. The entire relationship encompasses direct interactions with customers such as sales and service-related processes, forecasting and customer trend and behaviour analysis. The goal is to improve customer service relationships and assist in customer retention and drive sales growth through provision of detailed information on customers' personal information, purchase history, buying preferences and concerns.

The impact on customers of the service experience has been studied and tested. For example, committed relationships between customer and service provider have been shown to impact perceptions of service quality, loyalty and hence repeat sales (Bove et al., 2009). Robert (2013) points out that shoppers have expectations for service from the retail store and this service is closely tied to the value perception and merchandise quality selection. As a shopper's quality perception of a retailer increases, quality expectations also follow likewise, including expectations for service quality. Chang et al., (2014) considered men to perceive shopping satisfaction and hedonic value through physical appearance of the store whilst in contrary, women sense the satisfaction when their intrinsic needs are met, like friendly personnel offering a high-level standard of service. Retailers need therefore to keep these elements in balance.

Perceived reliability is also an important retailer characteristic which may be influenced through service design (Furrer, Liu & Sudharshan, 2000). Reliability can be shown through consistent positive service performance by retail personnel (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1988), and by contrast, consumers may view

perceived inconsistency as symbolic of a risky shopping place. Roberts and Urban (1988) suggest that perceived risk depends on uncertainty and integral changeability of product (or service) characteristics – and consumers' vagueness about the shopping experience might influence where they decide to shop. In addition, research has shown that consumers perceive the risk connected with store choice to be greater than that associated with choice of specific products or brands (Hisrich, Dornoff & Keman, 1972). On the other hand, some retail supermarket shoppers stereotypically dislike crowding and undertake a fair amount of search behaviour prior to store selection. They also regard queuing as bad and unacceptable and require consistency in service delivery. Service quality ends up being used as an extrinsic indication in the formation of overall merchandise quality perceptions (Sirohi, McLaughlin & Wittink, 1998). Guinn (2017) believes the problem of queuing and slow check outs at point of sale can be a thing of the past if retailers improve customer experience with new technologies. Adopting state of the art retail POS systems can improve speed if check outs and hence customer experience. Supermarkets, in their efforts to satisfy customers' need for speed and efficiency, often use the straight (gridiron) layout design as it creates an efficient atmosphere and makes shopping and self-service easy. The gridiron layout increases the swiftness of shopping which, when blended with price, is usually very important to supermarket shoppers (Davies, Goode & Mountinho, 2001). Put simply, all that customers want to be guaranteed of is exceptional, courteous and quick service delivery with integrity by retail personnel.

One of the greatest flaws of retailers is the attitude towards complaint management. Complaint handling can result in either a satisfied customer who will refer others and motivate repeat sales or as people say, "bad news travels faster than good new", will

discourage and paint black the company thereby affecting business. Boshoff and Terblanch (2004) consider complaint or queries handling by store personnel as important elements that capture the customer's needs. In addition, employees who are always willing to help, provide personal, individualised attention, courteous and smiling when dealing with customers regardless of the demand involved as well as respond swiftly to customer requests on product knowledge, enhance customer satisfaction and retention. Empathy, patience, adaptability, clear communication and consistency are all qualities retail management needs to instil and develop within staff to improve customer service delivery. Retailers also need to be aware that having goal-oriented focused employees who have been given unfettered power to please customers generates the returns expected y businesses. Over and above, retailers need to be aware that they are obligated to show customers that they are real people working on their behalf, how, by being available, creating communities and catering to customers. Provision of feedback platforms to customers where they feel free to air out their complaints and views as well as give suggestions to improvements beneficial to customers is also relatively important for business growth.

Achieving a high image shopping environment through effective management of these variables will play an important part in encouraging consumer loyalty and developing such relationships for continued business growth and success.

2.4 Summary

This chapter defined literature review as a study to the larger, ongoing dialogue in literature, filling in gaps and extending prior studies. The literature was based on

Maslow's Hierarchy of needs and consumer behaviour theories. What other authors have said on gender differences, motivation, store attributes, sales promotion and customer service were discussed. The next chapter dwelt more on research methodology.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Chapter three outlines the research paradigm and design, target population, sampling techniques, data collection instruments as well the data collection procedures, analysis and presentation plans. Research methodology is a systematic manner of solving the research problem. It involves all the methods used by the researcher to obtain data during the research. A fully informed awareness of research methodology provides the necessary training in choosing methods, materials, scientific and training in techniques relevant for solving the chosen problem (Research methods versus methodology, n.d.).

3.2 The Research Design

The research design is the method that is used in the collection and analysis of the data by the researcher. It outlines the overall framework for carrying out a research. The study employed a Descriptive research design to agree on the gendered differences in consumer shopping choice, motivations and behaviour focusing on the influence of factors such as store attributes, sales promotion and customer service on consumer store selection. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009) observed that descriptive research portrays an accurate profile of persons, events or situations which enabled the researcher to gather data from a wide array of respondent on the phenomena of interest which helped in analysing responses obtained on what influences consumer store selection regardless of gendered differences.

To address the key research objectives, the research used a mixed research approach which made the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods and a combination of primary and secondary sources. The qualitative data supports the quantitative data analysis and results in that it develops theories and understanding which is analytical with the intention of reaching universal statements. Quantitative research is useful for testing the results gained by a series of qualitative experiments, leading to a final answer, and a narrowing down of possible directions for follow up research to take (Shuttleworth, 2008). After statistical analysis of the results, a comprehensive answer is reached, and the results can be legitimately discussed and published. The researcher explored an already existing phenomenon that is, of consumer shopping choice, motivation and behaviour as influenced by gendered differences basing on three factors, store attributes marketing tools and customer service provided by the retail supermarkets under study. Saunders et al., (2009) supports the use of mixed method research in that it gives the research confidence that most important issues are addressed as different methods can be used for different purposes in a study.

The researcher used the survey method in which respondents answered structured questions administered through questionnaires and face to face interviews. Likert's five-point scale was applied on most questions to measure level of influence whilst open ended and self-explanatory structured questions were explained qualitatively revealing the opinions of respondents and taking into consideration their views as well as secondary sources. This method is widely supported by Klazema, (2014) where he says "Survey research uses interviews, questionnaires, and sampling polls to get a sense of behaviour with intense precision. This allows researchers to judge behaviour and then present the findings in an accurate way." He also pointed out that this is

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usually expressed in a percentage. Survey research can be conducted around one group specifically or used to compare several groups. This method is also best suited when the targeted population comprises a large number of individuals without requiring special skill to fill in the questionnaire. Saunders et al., (2009) recommends survey strategy as it allows quantitative data to be collected which can be used to analyse quantitatively using descriptive and inferential statistics. In addition, the data can also be used to suggest possible reasons for particular relationships between variables and to produce models of these relationships.

3.3 Population and Sampling

3.3.1 Population

The aggregate population comprised of all the items being considered for measuring some characteristics. For the purpose of this research, there was a need to consider only those individuals that had characteristics that were relevant to the problem. In this case, the population consisted of the 400 daily shoppers who averagely enter Choppies, Pick n Pay, SPAR and OK supermarkets as per statistics provided by the retail management.

3.3.2 Sample Size

A sample is a smaller (but hopefully representative) collection of units from a population used to determine truths about that population. Sampling systematically selects representative elements of the population that are crucial to the study. The study sampling unit comprised of the randomly selected customers inside or outside the retail store and the sample size was taken as 20 respondents from each retail store, 10 being

women and the other 10 men for gender sensitivity and fair representation of gender to enable unbiased analysis of findings. The total sample size used therefore became 80 equally divided gender wise. According to Kothari (2004) an optimum sample is one that fulfils the requirements of efficiency, representativeness, reliability and flexibility. The desired precision and acceptable confidence level for the estimate sample must be determined.

3.3.3 Sampling Design

The researcher used use Non-Probability Sampling design adopting both Convenience and Voluntary Sampling techniques to select the sampling units. This design was the best suited for this study as items in the sample are selected deliberately and the researcher's choice concerning the items remain supreme and will be typical or representative of the whole population (Kothari, 2004). These techniques were used as selection of respondents is dependent on convenience of participants. In addition, intent to conduct the research was sought prior to commencing the exercise thereby bringing out the voluntary aspect of the sampling technique.

