

CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND THEIR IMPACT ON CUSTOMER RETENTION IN SHOPPING CENTERS IN HONG KONG

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Abstract

Research paper focuses on exploring customer engagement strategies and their impact on customer retention in shopping centers in Hong Kong. In today's competitive retail landscape, shopping centers are continuously seeking effective ways to engage customers and encourage repeat visits. This study aims to identify and analyze the customer engagement strategies implemented by shopping centers in Hong Kong, including experiential marketing, loyalty programs, in-store events, and customer relationship management initiatives. By examining the relationship between customer engagement strategies and customer retention, the study seeks to provide valuable insights into the most influential factors that contribute to customer loyalty in shopping centers. The research methodology comprises a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, including interviews with shopping center managers, customer surveys, and analysis of customer transaction data. The findings of this study will assist shopping center managers and marketers in formulating effective customer engagement strategies that lead to improved customer retention, increased customer satisfaction, and enhanced overall shopping experiences.

Keywords: customer engagement strategies, customer retention, shopping centers, Hong Kong, experiential marketing, loyalty programs, in-store events, customer relationship management, qualitative research, quantitative research.

INTRODUCTION

In the beginning of this research project, a comprehensive literature search concerning topics such as customer loyalty, customer happiness, and customer service was carried out. In the section devoted to technique, both the scales that were used in this investigation as well as the sample strategy were presented. After that, an exploratory factor analysis, also known as EFA, was performed on the variables pertaining to customer service in order to exclude and categorise them. Confirmatory factor analysis, also known as CFA, was not used in this study since the existing body of research did not have any theoretical support that were directly connected to the categorization of customer service. When classifying customer service variables, the goal of factor analysis was to add value to the existing body of research by developing a model known as the shopping centre customer service (SCCS) model. This model demonstrates how customer service influences a company's level of satisfaction and loyalty to that company. In the section devoted to the results, they discovered that EFA was responsible for eight primary components. Through a series of multiple regressions, a research model known as the SCCS model was built and evaluated for its ability to predict the impacts of customer service on levels of satisfaction and loyalty. When compared to the expected

rates, the SCCS's impacts on customer satisfaction and loyalty were modest; yet, these results are enough to explain the observed range of satisfaction and loyalty ratings. In the section devoted to drawing conclusions, the findings and suggestions for the enhancement of the quality of services provided to customers were presented.

Since the word "relationship marketing" implies this, the primary focus of this kind of marketing is on the consumers. Because of this, continual personalized help is required. Putting the needs of the customer ahead of all other considerations is a tried-and-true tactic that has been shown to result in increased customer retention and loyalty. It is not sufficient to just ensure that the people working at their support desks are kind and helpful. If a company takes a proactive and individualized approach to caring for its customers, those customers are more likely to remain loyal to that company. For many years, the retail industry has placed a premium on providing excellent service to clients and cultivating long-term relationships with those customers. A durable competitive advantage and difference from one's competitors may be achieved via the creation of satisfied and loyal customers. According to the research, there are a number of different aspects that contribute to consumer happiness and loyalty. One of these characteristics is customer service. The literature on marketing over the last two decades has made several references to the significance of providing excellent customer service. This study placed an emphasis on customer service as an important factor in both customer happiness and customer loyalty. There are a great number of research that can be found in the academic literature that demonstrate the correlations between various factors that influence satisfaction and loyalty, such as perceived quality, expectations, perceived value, and service quality, and contentment and loyalty. Only the impacts of customer service on satisfaction and loyalty were looked at for this particular piece of study. The primary objective of this study was to determine whether or not customer service has an influence on the level of satisfaction and loyalty experienced by customers.

