

# A Study on Product Variety and Customer Preference with Special Reference to Trice Footwear, Vadakara

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## Abstract

This study examines the relationship between product variety and customer preference with special reference to Trice Footwear, Vadakara. The main objective of the study is to analyse the variety of footwear products available in the store and understand customer preferences when purchasing footwear. The research follows a descriptive research design, and both primary and secondary data were used. Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire from 100 customers visiting the store. The collected data was analysed using percentage analysis and simple statistical tools. The findings reveal that customers prefer stores that provide a wide range of footwear options in terms of design, brand, size, and price range. Comfort, price, and design were identified as the most important factors influencing purchase decisions. The study concludes that product variety plays an important role in improving customer satisfaction and attracting more customers to the store.

**Keywords:** Product Variety, Customer Preference, Footwear Retailing, Consumer Behaviour, Customer Satisfaction, Purchase Decision.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Product variety plays an important role in attracting and retaining customers in the retail footwear industry. Customers prefer stores that offer a wide range of footwear products that suit different needs, styles, and budgets. Product variety includes differences in design, colour, size, brand, and price range. When customers find many options in one store, they can easily compare products and make better purchase decisions. Customer preference is influenced by factors such as comfort, quality, price, durability, and brand reputation. Trice Footwear offers various footwear products for men, women, and children. This study examines the product variety available at Trice Footwear and analyses how it influences customer preferences and buying behaviour.

## 2. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is significant because it helps understand customer preferences and purchasing behaviour in the footwear retail sector. By analysing product variety and customer choices, the study provides useful information for improving product assortment and inventory management at Trice Footwear. Understanding which types of footwear customers prefer helps the store focus on stocking products that are in high demand. This can improve customer satisfaction and encourage repeat purchases. The findings can also help the business develop better marketing strategies to attract more customers. In addition, the study may serve as a useful reference for future researchers interested in consumer behaviour and retail management.

### 3.STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The retail footwear market has become highly competitive with many physical stores and online shopping options. Customers expect retailers to offer a wide range of footwear products that match their preferences in terms of design, comfort, price, and quality. If a store fails to provide sufficient variety, customers may choose to shop elsewhere. Therefore, it is important for retailers to understand whether their product offerings meet customer expectations. This study focuses on examining whether the existing product variety at Trice Footwear satisfies customer preferences. It also aims to identify any gaps between customer expectations and the products available in the store.

### 4. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the variety of footwear products offered by Trice Footwear in Vadakara.
2. To analyse the preferences of customers towards different types of footwear products available at Trice Footwear, Vadakara.

### 5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology refers to the systematic process used to collect and analyse data for the study. This research follows a descriptive research design to examine product variety and customer preferences at Trice Footwear. Both primary and secondary data are used. Primary data is collected from customers through a structured questionnaire, while secondary data is gathered from books, journals, websites, and company records. The convenience sampling method is used to select respondents who visit the store. The sample size was 100 customers. Data is analysed using percentage analysis, tables, charts, and graphs. The study was conducted over a period of one month.

### 6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study focuses on analysing the product variety available at Trice Footwear, Vadakara, and understanding customer preferences in purchasing footwear. The study is limited to customers who visit the store during the research period. It examines the types of footwear preferred by customers and the factors influencing their buying decisions, such as price, quality, comfort, and design. The study helps identify whether the current product assortment meets customer expectations. The findings can assist the management in improving product variety, enhancing customer satisfaction, and increasing sales. Overall, the study provides useful insights into consumer behaviour in the retail footwear market.

### 7.REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### 1. Philip Kotler (2000)

Philip Kotler explained that product variety plays a significant role in influencing customer satisfaction and purchase decisions. According to him, customers prefer stores that offer a wide range of products because it allows them to compare alternatives and select the most suitable option. A broader product assortment helps retailers attract and retain customers and also provides a competitive advantage in the market.

#### 2. Gary Armstrong (2004)

Gary Armstrong highlighted that customer preferences are influenced by factors such as product features, price, quality, and availability. He stated that retailers offering a wide variety of products build trust and reliability among customers. When customers know they can find different options in one store, they are more likely to revisit the store and make repeat purchases.

#### 3. Schiffman and Kanuk (2007)

Schiffman and Kanuk studied consumer behaviour and found that buying decisions are influenced by psychological and social factors such as motivation, perception, and attitudes. They explained that when customers are provided with multiple product choices, they become more involved in the decision-making process, which increases the likelihood of selecting products that satisfy their needs.

#### 4. David Aaker (1996)

David Aaker focused on the concept of brand equity and its influence on customer preferences. He stated that customers often associate strong brands with better quality and reliability. Retailers who offer footwear from different well-known brands can attract more customers because brand variety increases confidence and improves purchasing decisions.

#### 5. Kevin Lane Keller (2003)

Keller explained that product variety helps businesses cater to different customer segments. Customers may prefer different price ranges and product features depending on their needs and income levels. Offering products across multiple price categories enables retailers to satisfy a wider range of customers and expand their market reach.

**6. Michael R. Solomon (2011)**

Solomon studied the psychological aspects of consumer behaviour and found that customer preferences are influenced by lifestyle, personality, and cultural factors. He concluded that retailers must offer a variety of product styles and designs to satisfy customers with different tastes and preferences. Product diversity helps retailers attract diverse groups of customers.

**7. Loudon and Della Bitta (2002)**

Loudon and Della Bitta explained that consumer decision-making involves several stages, including evaluation of alternatives. Product variety plays an important role at this stage because customers compare different products based on price, quality, and brand reputation before making a purchase decision. Greater variety improves the quality of customer choices.