The sample included 80 male and female shoppers from different qualification, background, occupation, income group and age group. Selection of respondents was done using stratified random sampling of one in every five shoppers between 12pm to 3pm on a Saturday. Random sampling gave each possible sample combination an equal probability of being picked and each item in the entire population had an equal chance of being included in the sample (Kothari, 2004).

3.4 Data Collection Instruments

The primary data was collected from a total of 80 respondents, 20 from each of the 4-retail store under study, namely Choppies, SPAR, Pick n Pay and OK Supermarkets, in the city of Mutare using filled out structured questionnaires. A questionnaire is defined as a set of questions for statistically useful or personal information from individuals (Questionnaire, 2020). The instrument has many advantages such as respondent anonymity, scalability, comparability, easy analysis and finally, inexpensive and hence the desired instrument of choice for the research.

The researcher approached these 80 respondents conveniently and solicited for their views directly. The interviews were carried out by the researcher. The Secondary data was obtained from multiple-source secondary data through desk research and internet browsing from company and relevant industry websites, magazines, journals and books. Saunders et al., (2009) encourages the use of secondary data as it can provide comparative and contextual data, is unobtrusive and has fewer resource requirements thereby enormous savings in resources. It can also be comprehended as content analysis where quantitative and qualitative aspects are mixed to assess structural as well as content criteria.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

Letters of research intent were written to Pick and Pay, Spar, Choppies and OK Supermarkets seeking authority to conduct the study within the organisations. Upon approval, dates and times for selecting and distribution of data collection instruments were set per retail store. Customers were stopped inside the store near the entrance of

the supermarket before they started doing their shopping and structured questionnaires were distributed to the target respondents on site. Respondents had to acknowledge acceptance of participating in the research and thereafter completed filling in the questionnaire. Upon completion, all the questionnaires were submitted to the researcher, recorded and filed for further input into SPSS version 20 for data analysis.

Primary data collection was also done through face to face interviews with each selected respondent who visited the retail store. This was done on a busy month end Saturday between 12pm and 3pm when shoppers are financially capacitated to complete their shopping experience and to reduce the refusal rates. Interviews allowed the respondents to raise issues that the interviewer may not have expected. Data recording table, notebooks and checklist were used to ensure all respondents were accounted for.

3.6 Analysis and Organisation of Data

The ability to produce essentially identical results after repeated use is reliability. A questionnaire is considered to be reliable if it demonstrates that it can be repeated and still attain the same results for a subsequent study (Churchill & Peter, 2007). According to Polit and Hungker (1999), validity refers to the degree to which the instrument measures what it is supposed to measure. The focus of the researcher was on content validity, which looked at the accuracy with which the questionnaire measured the factors under study. Therefore, content validity was concerned with how accurate the questions asked were able to appropriately bring out the information required. This was achieved by giving colleagues and the supervisor to check if all aspects of the questionnaire related to the themes and research questions. Reliability

was achieved through pilot testing where the same responses were achieved so as to compare reliability of findings and rating scales (Churchill & Peter, 2007).

Quantitative and qualitative data were obtained from primary and secondary data discussed earlier in the chapter. Before analysis, data coding of responses and analysis were made in order to analyse the obtained data easily. This was done entered through SPSS version 20 software on Windows 10. The task involved identifying, classifying and assigning a numeric or character symbol to data where all the responses were pre-coded. Microsoft Excel was also used to draw graphs and calculate some analytical solutions. Under the analysis of data, exploration of data was made with descriptive statistics and graphical analysis. The analysis included exploring the relationship between variables and comparing how they affect each other. This was done using cross tabulation analysis.

3.7 Ethical Consideration

Behaving ethically means that no harm should come to research participants. Participants should be agreeable to participate in the research with their privacy being respected and for participants not to be deceived by the researcher which is why the purpose of the study was explained to the study subjects for their consent. There was no plagiarism in this research as all secondary sources will be acknowledged in the reference section. The following ethical principles were used: -

a) Ethical clearance from Africa University Research Committee to conduct the research.

b) Informed consent/information sheet from participants indicating anonymity clause.

c) Approval from Choppies, Pick n Pay, SPAR and OK Retail Supermarkets to approach their customers for the purpose of this research.

3.8 Summary

This chapter's focus was on the research methodology adopted in the study and the associated reasons why certain techniques were selected. Descriptive research design was adopted, and mixed method approach was used which was both quantitative and qualitative. Non-Probability sampling design using convenience and voluntary sampling techniques was employed to select and arrive at the sample size of 80 participants. The research implemented a survey method by use of questionnaires and structured interviews which were the data collection instruments apart from input from secondary data collected through desk research. Data was coded and analysed using SPSS 20 software and Microsoft excel and presented using graphs, tables, pie charts and descriptive analysis. The next chapter focused on data presentation, analysis and interpretation.

CHAPTER 4 DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

The chapter makes use of data retrieved from the preceding chapter and quantitative and qualitative data collected is analysed, interpreted and discussions done with the aim of obtaining research conclusions and recommendations in chapter five. For easy comprehension, the data was presented in the form of graphs, tables, and various diagrams as well as pie charts.

4.2 Data Presentation Analysis

Data retrieved from SPSS version 20 software was analysed and findings discussed according to the questionnaire sections as follows: -

- Section A - Demographic analysis

- Section B – Gendered consumer shopping behaviour and motivation analysis

4.2.1 Primary Data Reporting

An overwhelming response rate of 100% was achieved with all 80 respondents completing and returning their questionnaires. The rate is relatively large enough to be used as a basis for representation as 70% is considered the least acceptable rate of return of questionnaires (Wierman, 1995).

Table 4. 1 Gender response rate

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	40	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Male	40	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	80	100.0	100.0	

The Table 4.1 summarises the 100% response rate of participants in the research. This forms a solid basis of ascertaining a balance needed in exploring the gender difference factors of the study. Analysing the responses of these 40 females and 40 male customers will give us a clear insight into the impact of gender on consumer store choice. Adequate and equal gender representation is enabled through the 50/50 split of the study sample.

4.2.2 Questionnaire responses

The following section outlines responses from participants per question asked in the data collection instrument with the aim of answering the research questions. The demographic information given aided the research in ascertaining the validity and reliability of the information given to achieve research objectives. Demographic information such as age, levels of qualification and income gave an insight into probable reasons why men and women of various age groups make certain shopping decisions.

4.2.2.1 Respondents age distribution

The Table 4.2 below shows the distribution of age group represented in the sample size. Of interest, each age group was relatively represented such that no misconceptions will arise from the data obtained in terms of age biasness.

Table 4. 2 Respondents age distribution

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
18-25 years	19	23.8	23.8	23.8
26-30 years	28	35.0	35.0	58.8
31-40 years	14	17.5	17.5	76.3
41-50 Years	10	12.5	12.5	88.8
51-55 years	5	6.3	6.3	95.0
56 and above	4	5.0	5.0	100.0
Total	80	100.0	100.0	