Company's today see provided a larger their business as a method of retaining their competition in the modern market for globalisation, and they are taking these steps as of right now. To maintain its relevance in the harsh environment of today's modern economic world, every organisation requires a robust marketing strategy. A pattern of decisions made on how resources should be distributed within an organisation is what Aram and Lawal mean when they talk about strategy. This includes not just the intended goals but also perspectives on the proper and, more significantly, incorrect ways for achieving them as well. As according to Armev and Lawal, strategy involves doing research about the market and the environment in which it operates, the buying habits of consumers, the activities of competitors, as well as the necessity for and availability of marketing intermediaries. Therefore, the marketing strategy of a company may be seen as the efforts the company makes to communicate with the people it intends to sell to. Conducting market research, which includes an analysis of customer desires, attitudes, and competing products, is the first stage in developing a marketing strategy. The strategy then continues on to advertising, marketing, distribution, and, if required, customer relations, packaging, revenues, and distribution. Finally, the plan concludes with sales

and distribution. The provision of increased value to clients and the organisation at a reduced expense ought to be the primary objective of any marketing plan. A business strategy also must be seen as a means of delivering a high-quality product that fulfils the demands of customers, offering a price that is reasonable, engaging in greater distribution, and being backed by an effective promotion strategy. An effective marketing strategy is a necessary prerequisite for every business sector that want to grow their market share and reduce the impact of its competitors.

The expansion and development of economies all over the globe is supported by the proliferation of small and medium enterprises, such as those found. Because of the nature of small and medium-sized businesses, they are the most effective and dependable vehicle for ego industrial expansion. When there is intense competition both locally and internationally, it may be difficult for smaller businesses to succeed in developing countries. Discover why small and medium-sized enterprises really haven't performed as admirably as was expected, and as consequence, have just not provided as much to the expansion and growth of the economy as was hoped for. They point out that the problem has produced significant worry for the government, the people, operators, and practitioners. These challenges might have been brought on by an ineffective marketing strategy that is having a detrimental effect on the company's productivity, product quality, customer satisfaction, and profitability. To be able to deal with the stress that comes from operating in a world market that's also increasingly competitive, operators of small and medium-sized enterprises need to deliver a product that is of a great quality and comes in appealing wrapping that satisfies the expectations of consumers, in addition to offering prices that are affordable and increasing distribution. The major objective of this research project is to analyse the ways in which marketing strategies influence the level of success that small and mid-sized businesses achieve in the industry.

It is nevertheless necessary for human resources to be aware that the retail sector is not yet regarded to be an industry. In comparison to other fields of work, most people do not see working in retail as a viable alternative for a professional career. Until individuals are excited to begin their job as a retailer, it will be a challenging endeavor to get the highest levels of productivity from employees who have the lowest levels of motivation. The Human Resources division is more than just a department; it is also an institutional business partner. This means that it is able to draw lessons from the past, observe the trends of the present, and analyse the requirements and trends of the future in order to build a coming generation's group for its organisation and contribute to the practices of the relevant industry. In order for human resources to become an integrated part of the organization as a strategic function, researchers need to have a clear awareness of the advantages and prospects that HR can build upon, while also being aware of the weaknesses and dangers that the retail industry can present to HR in the form of new challenges.

As a result of the enormous growth of the retail industry as well as the participation of international players in the country's existing market, there will almost certainly be a shortage of talent in the not too distant future. Attracting the proper people, then

developing that talent to meet the needs of your firm, and finally keeping that talent is the most important and continuing challenge that every retail HR department has today. There has been a noticeable change in the emphasis of HR practices away from just recruiting and toward the cultivation of talent. To encourage their workforce, various types of businesses have developed a variety of strategies. Even while financial stability is of the utmost importance for entry-level employees, there are a variety of other considerations that go into a person's decision to work for a certain organisation.

Company's today see provided a larger their business as a method of retaining their competition in the modern market for globalisation, and they are taking these steps as of right now. To maintain its relevance in the harsh environment of today's modern economic world, every organisation requires a robust marketing strategy. A pattern of decisions made on how resources should be distributed within an organisation is what Aram and Lawal mean when they talk about strategy. This includes not just the intended goals but also perspectives on the proper and, more significantly, incorrect ways for achieving them as well. As according to Arney and Lawal, strategy involves doing research about the market and the environment in which it operates, the buying habits of consumers, the activities of competitors, as well as the necessity for and availability of marketing intermediaries. Therefore, the marketing strategy of a company may be seen as the efforts the company makes to communicate with the people it intends to sell to. Conducting market research, which includes an analysis of customer desires, attitudes, and competing products, is the first stage in creating a marketing plan. The strategy then continues on to advertising, marketing, distribution, and, if required, customer relations, packaging, revenues, and distribution. Finally, the plan concludes with sales and distribution. The provision of increased value to clients and the organisation at a reduced expense ought to be the primary objective of any marketing plan. A business strategy also must be seen as a means of delivering a high-quality product that fulfils the demands of customers, offering a price that is reasonable, engaging in greater distribution, and being backed by an effective promotion strategy. An effective marketing strategy is a necessary prerequisite for every business sector that want to grow their market share and reduce the impact of its competitors **(Phelps, 2019)**.