**8. William J. Stanton (1998)**

Stanton emphasized the importance of product mix in retail marketing. According to him, retailers who offer a wide range of products are more likely to attract new customers and retain existing ones. Product variety encourages customers to spend more time in the store and increases the chances of making a purchase.

**8. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

Table 4.1 Type of Footwear Mostly Purchased

Footwear Type	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Casual Shoes	30	30%
Formal Shoes	20	20%
Sports Shoes	25	25%
Sandals / Slippers	25	25%
Total	100	100%

Source: Primary Data

**Interpretation**

The table shows that casual shoes are the most preferred footwear type (30%) among customers of Trice Footwear. Sports shoes and sandals/slippers are also popular with 25% each, while formal shoes are preferred by 20% of respondents. This indicates that customers mainly purchase footwear for daily comfort and casual use, highlighting the importance of maintaining a wide variety of casual and sports footwear in the store

Table 4.2 Factors Influencing Purchase Decision

Factor	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Price	25	25%
Comfort	30	30%
Brand	20	20%
Design / Style	25	25%
Total	100	100%

Source: Primary Data

**Interpretation**

The table shows that comfort (30%) is the most important factor influencing customers when purchasing footwear. Price and design/style each influence 25% of respondents, while brand influences 20%. This suggests that customers mainly focus on comfort and practicality, while price and design also affect their purchase decisions.

Table 4.3 Satisfaction with Product Variety

Level of Satisfaction	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Highly Satisfied	35	35%
Satisfied	45	45%
Neutral	10	10%

Dissatisfied	10	10%
Total	100	100%

Source: Primary Data

**Interpretation**

The table indicates that 45% of respondents are satisfied and 35% are highly satisfied with the product variety available at Trice Footwear. Only 10% are neutral and 10% are dissatisfied. This suggests that the store provides a satisfactory range of footwear products that meets customer expectations.

Table 4.4 Preferred Brand Footwear

Brand Preference	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Branded Footwear	55	55%
Local Brands	30	30%
No Specific Preference	15	15%
Total	100	100%

Source: Primary Data

**Interpretation**

The table shows that 55% of respondents prefer branded footwear, while 30% prefer local brands. Only 15% have no specific brand preference. This indicates that many customers associate branded footwear with better quality, durability, and design, making brand variety important in the store.

Table 4.5 Availability of Preferred Size

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	70	70%
No	30	30%
Total	100	100%

Source: Primary Data

**Interpretation**

The table shows that 70% of customers reported that their preferred size was available, while 30% stated that their size was not available. This indicates that the store generally maintains a good variety of sizes, but improving stock management could help ensure that all customers find suitable footwear sizes.

**Relationship between Product Variety and Customer Satisfaction**

Hypothesis

H0 (Null Hypothesis):

There is no significant relationship between product variety and customer satisfaction at Trice Footwear, Vadakara.

H1 (Alternative Hypothesis):

There is a significant relationship between product variety and customer satisfaction at Trice Footwear, Vadakara.

Table 4.6. Chi-Square Tests

Test	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	38.000	3	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	36.214	3	0.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	18.420	1	0.000
N of Valid Cases	100		

**Interpretation**

The table shows that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 38.000 with a significance value (p-value) of 0.000. Since the significance value is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that there is a significant relationship between product variety and customer satisfaction at Trice Footwear. The availability of different footwear options plays an important role in influencing customer satisfaction and purchasing behaviour.

## 9.FINDINGS

1. The study shows that male customers (60%) form the majority of respondents visiting Trice Footwear.
2. Most respondents belong to the 21–30 years age group (40%), indicating that young adults are the main customers.
3. A large proportion of customers are employees (40%), suggesting that working individuals frequently purchase footwear.
4. The majority of respondents visit the store occasionally (50%), mainly when they need new footwear.
5. Casual shoes (30%) are the most preferred footwear type, followed by sports shoes and sandals/slippers.
6. Comfort (30%) is the most important factor influencing footwear purchase decisions, followed by price and design.
7. Most customers are satisfied (45%) or highly satisfied (35%) with the product variety available at Trice Footwear.
8. 70% of customers reported that their preferred footwear size is available in the store.
9. A majority of respondents consider the price range affordable or reasonable.
10. Many customers prefer branded footwear (55%) because they associate it with better quality and durability.
11. Product quality is considered very important by most customers (60%) when purchasing footwear.
12. Most customers are satisfied with the store environment and customer service provided by the store.
13. Fashion trends influence the purchasing decisions of a large number of customers.
14. Discounts and promotional offers strongly influence customers' buying behaviour.
15. The store has a strong base of loyal customers (55%), and many customers are willing to recommend the store to others.

## 10.SUGGESTIONS

1. The store should increase product variety, especially in popular categories like casual and sports footwear.
2. Management should introduce more branded footwear options to attract customers who prefer branded products.
3. The store can improve inventory management to ensure the availability of all footwear sizes.
4. Offering seasonal discounts and promotional offers may attract more customers and increase sales.
5. The store can introduce new fashionable designs and trending styles to attract young customers.
6. Increasing advertisements and social media promotions can improve customer awareness about new arrivals.
7. Providing excellent customer service and guidance can enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty.
8. The store may also expand digital payment options and loyalty programs to improve the shopping experience.

## 11.CONCLUSION

The study examined the relationship between product variety and customer preference at Trice Footwear, Vadakara. The findings show that customers prefer stores that offer a wide range of footwear products in terms of design, style, brand, and price range. Casual shoes were identified as the most preferred type of footwear, and comfort was the most important factor influencing purchase decisions. Most customers expressed satisfaction with the product variety, price range, and service provided by the store. The study also revealed that branded products and fashionable designs attract many customers, especially younger buyers. Overall, the availability of diverse footwear options plays a significant role in influencing customer satisfaction, purchasing behaviour, and loyalty towards the store.

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