Figure 4.1 below clearly shows the sample age groups proportions versus the whole sample size.
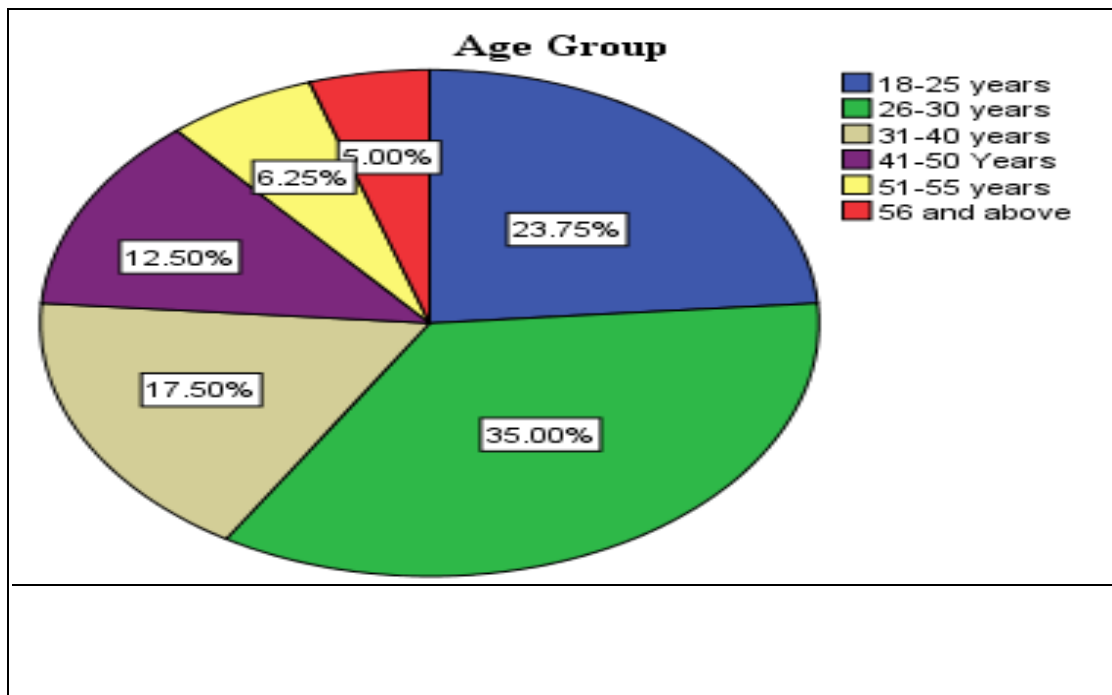
Figure 4. 1 Respondents Age Distribution

In Figure 4.1 Age group of 26-30 years represented the highest with 35% of the sample size which constitutes recent university graduates, employment seeking active segment of the population sample. 23.8% of the sample comprised of 18-25 years age group whilst who relatively are dependents by nature. Age groups 31-40 years and 45-50 years represent 17.5% and 12.5% respectively who constitute a more mature working-class category of respondents whose input is invaluable to the research as experience on life, budgeting and experience. Age group 51-55 years and 56 years and above both had 6.3% and 5% respectively, having the least representation of the sample. This age group represents elderly and pensioners who may not always have time and energy for shopping and tend to delegate shopping responsibility to the younger age groups. The purpose of age distribution analysis was to validate the adequacy of representation of each age group in study and the contributions made by the sample insinuating that primary data being collected is valid and unbiased. Age

and marital status were analysed and considered as the affect the store choice and time spent on the shopping activity (Paulins & Geistfeld, 2003).

Table 4. 3 Employment status and education qualification

		Qualification					
		Primary School	Seconda ry School	Diploma	Degree	Masters Degree	Total
Employment Status	Self Employed	1	3	0	0	0	4
	Employed for Wage-Public	0	0	0	4	0	4
	Employed for Wage - Private	0	4	18	25	8	55
	Student/Dependent	0	3	2	12	0	17
Total		1	10	20	41	8	80

Table 4.3 represents the level of education qualification and employment status of the sample. 63 respondents representing 78.75% of the respondents have a source of income as they are either self-employed (4), employed in the public sector (4) or employed in the private sector (55), whilst the remaining 17 being 21.25% of the sample are students or dependents. Level of education plays an important role to purchasing decision making as it impacts on an individual's ability to appreciate and comprehend the various store aesthetics, assess sales promotion and their usefulness and influence, measure level of customer service quality and even their ability to even respond to the questionnaire without difficulty. This is consistent with Prasad and Reddy (2007) who also emphasised that demographic characteristics such as the age, income, education and location of residence affect shopping behaviour of consumers.

Employment status gratifies the availability of some form of financial capacity to fulfil a need nevertheless, magnitude of intended purchase. Absence of any form of financial resource results in the respondents' inability to undergo the shopping experience and hence make good judgement of the factors under study. Ioannis et al., (2010) support this statement insinuating that the level of income as well negatively causes an impact on both the consumer attitudes and purchase intentions.

Table 4. 4 Gender monthly income levels

	Monthly Income				Total
	0-1,000	1001-3000	3,001-5,000	5,001-10,000	
Gender Female	7	18	10	5	40
Male	13	11	7	9	40
Total	20	29	17	14	80

Table 4.4 summarises the distribution on income levels for both male and female shoppers. 45% (18) of the women have income between $1,000-3,000 whilst 37.5% are above $3,000 and 0.175% below $1,000. On the contrary, 32.5% (13) of the 40 male shoppers were of income below $1,000 whilst 27.5% have income between $1,001-3,000 and the remaining 40% has income above $3,001.

Figure 4.2 below graphically shows the distribution of male and female respondents' income levels as summarised in Table 4.4 revealing the different disparities of income levels in the sample size. The distributions resemble a fair representation of each income category in the sample population.
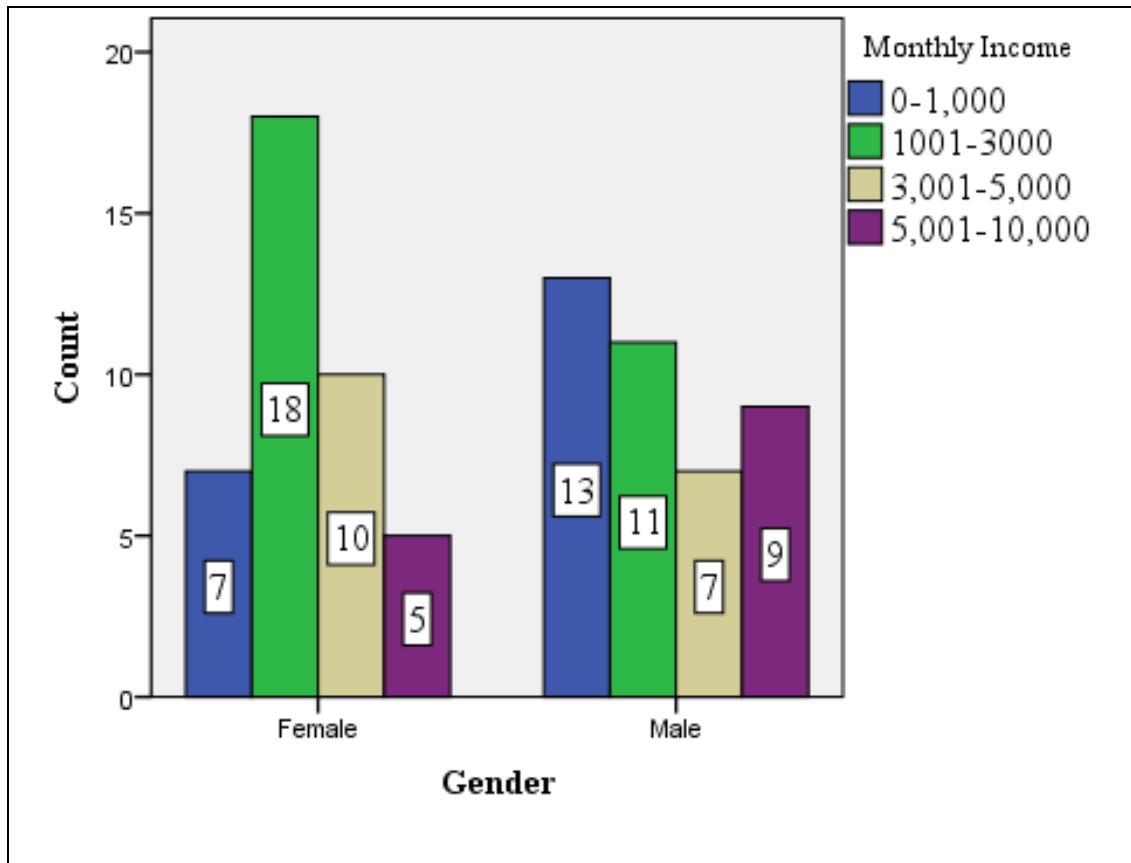
Figure 4. 2 Monthly income by gender

The financial capacity of participants was vital to the study as it had a direct impact of the consumer's decision-making process by ascertaining the fact that the participant's intention is to undergo a shopping experience to satisfy a need with enough buying power. Roberts (2013) supports this fact value that a shopper seeks is frugality which could mean for higher income shoppers, selecting a different cut of meat, for enthusiast shoppers buying more and saving, for middle income shoppers its choosing a store brand instead of national brand, for low income shoppers its selecting a smaller package size and the struggling shopper choosing and entirely new retailer and product sourcing.