Customer satisfaction and loyalty

At the conclusion of a transaction, one's level of contentment is based on how well their requirements were met. The level of satisfaction is an assessment of the degree to which the store was able to meet or surpass the expectations of the consumer. The level of pleasure a customer experiences is directly proportional to the degree to which their pre- and post-purchase expectations are met. After making a purchase, customers often engage in post-buy analysis to determine the degree to which the store was able to live up to their anticipations. The amount of a customer's satisfaction may be determined by analysing how well the product or service meets their expectations after it has been purchased. There are a number of studies that can be found in the published research that describe the factors that lead to satisfaction. Perceived quality, perceived value, and customer expectations are the three factors that go into determining overall customer

satisfaction. They discovered a good association between the quality of the service and the level of client happiness. One of the factors that plays a role in determining a customer's level of satisfaction is the quality of the service provided, which takes into account both the customer's expectations and their impressions of how well the service was performed. The link between service quality, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty in a retail shop environment was studied, and the results showed that service quality does, in fact, have a beneficial influence on consumer satisfaction and loyalty. They came to the conclusion that the quality of service has an impact on customer happiness with retail shops, and that customer satisfaction, in turn, has an impact on customer loyalty. Email marketing should continue to be a top focus if they want to keep more of their existing clients. Even if the use of email is losing favor and social media marketing is on the increase, there is still a significant role for email in the process of establishing new contacts. Researchers will be able to maintain consistent contact with researcher clients if researcher use email marketing. Another benefit is that researchers may contact them at a time when they are less likely to be preoccupied with anything else. When researchers submit a status update on Facebook, researcher followers' attention is likely to be diverted by the abundance of other updates, photographs, and news that are vying for their attention at the same time.

However, when customers are checking their email, there is a decreased likelihood that they will be presented with intriguing material. Researchers should make research customers aware of the kind of information researchers want them to pay attention to at this time. To begin, researchers should make use of an email checker to ensure that researcher messages are really being received. Then, send emails that have been correctly produced at a frequency that will feed customers without overflowing their email boxes. Utilizing automatic email distribution at strategically determined intervals may make it easier and more effective to retain existing customers.

The Importance of Relationship Marketing, Along with Some Suggestions on How to Get Started with One. Relationship marketing is a nuanced strategy that, in order to be effective, must make use of a broad variety of different approaches. If researcher is willing to take a hands-on approach with researcher customers and if researcher have the resources that are required, researcher may be able to implement a successful relationship marketing strategy in researcher firm.

Utilize Information Obtained from Individual Customers

Kohl's has shown that a personalized shopping experience that is based on the data collected from customers is a successful method for improving customer loyalty. Sending clients a birthday email, which has been found to greatly enhance both customer retention and satisfaction, is a simple way that may be used to accomplish this goal. Whether or not researchers want to include a discount in conjunction with this sort of gesture, the fact remains that this is an effective strategy for relationship marketing. Researchers may be able to get this kind of information from a variety of sources, including social media campaigns, surveys, and other similar activities.

