

A Comparative Study of Consumer Perception and Satisfaction : DMart VS Other Organized Retail Chains in India

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Abstract

In today's fast-changing retail environment, shopping is no longer just about buying daily necessities, it has become a mix of convenience, value, and overall experience. This study focuses on understanding how consumers perceive DMart in comparison to other retail chains such as supermarkets, online platforms, and local kirana stores. The main aim is to explore what influences customer preferences, satisfaction, and loyalty when choosing where to shop.

The research is based on responses collected from over 200 participants belonging to different age groups, income levels, and occupations. The findings reveal that DMart is widely preferred by customers, mainly due to its affordable pricing, consistent discounts, and availability of essential products. Most consumers view DMart as a value-for-money store and often visit it for planned or bulk purchases rather than frequent shopping trips.

While other retail chains offer better store ambience, convenience, and online services, price and trust remain the most important factors for Indian consumers. The study also highlights that although online grocery shopping is growing, many customers still prefer in-store shopping for its reliability and immediate product access.

Overall, the research shows that DMart has built strong customer trust and loyalty over time. However, there is still scope for improvement, especially in areas like online services, crowd management, and shopping convenience. These insights can help retail companies better understand customer expectations and improve their strategies in an increasingly competitive market.

Introduction

In today's busy and fast-moving world, shopping has gone far beyond simply buying basic necessities. For many people, it now involves convenience, affordability, variety, and the overall shopping experience. Over time, the retail sector in India has changed significantly. While traditional kirana stores still play an important role, organized retail chains have become a common part of everyday life, especially in urban and semi-urban areas.

With rising income levels, increased brand awareness, and changing lifestyles, consumers now have more choices than ever before. Retail formats such as supermarkets, hypermarkets, and online grocery platforms are growing rapidly, creating strong competition in the market. As a result, customers have become more informed, selective, and focused on getting the best value for their money.

Among these retail chains, DMart has managed to build a strong reputation. It is known for its simple store setup, focus on essential products, and consistent low pricing strategy. Unlike many competitors that invest heavily in advertising or store appearance, DMart focuses on keeping its costs low and passing those savings on to customers. This approach has helped it earn the trust and loyalty of middle-class consumers.

On the other hand, other retail stores such as Reliance Smart, Star Bazaar, and Spencer's offer benefits like better store ambience, wider product choices, loyalty programs, and online shopping options. These features attract customers who value comfort and convenience. However, when it comes to regular grocery shopping, factors like price and value for money remain the most important considerations for most consumers.

Customer buying behaviour in the retail sector is influenced by several factors, including pricing, product quality, availability, location, billing speed, and overall shopping comfort. Consumers often try to balance affordability with trust and familiarity, which leads to strong preferences for certain stores over time.

This study aims to compare DMart with other retail chains from the customer's perspective. It focuses on understanding consumer preferences, satisfaction levels, and the key factors that influence their choice of store. The insights gained from this research can help retailers better understand customer expectations and improve their strategies in an increasingly competitive market.

Objectives of the Study

- To understand how customers choose between DMart and other retail stores for their regular shopping needs.
- To identify the key factors that influence consumers to prefer DMart, such as pricing, product availability, quality, and trust.
- To examine and compare the level of customer satisfaction across DMart and other organized retail chains.
- To analyze how customers perceive DMart in comparison to supermarkets, online platforms, and local kirana stores.
- To study the role of discounts, offers, and value for money in building customer preference and loyalty towards DMart.
- To explore whether demographic factors like age, income, and occupation affect shopping behaviour and store selection.
- To assess the awareness and usage of DMart's online platform (DMart Ready) among customers.
- To gather customer suggestions and identify areas where DMart can improve its services and overall shopping experience.

Literature Review

The retail industry in India has experienced major changes over the past few years, largely driven by urbanization, economic growth, and evolving consumer lifestyles. Traditionally, most consumers depend on local kirana stores for their daily needs. However, the growth of organized retail chains has introduced a new shopping culture that offers wider product choices, fixed pricing, and the convenience of purchasing everything under one roof.

Previous studies on consumer behaviour in the retail sector highlight that price plays a crucial role in decision-making, especially for grocery and household purchases. Many consumers prefer stores that consistently offer lower prices rather than relying on occasional discounts. At the same time, factors such as product quality, availability, cleanliness, store location, and ease of billing also influence shopping preferences. While an attractive store environment and good customer service can enhance the shopping experience, practical factors like affordability and product accessibility often have a stronger impact.

Research also shows that shopping habits vary depending on the purpose of purchase. Organized retail stores are commonly preferred for planned or bulk buying, whereas local kirana shops continue to be important for quick and urgent purchases. This pattern is particularly noticeable among middle-income households, who try to balance convenience with cost savings.