Table 4. 5 Shopping frequency by gender

		Shopping Frequency				Total
		Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Other	
Gender	Female	4	27	7	2	40
	Male	5	12	22	1	40
Total		9	39	29	3	80

Table 4.5 Show summarises the respondents' shopping habits or frequency. 48.75% (39 shoppers) shop weekly whilst 36.25% shop monthly. Of the 39 shoppers, women constituted 69% concluding that women shop more frequently than men. Only 9 shoppers, being 11.25% shop daily whilst the remaining 3 shoppers at 3.73% responded indifferently that they delegate shopping duties unless necessary or convenient for them.
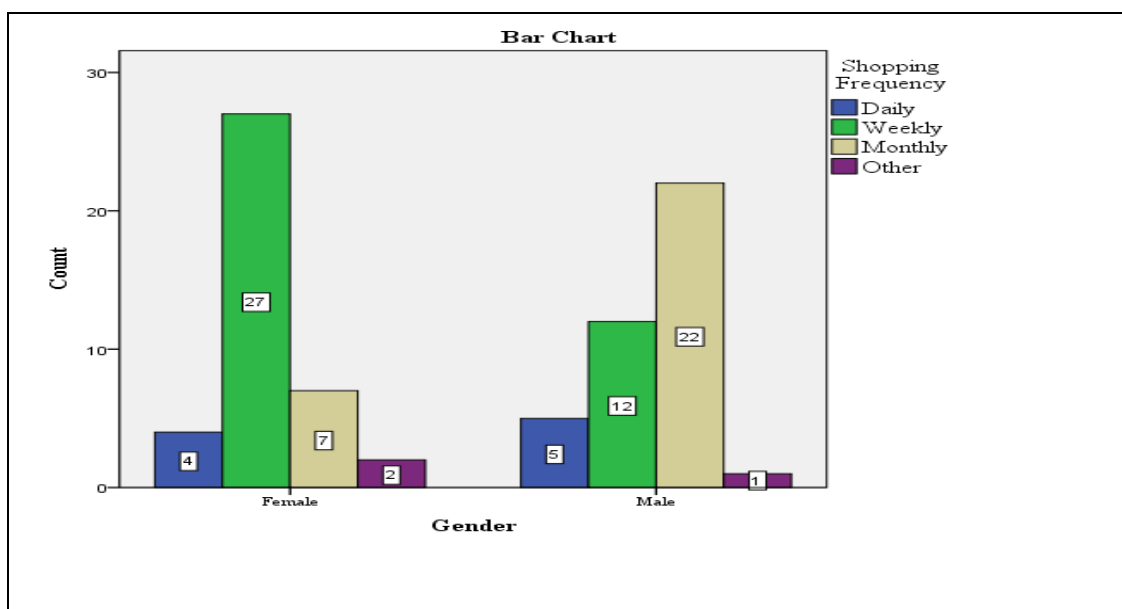
Figure 4. 3 Shopping frequency

As shown in Figure 4.3 female respondents shop more regularly than male respondents on a weekly basis whilst men shop more monthly. The results are consistent with the findings by Hart et al., (2007), who noted that women view shopping as a leisurely activity including social interactions. This explains the weekly nature of store visits. Men shop monthly as supported by Bakewell and Mitchell (2004) who alluded that men generally see themselves as competent shoppers and hence one consolidated visit to the supermarket is more than enough. This however contradicts with Kuruvilla et al., (2009) who in their research found that men visited the malls more frequently than women. This remains a debatable paradigm which is a cause for further research.

Table 4. 6 Shopping decision motivation

		Decision Influencer				Total
		Necessity by Household	Impulse Buying	Brand Loyalty	Opportunity for Specials	
Gender	Female	21	5	6	8	40
	Male	22	9	6	3	40
Total		43	14	12	11	80

Table 4.6 encapsulates the reasons why most people make a decision to go shopping. 53.75% (43 respondents) of respondents believe shopping is done due to a necessity to cater for the household's needs. 17.5% (14 respondents) do it out of impulsive buying whilst 15% (12 respondents) are just loyal to the retail store brand and will continue to patronise that particular store regardless of store atmospherics, sales promotions offered and customer service level. The remaining 11 respondents

constituting 13.5% of the sample take advantage of instore or advertised specials being offered at that time. This also showed that women are motivated more by bargains than men as repeated in a study by Bastos (2009) who found that women love shopping when they are in a tighter financial position and satisfaction is greater when they get a good deal or bargain. Ultimately, the motivation behind any consumer's decision to shop to satisfy a need regardless of the store selected. From the information provided, both men and women are family centric and driven to shop as an obligation to family needs as represented by a combined 53.75%, with 55 % of the men (22 out of 40) and 52.5% of the women (21 out of 40) dominating in the 'necessity by household' category. This is largely supported by Dholakia (1999) who pointed out that the retail setting is likely where the changing roles will make the greatest impact. Women find shopping pleasurable as it gives them an opportunity to interact with family and consider it a utilitarian activity (Thrassou et al., 2008). Lewis (2008) is consistent with the findings that content responsible women consider shopping as an errand or chore. This is also shown by the 20% of women who consider shopping for necessity as an influencer for shopping.

4.2.3 Influence of Store attributes

The following store atmospherics were investigated, and the proceeding results obtained: -

   i.   Store ambiance - this includes lighting, music, smell, and air conditioning

   ii.   Store product variety – this pertains to instore aisle organisation of products, product variety and easy location. Basically convenience.

   iii. Cleanliness – general hygiene in the store

iv.   Product Quality – product durability, health benefits, freshness

Table 4. 7 Store ambiance rating

	Ambiance Rating					Total
	Most Least Influencer	Least Influencer	Influencer	Better Influencer	Best Influencer	
Gender Female	3	0	4	18	15	40
Male	2	3	8	20	7	40
Total	5	3	12	38	22	80

Table 4.7 shows that 75% of the respondents as indicated by better (38) and best (22) influencer, valued store ambiance when making a decision to select a store for their shopping experience regardless of which section they intend to visit. Stores with favourable ambiance are likely to increase a positive buying experience and customer satisfaction (Babin & Darden, 1999). The results are also consistent with the findings by Tlappana (2009) who pointed store environment and image as tangible and intangible elements that affect store patronage decision of a consumer. This is shown in the findings where 35/40 men are influenced by store ambiance and aligning with findings by Otnes and McGrath (2001) who also highlighted that the format and ambiance of the store has its own impact on the shoppers for both male and female shoppers.

Table 4. 8 Store product variety rating

		Variety Rating					Total
		Most least Influencer	Least Influencer	Influencer	Better Influencer	Best Influencer	
Gender	Female	0	0	8	19	13	40
	Male	2	3	10	19	6	40
Total		2	3	18	38	19	80

Table 4.8 illustrates that 71.25% of the respondents considered store product variety as an essential motivator for their store choice. These are represented by those that selected better (38) and best (19) influencer with male shoppers being 43.75% and women 40% agreeing to be influenced by store product variety. Male shoppers seemed more influenced than female shoppers as represented by the difference in percentages. The findings by Mulky and Nargundkar (2003) are in agreement that convenience and merchandise assortment were the most important factors influencing retail store choice behaviour. Roy (2005) studied factors governing the consumers' choice of supermarkets and identified that add-on benefits, general services, convenience and variety as influencers in store choice which is consistent with the findings of the study.