The second step is to launch a customer retention campaign. It may be challenging to enhance customer retention and loyalty, but a customer loyalty program that is expertly structured may do wonders for a business. Although it may be difficult to develop a customer loyalty program that is effective, the benefits of greater participation on the part of consumers make the effort worthwhile. The most essential component is ensuring that customers will really want to take part in researcher customer loyalty rewards program by presenting them with something of genuine value in return for their continued patronage as a loyalty incentive. Before incorporating a customer loyalty program into the researcher's overall plan for relationship marketing, it is essential to give careful consideration to the requirements of Researcher Company. Depending on the goals of researcher program, there are many different methods in which positive customer behavior might be rewarded. One example that is simple to measure and has beneficial results is asking friends and family for recommendations (**Taylor, 2018**). Check to see that the customer loyalty program researchers have in place is in line with the kind of business researcher are. For instance, if the cost of a researcher product or service is quite modest, researcher shouldn't offer a bonus to customers who spend several thousand dollars with Researcher Company since they won't qualify for it. Through the use of relationship marketing, researcher should conduct surveys to better understand researcher target market. Is researcher interested in gaining a better understanding of researcher clientele? Speculation is really unnecessary at this point. A wonderful tool for researcher to employ is a survey, particularly if researcher is interested in learning what the desires of researcher audience are and how researcher may develop as a marketer. However, surveys are only useful if customers take the time to complete them. To increase the likelihood that customers will respond to researchers, make sure they are succinct and get right to the point. Choose researcher questions carefully and have a conclusion in mind before researcher begin. This is the ultimate objective, and every question researcher ask should be geared in some way toward achieving it. First, researcher need to identify what researcher want to achieve via the use of these emails in email marketing before researcher send them out. , The creation of a presence that is directed at the client is the fourth phase. In the modern world of instant messaging, social media, and electronic mail, there are several ways via which businesses may communicate with their customers. Having a group of individuals who are in charge of managing all of the online interactions that occur between the organization and its clients is an efficient tactic for this matter.

There have been an increasing number of ads in recent years that make disparaging remarks against various racial or ethnic groups. Certain ads have caused consumers to act against the advertiser, urge the media to stop accepting advertising, or even boycott a company and its products because of their outraged feelings. An advertising campaign may attract the eye of the public and stand out from all of the other images in today's media, but the company's reputation and customer base may be destroyed. Previously conducted research in Western countries has given little emphasis to Asian consumer views of aggressive advertising. Cultural differences exist between Hong Kong's ethnic Chinese population and its modern, Western-looking counterpart. Provocative advertising

is becoming more popular in Hong Kong, as people are becoming more conscious of it. Customers in Hong Kong aren't sure how they'll react to offending commercials. This study looked at how offensive customers find different goods and services, as well as their tolerance for ads across various media and the impact of offensive marketing on consumer purchasing decisions. Diverse products and services, as well as various delivery methods, have varying degrees of offensiveness, according to the results of the research. How offensive a message is and how it affects consumer behavior are affected by the media and demographics of the audience to whom it is being conveyed, among other things (**Damen, 2021**).

DEVELOPING A STRATEGY FOR MARKETING

The marketing objectives of a business are adapted to the particular goals that the company has in mind for the growth of its brand and the pursuit of customers. Establishing the value of a firm and locating a potential buyer for that company are two crucial components of any goal-setting process that is intended to be successful. In marketing plans, timelines are defined, and the performance of the plan is assessed in terms of return on investment (ROI), which helps determine whether or not the strategy should be used again. The SMART methodology provides support for the processes of goal setting and plan-making. For example, just in time for the holidays, a brand-new flavor of coffee is going to be made available. The following is an example of a SMART aim for the growth of sales: To be more specific, the company's objective is to acquire one thousand more customers. This is a goal that can be accomplished by the company before the end of the year. The firm will select where to concentrate its marketing efforts based on the information that is taken into consideration. The launch is scheduled for November, and there is a holiday spirit to the product. The timing couldn't be better. Sensitive to the passage of time: With a specific target date in mind, the company may work toward achieving a precise outcome while simultaneously making any required modifications along the way. In a marketing plan, the aims and objectives of a firm are laid out, but the marketing strategy is what really brings those goals and objectives to reality. The marketing strategy of a corporation will include not only the actions that will be done to accomplish the company's goals, but also the days, hours, and locations where different marketing activities will take place, as well as the resources that will be allotted to each of these activities. Marketing strategies have a longer lifespan and serve as the basis for the marketing strategy since they combine value propositions and brand attributes that don't alter substantially over time. These elements make up the foundation of the marketing strategy. The word "strategy" is used to refer to a broad range of different tactics that are utilized by organizations to find prospective consumers and convert them into paying clients.