Customer loyalty in retail is often linked to trust, consistency, and overall satisfaction. Consumers are more likely to revisit stores that reliably meet their expectations in terms of pricing, quality, and availability. Positive experiences also encourage word-of-mouth recommendations, which play a significant role in attracting new customers.

With the rise of digital technology, online grocery shopping has started gaining popularity. However, many consumers still prefer physical stores because they value the ability to personally check products and receive them immediately. At the same time, organized retail chains face challenges such as overcrowding, long queues, and slower service during peak hours, which can negatively affect customer satisfaction.

Overall, existing research suggests that Indian consumers prioritize affordability, reliability, and trust over luxury or premium shopping experiences. This study builds on these insights by specifically comparing DMart with other retail chains, focusing on how customers perceive their pricing, quality, and overall value in a competitive retail environment.

Research Methodology

This study follows a descriptive research design, as it aims to understand and present the actual opinions, preferences, and experiences of customers regarding DMart and other retail stores. The focus is on observing and describing consumer behaviour without influencing it in any way.

At the same time, the study also includes an analytical approach, as it compares different retail chains based on customer responses to identify patterns, trends, and differences in satisfaction levels.

Nature of Study

The research is both descriptive and analytical in nature. It not only explains customer behaviour but also evaluates and compares the performance of DMart with other retail options from the consumer's point of view.

Sources of Data

- **Primary Data:** The main data was collected directly from consumers through a structured questionnaire created using Google Forms. More than 200 respondents participated in the survey. The questions were designed to understand shopping frequency, store preferences, reasons for choosing specific stores, satisfaction levels, and awareness of online services.
- **Secondary Data:** Additional information was gathered from academic journals, research articles, books, and online sources related to retail management and consumer behaviour. This helped in building a theoretical background and understanding industry trends.

Sampling Method

The study uses **convenience sampling**, where respondents were selected based on their availability and willingness to participate. This method was chosen due to time constraints and ease of data collection through online platforms.

Sample Size

The research is based on responses from over 200 participants belonging to different age groups, income levels, and occupations, providing a diverse range of opinions.

Area of Study

The study focuses on consumers from urban and semi-urban areas where organized retail stores like DMart are easily accessible and commonly used.

Tools for Data Collection

A structured questionnaire was used as the primary tool for data collection. The questions were simple, clear, and easy to understand to ensure accurate responses from participants.

Techniques of Data Analysis

The collected data was analyzed using basic statistical methods such as percentages, tables, and charts. These tools helped in presenting the findings in a clear and understandable manner.

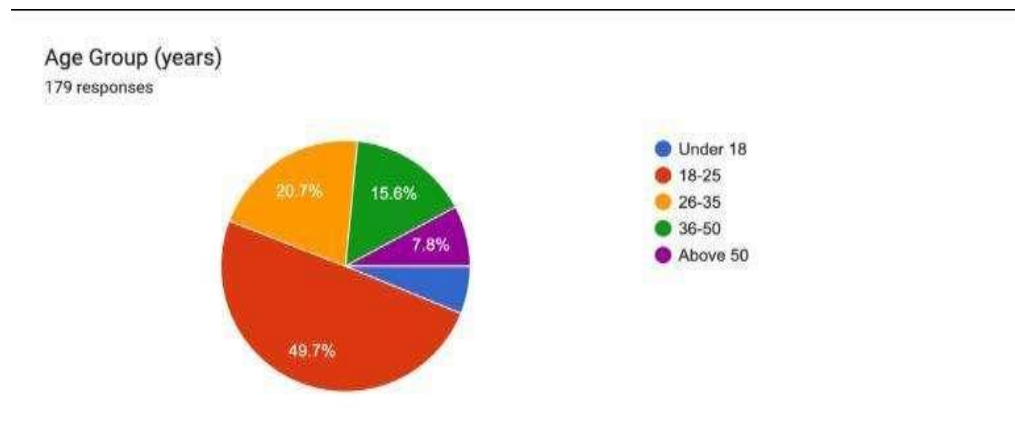
Limitations of the Study

- The study is limited to certain regions and may not represent the entire population.
- Responses are based on personal opinions, which may include some level of bias.
- Time constraints restricted the depth of analysis.
- The study mainly focuses on offline shopping behaviour, with limited emphasis on online retail.

Ethical Considerations

The research was conducted by following ethical practices. Participation was completely voluntary, respondents' identities were kept confidential, and the data collected was used only for academic purposes.