Table 4. 9 Cleanliness rating

		Cleanliness Rating					Total
		Most least Influencer	Least Influencer	Influencer	Better Influencer	Best Influencer	
Gend er	Female	0	1	7	20	12	40
	Male	1	2	9	20	8	40
Total		1	3	16	40	20	80

Table 4.9 supports the notion that respondents considered the cleanliness of the store as an influencer in their decision. This is shown by the results that 75% of the respondents selected better (40) and best (20) influencer. This is supported by Lee et al, (2005) who found that men enjoy the shopping experience more when the store is clean. 90%, that is 36 out of 40, of the men were in support of cleanliness as a motivator of store choice which is also consistent with the findings by Mortimer and Clarke (2011) who identified cleanliness as one of the important store attributes as determinants of store selection.

Table 4. 10 Product quality rating

		Product Quality Rating					Total
		Most least Influencer	Least Influencer	Influencer	Better Influencer	Best Influencer	
Gend er	Female	1	1	1	24	13	40
	Male	2	5	3	19	11	40
Total		3	6	4	43	24	80

Results shown in Table 4.10 revealed that 71 respondents, being 88.75% of the sample, placed importance on product quality provided by stores as one of the motivators for selecting the store for their shopping experience. Of these female shoppers constituted 47.5% whilst male shoppers 41.25%. However, 11.25% (9 respondents) disregarded product quality as a factor in choice selection. Robert (2013) in support of these results by stating that a retailer's desired image and the quality perception carried by the products should reinforce each other.

The findings show that both male and female customers considered store attributes such as ambiance, cleanliness, product variety as well as product quality as factors to consider when deciding on which store to select for their shopping experience. In addition, Kuruvilla et al., (2009) as highlighted in that women had a better attitude towards parking availability and convenience, quality of products, ambiance and amenities. Stores with a favourable atmosphere are likely to increase the positive buying experience and customer satisfaction (Babin & Darden, 1996). This is also consistent with results of a study conducted in Greece, where product assortment and quality were found to be the key contributory factors of customer's decision or choice (Baltas & Papastathopoulou, 2003).

4.2.4 Sales Promotions

Table 4.11 below shows that 60 respondents both male and female, being 75% of the sample, acknowledge that marketing tools influence their decision in store selection whilst on the other hand, 25% (20 respondents) differed in their line of thought.

Table 4. 11 Role of marketing tools in purchasing decision

| | | Marketing Tools Role in Decision | | Total |
		Yes	No	
Gender	Female	29	11	40
	Male	31	9	40
Total		60	20	80

Acting as a store traffic stimulate, marketing tools tend to lead customers purchase more of their regular purchases. Kumar and Das (2009) supported this fact stating that 20% of such customers are prey to marketing tools. Basing on the results, male shoppers tend to be more convinced by marketing tools than female shoppers though the difference is insignificant. This may be because men that do enjoy shopping were not only prepared to spend time shopping but purchased impetuously and without budget consideration (Bakewell & Mitchell, 2004). The findings are also consistent with Kopalle et al., (1999) who found that price promotions tend to enhance consumer price sensitivity which in turn increase short term brand sales.

In order to zero in on which marketing tool best captivated the respondents, the results below were reflective of their perception towards store choice decision motivation.

Table 4. 12 Marketing tools rating

		Sales Promotions	Advertising	Direct Marketing	Events	Public Relations	Personal Selling
Marketing Tools	No Contribution	30	43	46	46	50	46
	Most Least contribution	1	0	6	3	1	1
	Least Contribution	2	3	9	1	3	2
	Somewhat Contributes	7	12	10	10	6	8
	Better Contributer	20	11	7	12	10	12
	Best Contributer	20	11	2	8	10	11
Total		80	80	80	80	80	80

Table 4.12 summarises the response towards contribution of marketing tools in the purchasing decision process of store selection. 47 individuals, that is 58.75%, responded that Sales Promotions have an influence in their store selection decision whilst 33 respondents insinuate that sales promotion play no role in their decision. With regards to the other marketing tools, respondents somewhat had negative attitude towards the other marketing tools as shown below: -

i.   Advertising, 46 respondents (57.5%)

ii. Direct marketing 61 respondents (76.25%)

iii. Events and Experiences – 50 respondents (62.5%)

iv. Public Relations – 54 respondents (67.5%)

v.   Personal Selling – 49 respondents (61.25%)

The above statistics clearly show that amongst the marketing tools available to the retailers to increase store traffic, sales promotion strategies tend to be more acceptable and enticing to consumers. This is also highly supported by Kumar and Das (2009)

who stated that 20% of customers purchase more of their regular purchases due to sales promotion.

4.2.5 Customer service and support

Table 4. 13 Customer service

		Gender		Total
		Female	Male	
Customer Service Influence	Yes	28	24	52
	No	12	13	28
Total		40	40	80

Table 4.13 summarises the response pertaining to contribution of level of customer service on consumer purchasing decision. 52 respondents representing 65% of the sample concur with the notion that customer service plays a vital role in repeat sales by customers. However, a mere 35% of the respondents are not influenced by the service rendered to them by store attendants.

Table 4. 14 Summary customer service attributes

		Pleasant Welcome	Swift Check-outs	Shop Assistance	Packing & Car park help	Courteous staff	Honest & Integrity
Customer Service	Best Contributer	53	49	30	57	30	28
	Better Contributer	1	1	5	13	18	22
	Somewhat Contributes	7	7	8	1	5	7
	Least Contributor	6	8	12	4	12	9
	Most Least Contributor	13	15	5	5	15	14
Total		80	80	80	80	80	80

Results summarised in Table 4.14 show that 61 out of 80 respondents consider a pleasant welcome from store attendance to be an enticer into their store whilst 71 respondents would rather prefer being assisted in packing and ferrying groceries to the car park and the most important service that should be provided by retail stores. 57 respondents vouch for swift check outs at tills and advocate for honesty and integrity in addressing matters of product knowledge and purchase recommendations by staff to customers on various products. 53 respondents also chose staff courtesy towards customers as a contributor in their purchasing decision.

Furrer et al., (2000) highlighted in support of this stating that perceived reliability can be shown through consistent positive service performance by retail personnel whilst Parasuraman et al., (1988) viewed perceived inconsistency as symbolic of risky shopping place. Boshoff and Terblache (2004) consider complaint or queries handling by store personnel as important elements that capture the customer's needs which is represented by 51 respondents who agreed that courteous staff appeal to their motivational senses in store selection.

4.3 Discussions and Interpretation

The survey results show that shopping is still a gendered activity with men and women sharing responsibility. As we investigate the future, there are likely to be significant changes in the allocation of responsibilities within households as changing roles are evolving within households and men in general. In addition, many product categories once seen as female, for example, fashion magazines and cosmetics, now have male products that appeal to their feministic inner side.

4.3.1 Importance of gendered difference in purchasing decision/shopping

The findings clearly showed that shopping has become a female dominated activity due to the frequency of visits. Women consider shopping to be a leisurely and social activity where they converge with friends to destress. In addition, shopping has become a utilitarian activity to women as they feel a sense of obligation to their family's needs. However, men tend to be more conscious of their shopping, visiting monthly rather that daily or weekly as women do. This may be because men generally see themselves as competent shoppers, (Blackwell & Mitchell, 2004). Both male and female shoppers moreover tend to be lured towards shopping when financially capacitated and motivated by purchasing necessities for households, rather than impulse buying or taking advantage of bargains. In addition, female shoppers who shop more frequently feel reinforced by their families' gratitude of their shopping. This then insinuates that activities and behaviours which are reinforced are more likely to engage on a continuing basis (Dholakia, 1999).

4.3.2 Influence of store attributes on motivation and behaviour

Based on the findings, consumers are attracted to the store atmospherics and concerned about the store ambiance, product variety, cleanliness and products quality provided by the retail store. On a hot summer day, no one wants to shop in a hot crowded, smelly environment and hence the need to ensure all store attributes in all sections of the supermarket are appealing to customers. This agrees with Mohanty and Sikaris (2011) who suggested that the shopping experience of the customer is completely dependent on innovation by enhancing customer satisfaction and adding value to their shopping experience. In-store convenience represents an important attribute of store environmental stimuli. This includes store layout which assist customers in planning their trip in terms of orientation and direction. Bell (1999) adds that consumers are likely to consider product variety in store, customer service and visual appeal as influencers in their shopping decision.