This study's primary objective is to investigate the effect that electronic customer relationship management (e-CRM) advertising has on client loyalty in the Hong Kong banking industry. They were successful in obtaining 119 useable surveys from a total of 150 participants by using a quantitative methodology. Commonly known as HSBC, is the

largest bank in Hong Kong; all of the respondents held accounts with the institution. The interconnections of the many possible predictors and outcomes were investigated by using methods such as multiple regression analyses and reliability testing. These results indicate that it is important to use all four e-CRM marketing tactics (conventional mail, face-to-face contact, special treatment, or material rewards) in order to develop long-lasting ties with customers. Additionally, a substantial correlation was found between the quality of interactions with customers and the use of e-CRM marketing methods. According to the findings of the study, the latter was also shown to boost customer loyalty. According to the results of the research, HSBC will witness a boost in customer loyalty if it makes an effort to market itself via electronic customer relationship management (e-CRM).

Since its inception, customer relationship management (CRM) has been an indispensable tool for marketers. Due to the proliferation of Internet access in recent years, electronic customer relationship management, often known as e-CRM, has become an increasingly popular method for maintaining and enhancing customer relationships. Companies are eager to implement various e-CRM strategies in order to grow their businesses as a result of their recognition of the positive effects that strong customer connections have on brand loyalty and revenue generation. These companies recognize the positive effects that strong customer connections have on brand loyalty and revenue generation (**Reichheld, 2001**) Because of the widespread use of smart phones and tablet PCs and also the increasing popularity of social media such as Facebook and Weibo, e-CRM is especially important to the success of businesses in Hong Kong. According to Nielsen (2011), internet usage among residents of Hong Kong has reached 87%, the highest in Asia. In addition to information search and email communication, around forty percent of customers in Hong Kong utilize the internet for financial services such as bill payment and payment of other bills (Nielsen, 2011). In recent years, the service sector in Hong Kong has seen rapid expansion, and it currently contributes 93 percent of the city's gross domestic product. "Finance and insurance" is one of the industries that is growing at one of the fastest rates (5.7% in 2012). "Establish Hong Kong as a global financial centre" is the objective of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region with regard to the local economy. The banking business in Hong Kong is among the most significant in the world, and the manner in which clients use the Internet in this city is unlike that of any other city in the world. As a consequence of this, it is very necessary for bankers and marketers in Hong Kong to have a solid understanding of the value of e-CRM tactics as well as the influence that these strategies may have on the customer relationships and loyalty. The financial market in Hong Kong is very liquid and transparent, and the government does not meddle with the market very often. In 2011, there were 1,400 branches run by regulated banks originating from 150 different nations Hong Kong ranks first in the world in terms of economic independence (HKSAR Government, 2011), sixth in terms of the turnover of its foreign currency market, and among the world's top 10 financial hubs, Hong Kong is one of the top three. Since the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) started liberalizing the banking industry in 2001, a greater number of banks from other countries and the mainland have established

operations in Hong Kong. On the one hand, this has resulted in Hong Kong's enhanced status as a leading international financial center and increased access to the global banking market. On the other hand, this has led to a rise in the level of competition in Hong Kong's banking industry.

Table 1: Income

Income					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	<2000 HKD	396	28.0	28.0	28.0
	21000 - 30000 HKD	396	28.0	28.0	56.0
	31000 - 40000 HKD	312	22.0	22.0	78.0
	>40000 HKD	311	22.0	22.0	100.0
	Total	1415	100.0	100.0	

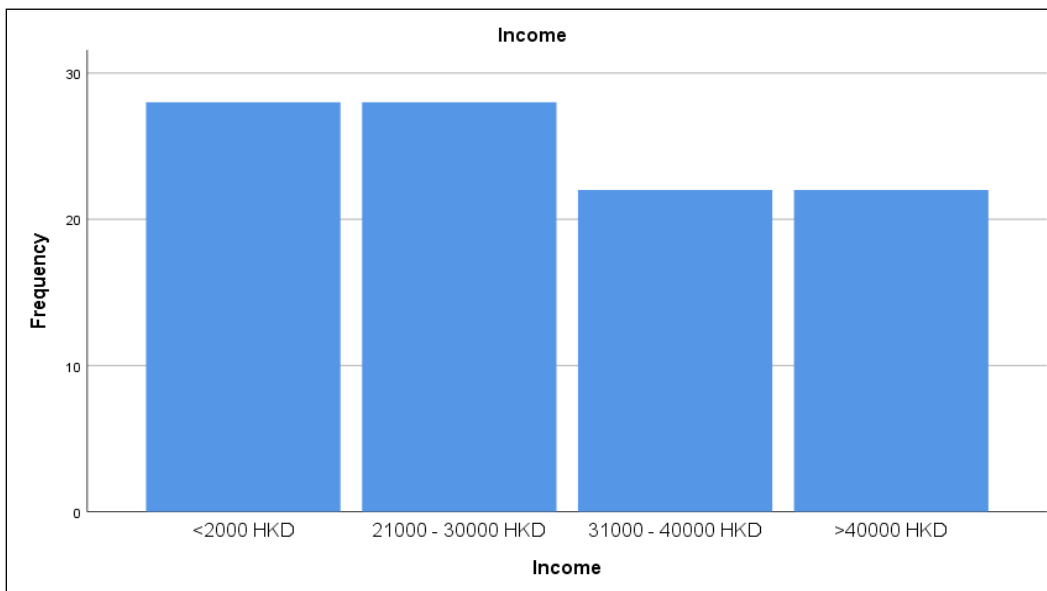


Figure 1: Income Graph

As per the table and figure 1 the demographic information of income for the participants in the study is shown. The number of respondents for the income group was of <2000 HKD 28.0% (N=396), 21000 - 30000 HKD 28.0% (N=396), 31000 - 40000 HKD 22.0% (N=312), and the least income of the respondent's is >40000 HKD 22.0% (N=311).

Table 2: Work Experience

Work Experience		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0 - 5 years	368	26.0	26.0	26.0
	6 - 10 years	340	24.0	24.0	50.0
	11 - 15 years	368	26.0	26.0	76.0
	more than 15 years	339	24.0	24.0	100.0
	Total	1415	100.0	100.0	



Figure 2: Work Experience Graph

As per the table and figure 2 the demographic information of income for the participants in the study is shown. The number of respondents for the work experience group was of 0 - 5 years 26.0% (N=368), 6 - 10 years 24.0% (N=340), 11 - 15 years 26.0% (N=368), and the least work experience of the respondent's is more than 15 years 24.0% (N=339).

Table 3: Occupation

Occupation		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Teachers	297	21.0	21.0	21.0
	Students	325	23.0	23.0	44.0
	Private Employee	326	23.0	23.0	67.0
	Govt. Employee	467	33.0	33.0	100.0
	Total	1415	100.0	100.0	

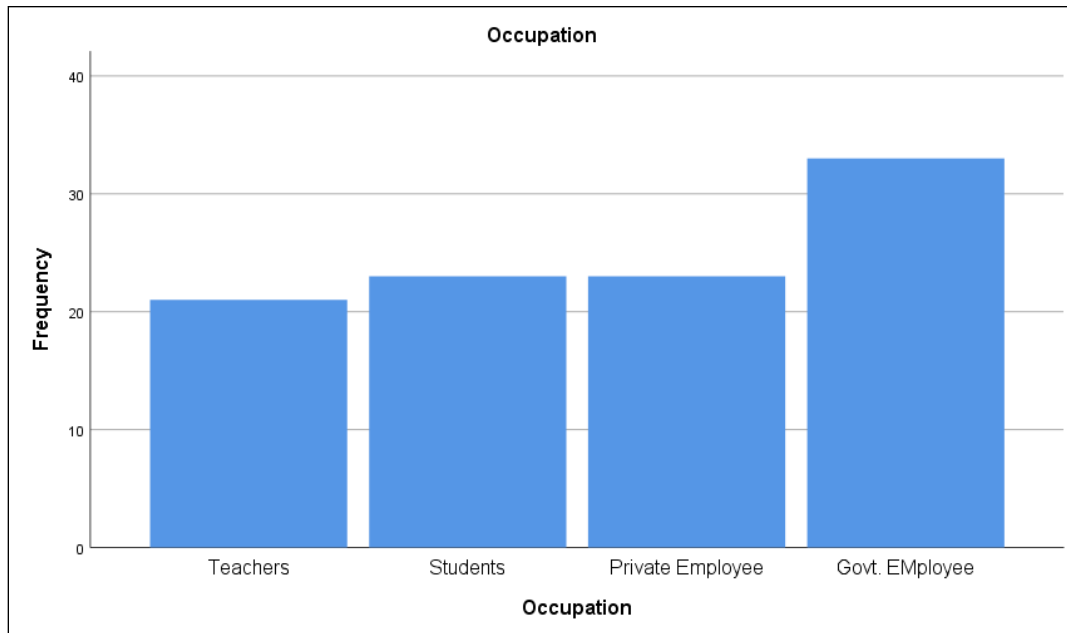


Figure 3: Occupation Graph

As per the table and figure 3 the demographic information of occupation for the participants in the study is shown. The number of respondents for the occupation group was Teachers 21.0% (N=297), Students 23.0% (N=325), Private Employee 26.0% (N=326), and the least occupation of the respondents is Govt. Employee 33.0% (N=467).