4.3.3 Influence of sales promotion/marketing tools motivation and behaviour

Though marketers use a combination of marketing tools to attract customer traffic and retain customers, the study showed that sales promotion were more influential in luring customers to their store. Kumar and Das (2009) support this notion stating that 20% of customer purchases are as a result of sales promotion. This may be because sales promotions run on a limited time string and customers would want to get value for their money immediately. Sales promotions appeal more to the frequent female shoppers, impulse buyer and therapy seeking shoppers with favourable financial backing as rewards are instantly redeemable. Sales promotion tend stimulate their perception on bargain attainment especially now with the increasing cost of living

being experienced in Zimbabwe, what motivates shoppers is the positive impact bargains will have on their purchase basket and pocket. The results show that the other marketing tools such as advertising, public relations, direct marketing, events and personal selling though important to marketing strategy, where retail supermarkets are concerned, they tend to be less effective to consumers in luring them to their stores and prompting sales.

4.3.4 Influence of customer service support on motivation and behaviour

The survey results show that customers' perception of good service entail meeting their needs in a timely, efficient and pleasant manner. From the array of customer service attributes customers highly regard having their groceries packed and accompanying them to their vehicles as the most important factor which influences their decision to select a store for their shopping experience. No customer wants to stagger along with heavy packages to their vehicle for fear of harassment by street hooligans on the way or having to pull a trolley to the vehicle and return it. Customers consider this gesture as more personalised and appealing to their safety needs which in-turn cements brand loyalty, trust and turns customers into raving fans. On the other hand, other factors such as swift check outs at tills, in-store shop assistance from energetic knowledgeable in-store personnel, pleasant welcome by staff to a customer in distress and courteousness and honesty in service also play a role in attracting customers.

4.3.5 Suggestions

Seventy-five percent of the respondents put emphasis on customer complaints resolution. Purchase returns, faulty goods under warranty as well as breakages or expired products should be attended to swiftly and refunds were applicable executed. Over and above this, respondents also encouraged the retailers to avail secure private parking for shoppers within proximity from the store as the current parking was invaded by taxis and public transport operators. In addition, customers prompted retail supermarkets to initiate online shopping and deliveries at homes and workplaces. Of importance was assistance in packing groceries at the Point of sale as in most cases, POS operators are only concerned about the next customer even though the current customer's groceries are still covering the POS area awaiting packing. This somehow frustrates customers as they feel overwhelmed with the need to speed up their once pleasant shopping experience only to be dumped at the till. Of importance is assisting senior citizens in store through designated Point of sale areas strictly reserved for them. For easy identification of product categories, customers suggested aisle labelling as store navigation guides and for store personnel to take cognizant of 'customers in distress or confusion' and quickly assist.

4.4 Summary

The chapter sought to present and analyse research results relative to the research objectives, research questions and assumptions highlighted in chapter one. The response rate was given of the target sample of respondents and findings were presented in the form of tables, charts and graphs for easy comprehension and analysis.

The next chapter will make use of the results in arriving at the conclusion and probable

recommendations of the research.

CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Chapter five concludes that study giving the research conclusions based on the results in the preceding chapter in meeting the research objectives which were to ascertain the gender sensitivity of consumer shopping experience, identify instore attributes that influence consumer store choice, establish the effectiveness of marketing tools in consumer store choice and describe the extent to which customer service and support influence consumer supermarket selection. Recommendations and suggestions are then suggested to the retail supermarkets on how best they can implement these strategies to attract and retain customers to their stores increase customer traffic and sales sustainably. Areas of further research will be recommended by the research based on suggestions made by respondents and anomalies or deterrence's the research may have encountered.

5.2 Summary

5.2.1 Ascertaining the gender sensitivity of consumer shopping experience

Consumer motivations on store selection are highly gender sensitive and retailers need to take into consideration the changing lifestyle and roles in households which may alter their perception of who to target with marketing efforts. Both men and women are family centric and driven to shop as an obligation to family needs. Women being more utilitarian value frequent shoppers, bargain leisure and therapy seekers who buy impulsively and take pride in their ability to shop. Men on the other hand tend to

purchase when the need is immediate thereby limiting the ability to compare or take advantage of bargains for out of season commodities.

5.2.2 Identify instore attributes that influence consumer store choice

Retail store has its own personality comprising of functional and psychological attributes. Store attributes such as ambiance, cleanliness, product variety and product quality need to be continuously perfected as these have a detrimental impact on consumer purchasing decision. The convenience or location of the retail area or store, availability of parking and other amenities, cleanliness, appearance and atmosphere of store are all dimensions that consumers are likely to adopt holistic evaluation of retail stores and appeal more to the female shoppers whilst men are more influenced by product quality, variety and durability. Competitive advantage can be attained were more emphasis is placed on these factors over competitors.

5.2.3 Establish the effectiveness of marketing tools in consumer store choice

Marketing tools such as sales promotion are the most effective tools in attracting customers, especially impulse buying and bargain seeking female shoppers. Sales promotions give retailers high financial returns as compared to advertising, public relations, direct marketing and personal selling. Marketing communications and sales promotions are not only used to attract new customers. But now more to reinforce and retain loyal customers which is the key to business success in the retail industry.

5.2.4 Describe the extent to which customer service and support influence consumer supermarket selection

Superior customer service is what every customer anticipates for total enjoyment of their shopping experience. As a shopper's quality perception of a retailer increases, quality expectations also follow likewise, including expectations for service quality. Staff capability of having product knowledge and giving honest recommendations to customers on purchases is important to male customer just as staff packing groceries and assisting customers to their vehicles as well as remembering the names of frequent regular customer is to female shoppers. Customers appreciate the extra mile suppliers provide and will inevitably reward retailers through repeat purchases, referrals and brand loyalty.

5.2.5 Suggest ways in which retailers can retain customers that would have completed the shopping experience

Through discussions with the participants, emphasis was placed on customer complaint resolution, which mostly affected female shoppers as they are the ones particular about cost saving, bargains and value for money on purchased items.

In order to retain customers, retailers should strive to attend swiftly to service recovery in cases of purchase returns, faulty merchandise under warranty as well as breakages or expired products.

Retailers should also endeavour to speed up POS waiting and queuing times as well as assist in packing of purchased merchandise by customers and as well as accompanying

vulnerable female shoppers and senior citizens to their parking areas. These suggestions came highly recommended by the participants and stood out as being retention strategies that would entice them maintain to store patronage and loyalty.

5.3 Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, retail supermarkets are continually improving their marketing efforts and customer service to curb customer exits but rather attract and increase customer traffic. Their focus on gender impact on sales has resulted in changes in the way retailers promote and market their brands, appealing more to female and male preferences and concerns.

Store personnel training and development will soon be the centre of retail competitive advantage as the industry is centred on personal interactions with customers whose high expectations of product and service offering is dependent on previous shopping experience and perception of current store offering. Improvement in product assortment and freshness, investment in store upgrades, equipment and facilities such as air conditioning, refrigerators and Point of Sale systems all contribute to the competitive advantage of each store over the other as it appeals differently to shoppers' age and gender.

The Zimbabwean economy has negatively impacted on the ultimate consumer "pocket" such that the retail market has gone into a 'survival of the fittest' mode where those who have innovative and financial muscle win the retail war as it is all about enhancing that one sought after customer's shopping experience.

5.4 Implications

The research revealed that for retailers to be effective in implementing strategies to attract customers to their stores, a lot has to be done in the areas of identifying male and female motivations and behaviours detrimental to attract and increase store traffic. Retailers must be willing to invest in their customers, in other words, spend money to make money on the people who give you money. Retail staff training and developmental programs, provision of designated and secure customer parking and effective management by walking around to ensure that customer service quality, store atmospherics, product assortment and merchandising are kept in high standard and up to scale should become the pillar of retail success.

5.5 Recommendations

In the area of impact of gendered differences in shopping choice, considering the above conclusions, retailers must consider human resource development strategies for their staff and equip them to deal with the various preferences and habits of both female and male shoppers. Continuous training is required to keep up with changing global retail service scape trends and standards. This will help in areas such as complaint management, quick check outs at POS and customer assistance in grocery packing, after sale service and customer service delivery.

Secondly, the research recommends that retailers continuously upgrade their amenities such as air conditioning and refrigerators as these form an integral part of the store ambiance the appeals to the sensory side of customers.

The third recommendation is that retailers contract mystery shoppers to regularly assist them in noting irregularities on standards and keep staff alert where customer service is concerned. These mystery shoppers can also evaluate impact of instore sales promotions by interacting with customers and taking note of their views. Last but not least, the research recommends that adequate and safe parking be created for shoppers. Unavailability of parking can easily deter a potential customer and push them to competitors.

5.6 Suggestions for further Research

Despite having answered and provided solutions to the problems raised in the study, challenges faced by Zimbabwe retailers need to be researched further for their success and continuity. The areas of potential further study relate to the following: -

i.   Provision of credit facilities to regular customers who are credit worthy as a customer retention strategy

ii. Rebranding and merging with international retail brands such as Wallmart, as a competitive advantage strategy to enhance brand loyalty and confidence amongst customers thereby retaining and attracting more customers

The retailers in this study, Pick n Pay, Spar, OK Supermarket and Choppies need to map strategies that are in line with regional and international retail standards. Managers have to be accountable for store performance and profitability as well as maintain the standards of quality and service to customers if the business is to succeed and operate sustainably and profitably.

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APPENDIX 1: Questionnaire Survey Instrument

Gendered Differences in Consumer Shopping Choice, Motivations and Behaviour: A Study of Factors That Influence Consumer Selection of Retail Supermarket in Mutare.

My name is Tatenda Pamela Mukombe, a final year (EMBA) student from Africa University. I am carrying out a study on Gendered Differences in Consumer Shopping Choice, Motivations and Behaviour: A Study of Factors That Influence Consumer Selection of Retail Supermarket in Mutare. The objective of the questionnaire is to obtain data that will be used in the study of factors that influence consumer selection of retail supermarket in Mutare.

Kindly note that your responses will be held in good confidence and your name will not appear in any written report or be used in connection with information you may offer to us. This interview will only take 10 minutes of your time and feel free to answer as many questions as you feel comfortable to do. You are also free to stop at any time should you not feel comfortable.

Please return the completed Questionnaire

TATENDA MUKOMBE on:

WhatsApp: 00263 778 179 818   **Email**: dapirat@gmail.com

By Hand To: Attention Tatenda Mukombe at any SPAR, Pick n Pay, OK, Choppies Mutare Supermarkets Customer Help Desk

Please telephone for any queries about the questionnaire to TATENDA MUKOMBE on 00263 778179818 or 00263202061533

Thank you for agreeing to participate

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS BY MARKING A

TICK (√) WITHIN THE APPROPRIATE BOX.

SECTION 1– PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Indicate your Gender: FEMALE ☐   MALE ☐

2. Indicate your marital status: MARRIED ☐   SINGLE ☐

   DIVORCED ☐   WIDOWED ☐

3. Please indicate, which best describes your age group?

   18 – 25 years ☐   26 – 30 years ☐   31- 40 years ☐

   41 – 50 years ☐   51 - 55 years ☐   56 years and above ☐

4. Please indicate, which best describes your highest level of educational qualification?

QUAIFICATION	TICK (√)
None	
Primary School	
Secondary / High School	
Diploma	
Degree	
Master's Degree	
Doctorate	

5. Please indicate, which best describes your employment?

EMLOYMENT STATUS	TICK (√)
Self employed	
Employed for Wage/Salary (Public Sector)	
Employed for Wage/Salary (Private Sector)	
Student (Dependent on parent/Guardian)	
Unemployed and looking for work	
Unable to work	

6. What is your monthly income scale in ZWL?

MONTHLY INCOME SCALE (ZWL DOLLAR)	TICK (√)
0 – 1,000	
1,001 - 3,000	
3,001 - 5,000	
5,001 – 10,000	
Above 10,000	

7. Please indicate which best describes your household composition?

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION	NUMBER (√)
Children 0 - 5 years	
Children 6 -12 years	

Children 13 – 18 years	
Youths 19 – 24 years	
Adults 25 – 55 years	
Adults over 56 years	

SECTION B

1. Please indicate, how many times you go shopping.

FREQUENCY	TICK (√)
Daily	
Weekly	
Monthly	
Other – Specify	

2. What influences your decision to go shopping?

Decision Influencer	TICK (√)
Necessity for product by household	
Impulse buying due to funds being available	
Brand loyalty to supermarket due to excellent service and variety	
Take advantage of sales promotions / specials	

3. Which section in the supermarket do you frequently visit?

SUPERMARKET SECTION	TICK (√)
Confectionery (Bakery)	
Fruit and Vegetables	
Detergents and Toiletries	
Food and Beverage	
Home and Garden	

4. How best can you rate the section of the supermarket as being the influencer in your store choice on a scale of 1 – 5 with 1 being the least and 5 being the best?

SECTION	Store attribute rating (1 – 5)			
	Ambiance	Variety	Cleanliness	Product Quality
Confectionery				
Fruit and Vegetables				
Detergents & Toiletries				
Food and Beverage				
Home and Garden				

5. Do Marketing tools play an effective role in your decision to supermarket choice?

Yes / No_____

If Yes, please indicate which marketing tool best contributes to your store choice on a scale of 1 – 5 with 1 being the least and 5 being the best?

Marketing Tool	Rating
Sales Promotion (short-term incentives i.e. coupons, discounts)	
Advertising (newspaper, radio or television)	
Direct Marketing (SMSs, cold calling, e-mail, faxes etc.)	
Events and experiences (sponsored events/programs)	
Public relations & Publicity (image promoting /protection programs)	
Personal Selling (face to face interaction)	

6. Is your choice of supermarket influenced by the customer service and support provided by employees of the supermarket? Yes / No _____

If Yes, please indicate which service attribute you value that best contributes to your store choice on a scale of 1 – 5 with 1 being the least and 5 being the best?

Customer service attribute	Rating
Pleasant welcome/greeting	
Swift check-out service at tills	
Assistance in store aisle navigation	
Groceries packaging and assistance to car park	
Courteousness of staff (willingness and readiness to assist customers)	
Honesty & integrity (product knowledge/ recommendation on purchases)	

7. Are there any other reasons that influence your decision to select a particular supermarket for your shopping experience? Yes/No _____

If yes, please indicate below: -

_____

_____

_____

8. What recommendations would you give to Store Management that will ensure customers choose their store for a shopping experience?

_____

_____

_____

_____

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME. The Researcher will ensure that your views are used to influence the service provided by retailers for a perfect shopping experience

APPENDIX 2: Approval letters

COLLEGE OF
BUSINESS, PEACE, LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE

A UNITED METHODIST –RELATED INSTITUTION

P.O BOX 1320, MUTARE, ZIMBABWE ● TEL: (263-20) 60075/60026/61611/61618 ● FAX: (263-20) 61785/63284 ● EMAIL: cbplgdean@africau.edu;cbplgsec@africau.edu; cbplgadmin@africau.edu

25 September 2019

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Re: Permission to Undertake Research for Dissertation August – December 2019

Tatenda Pamela Mukombe student registration number **181313** is a student at Africa University. She is enrolled in the Master of Executive Business Administration and is currently conducting research for her dissertation, which is required for completion of the programme in December 2019. The research topic is **"Gendered differences in consumer shopping choice, motivations and behaviour: A study of factors that influence consumer selection of retail supermarket in Mutare."**

Tatenda is expected to undertake her data collection from August to December 2019 before the dissertation can be submitted to the College in December 2019. The student will share with you the results of this research after its approval by the College.

We thank you for your support and cooperation regarding this research.

Yours sincerely

B. Dodzo
College Administrator

AFRICA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS, PEACE
LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE
2 5 SEP 2019
BOX 1320, MUTARE
SEND / RECEIVED

AFRICA UNIVERSITY
RESEARCH ETHICS
COMMITTEE (AUREC)

(A United Methodist-Related Institution)
INVESTING IN AFRICA'S FUTURE

Ref: AU1210/19   10 January, 2020

Tatenda Mukombe
C/O CBPLG
Africa University
Box 1320
Mutare

RE: **GENDERED DIFERENCES IN CONSUMER SHOPPING CHOICE MOTIVATIONS**
         AND BEHAVIOUR: A STUDY OF FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE CONSUMER
         SELECTION OF RETAIL SUPERMARKET IN MUTARE

Thank you for the above titled proposal that you submitted to the Africa University Research Ethics
Committee for review. Please be advised that AUREC has reviewed and approved your application to
conduct the above research.