Table 4: Brand Preferences

Brand Preferences					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Quality	269	19.0	19.0	19.0
	Durability	368	26.0	26.0	45.0
	Price	424	30.0	30.0	75.0
	Offers or Discounts	354	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	1415	100.0	100.0	

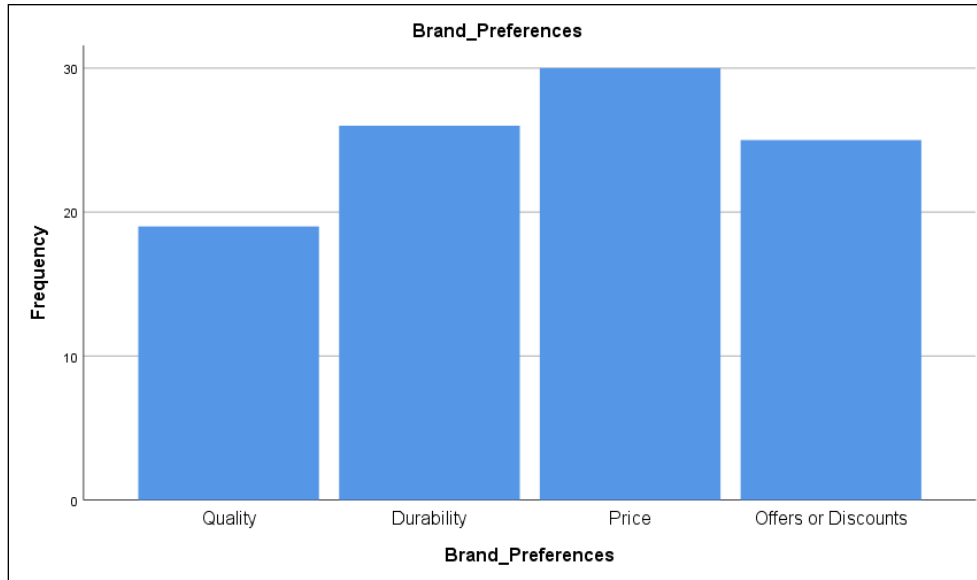


Figure 4: Brand Preferences Graph

As per the table and figure 4 the demographic information of brand preferences for the participants in the study is shown. The number of respondents for the brand preferences group was Quality 19.0% (N=269), Durability 26.0% (N=368), Price 30.0% (N=424), and the least brand preferences of the respondents is Offers or Discounts 25.0% (N=354).

CONCLUSION

The results of the study of the correlation coefficient show that there is a significant positive link between the product and marketing and the maintenance of existing customer relationships. The results of the research allow for the formation of this conclusion. [Citation needed] It is also feasible to recognise that the product had the highest value of the correlation coefficient when compared with the price, the location, and the marketing. This is something that can be done. It is possible to draw the conclusion that there is a significant positive association between product and customer retention, as well as pricing, and that product is the most effective component of customer retention. In conclusion, it is possible to draw the conclusion that there is a significant positive association between product and customer retention, as well as pricing. When considering the p values of product, price, location, and promotion, it is feasible to conclude that the p values of all four dimensions were 0.000. This conclusion may be reached by thinking about the p values of each individual dimension. This may be accomplished by taking into consideration the following: This indicates that all of the tests were highly significant and offered an overwhelming amount of data to support the argument that there is a correlation between the aforementioned traits and marketing strategies. It is conceivable, based on the results of the multiple regression analysis, to draw the conclusion that there is a positive correlation between the provision of products, the distribution of promotions, and the maintenance of existing clientele. In addition, it is

possible to admit that people are the most effective kind of marketing strategies that are provided by handlooms in the direction of client retention in the Ampara region. This is because handlooms sell their products directly to customers.

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