The approval is based on the following.
   a) Research proposal
   b) Questionnaires
   c) Informed consent form
   •   **APPROVAL NUMBER**   AUREC1210/19
This number should be used on all correspondences, consent forms, and appropriate documents.
   •   **AUREC MEETING DATE**   NA
   •   **APPROVAL DATE**   January 10, 2020
   •   **EXPIRATION DATE**   January 10, 2021
   •   **TYPE OF MEETING**   Expedited
After the expiration date this research may only continue upon renewal. For purposes of renewal, a
progress report on a standard AUREC form should be submitted a month before expiration date.
   •   **SERIOUS ADVERSE EVENTS** All serious problems having to do with subject safety must be
       reported to AUREC within 3 working days on standard AUREC form.
   •   **MODIFICATIONS** Prior AUREC approval is required before implementing any changes in the
       proposal (including changes in the consent documents)
   •   **TERMINATION OF STUDY** Upon termination of the study a report has to be submitted to
       AUREC.

Yours Faithfully

MARY CHINZOU – A/AUREC ADMINISTRATOR
FOR CHAIRPERSON, AFRICA UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

23 September 2019

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH AT SPAR

SUPERMARKET

I am a student at Africa University undertaking my Executive Masters in Business
Adminstration post graduate degree and as a requirement, I am to submit a research
of my choice in the final stage of the course.

I wish to conduct a study **"Gendered differences in consumer shopping choice,
motivations and behaviour: A study of factors that influence consumer selection
of retail supermarket in Mutare"**. It is my hope to collect data on the various
factors that influence consumers to make a decision to select a retail store for their
shopping experience and need satisfaction.

Rest assured that the information collected will be used for and only by Africa
University for academic purposes ONLY. However, it is with that regard that I will
furnish SPAR OK Supermarket with a copy of my final Research findings with the hope
that it will also aid in your business

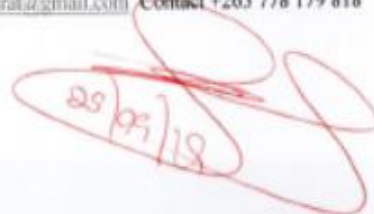Thank you in advance for your cooperation

Yours faithfully

Tatenda Pamela Mukombe

ID181313

Email: tmukombe@africau.edu ; dapirat@gmail.com Contact +263 778 179 818

23 September 2019

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH AT OK SUPERMARKET

I am a student at Africa University undertaking my Executive Masters in Business Adminstration post graduate degree and as a requirement, I am to submit a research of my choice in the final stage of the course.

I wish to conduct a study **"Gendered differences in consumer shopping choice, motivations and behaviour: A study of factors that influence consumer selection of retail supermarket in Mutare"**. It is my hope to collect data on the various factors that influence consumers to make a decision to select a retail store for their shopping experience and need satisfaction.

Rest assured that the information collected will be used for and only by Africa University for academic purposes ONLY. However, it is with that regard that I will furnish OK Supermarket with a copy of my final Research findings with the hope that it will also aid in your business

Thank you in advance for your cooperation

Yours faithfully

Tatenda Pamela Mukombe

ID181313

Email: tmukombe@africau.edu ; dapirat@gmail.com Contact +263 778 179 818

23 September 2019

Dear Sir/Madam

**RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH AT CHOPPIES
SUPERMARKET**

I am a student at Africa University undertaking my Executive Masters in Business
Adminstration post graduate degree and as a requirement, I am to submit a research
of my choice in the final stage of the course.

I wish to conduct a study **"Gendered differences in consumer shopping choice,
motivations and behaviour: A study of factors that influence consumer selection
of retail supermarket in Mutare".** It is my hope to collect data on the various
factors that influence consumers to make a decision to select a retail store for their
shopping experience and need satisfaction.

Rest assured that the information collected will be used for and only by Africa
University for academic purposes ONLY. However, it is with that regard that I will
furnish OK Supermarket with a copy of my final Research findings with the hope
that it will also aid in your business

Thank you in advance for your cooperation

Yours faithfully

Tatenda Pamela Mukombe
ID181313
Email: tmukombe@africau.edu ; dapirat@gmail.com Contact +263 778 179 818

23 September 2019

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH AT PICK N PAY

SUPERMARKET, MUTARE

I am a student at Africa University undertaking my Executive Masters in Business Adminstration post graduate degree and as a requirement, I am to submit a research of my choice in the final stage of the course.

I wish to conduct a study "**Gendered differences in consumer shopping choice, motivations and behaviour: A study of factors that influence consumer selection of retail supermarket in Mutare**". It is my hope to collect data on the various factors that influence consumers to make a decision to select a retail store for their shopping experience and need satisfaction.

Rest assured that the information collected will be used for and only by Africa University for academic purposes ONLY. However, it is with that regard that I will furnish PICK N PAY Supermarket with a copy of my final Research findings with the hope that it will also aid in your business

Thank you in advance for your cooperation

Yours faithfully

Tatenda Pamela Mukombe
ID181313
Email: tmukombe@africau.edu ; dapirat@gmail.com Contact +263 778 179 818

APPENDIX 3: Letter of Consent

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Tatenda Pamela Mukombe, a final year (EMBA) student from Africa University. I am carrying out a study **Gendered Differences in Consumer Shopping Choice, Motivations and Behaviour: A Study of Factors That Influence Consumer Selection of Retail Supermarket in Mutare**. I am kindly asking you to participate in this study by filling in the questionnaire.

What you should know about the study:

Purpose of the study:

The purpose of the study is to assess the factors that influence consumer selection of retail Supermarkets in Mutare. You were selected for the study because you are an active participant with the desirable characteristics required in the study.

Procedures and duration

If you decide to participate you will be given ample time to give your opinion. It is expected that this will take about **10 minutes** to fill in the questionnaire.

Risks and discomforts

You may have reservations in giving out information perceived confidential with fear of victimisation, or inconveniences in your time allocation. These are normal feelings.

However, the Researcher guarantees confidentiality and that no mention of your name will be requested and will remain anonymous.

Benefits and or compensation

The information requested for is expected to be given on a willing to basses without expectation of payment in return. The retailers will benefit tremendously from this research as well as the shopping population when retailers take into cognisant the Researcher's findings and recommendations to better service shoppers. However, should they want to know the results of the survey the Researcher is willing after completion to share the results with the you.

Confidentiality

The Researcher guarantees confidentiality of information obtained and that no mention of your name will be requested and will remain anonymous.

Voluntary participation

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you decide not to participate in this study, this will not affect the future relationship with the Researcher nor the retailers under study. If, however you choose to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and to discontinue participation without penalty.

Offer to answer questions

Before you sign this form, please ask any questions on any aspect of this study that is unclear to you. You may take as much time as necessary to think it over.

If you have decided to participate in this study, please sign this form in the space provide below as an indication that you have read and understood the information provided above and have agreed to participate.

---   -----------------------------

Name of Research Participant   Date

Signature of Research Participant or legally authorised representative

If you have any questions concerning this study or consent form beyond those answered by the researcher including questions about the research, your rights as a research participant, or if you feel that you have been treated unfairly and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, please feel free to contact the Africa University Research Ethics Committee on telephone (020) 60075 or 60026 extension 1156 email aurec@africau.edu

Name of Researcher – **Tatenda Pamela Mukombe**

URKUND

Urkund Analysis Result

Analysed Document: TATENDA P MUKOMBE.docx (D64696372)
Submitted: 3/2/2020 8:56:00 AM
Submitted By: djeranyama@africau.edu
Significance: 5 %

Sources included in the report:

E.MAHENDHIRAN.pdf (D50987641)
2 CHAPTER II.docx (D40431910)