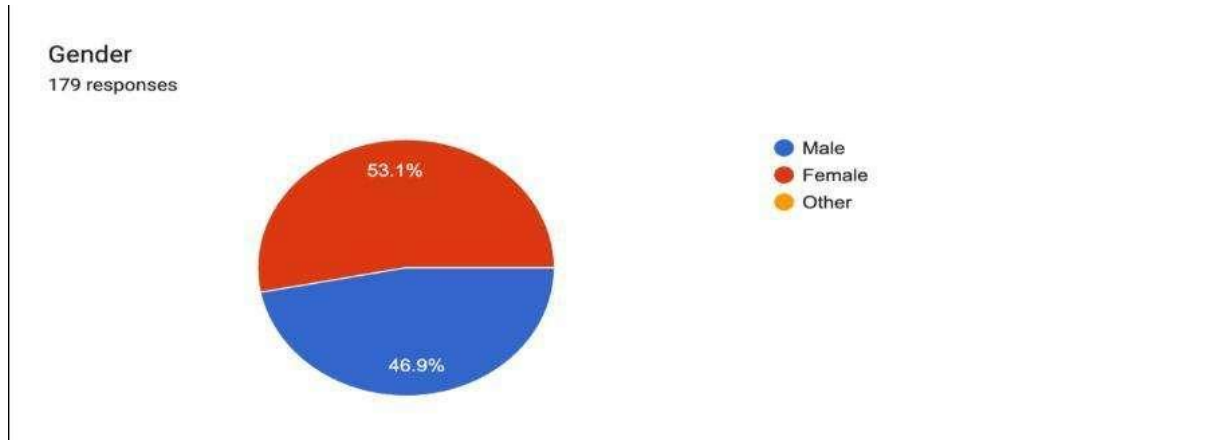
Interpretation



The chart shows that many respondents belong to the 18–25 age group, accounting for nearly half of the total participants (49.7%). This indicates that young adults form the largest segment of the survey and are the most actively engaged in sharing their opinions. Their higher participation may be due to greater familiarity with online surveys and a stronger interest in expressing their views.

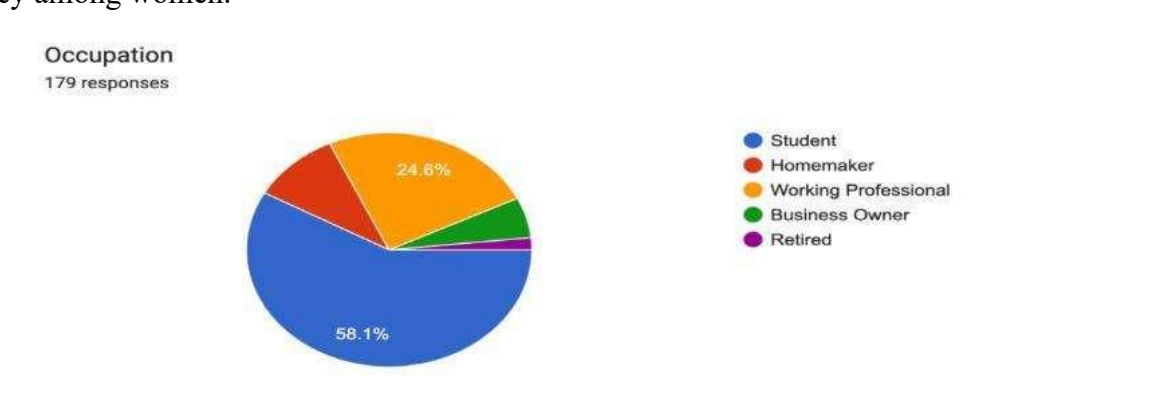
The second largest group is the 26–35 age category, contributing 20.7% of the responses. This reflects a fair representation of early working professionals who are also regular consumers in the retail market. Respondents in the 36–50 age group make up 15.6% of the sample, while those above 50 account for only 7.8%. The under-18 category represents the smallest portion of participants. This shows that older age groups are comparatively less represented in the study.

Overall, the data suggests that the findings of the research are largely influenced by younger consumers, particularly those in the 18–25 age group. Since this segment is more active and involved, their preferences and opinions play a significant role in shaping the overall results of the study.



The chart represents the gender distribution of the respondents who participated in the survey. It shows that females make up a slightly higher proportion at 53.1%, while males account for 46.9% of the total responses. This near-balanced participation indicates that the study includes perspectives from both genders in an equal manner, with only a small difference between them. Such a distribution is beneficial as it reduces the chances of the results being heavily influenced by one group.

Overall, the data reflects a well-represented sample in terms of gender, making the findings more reliable and inclusive. Many female respondents may also suggest a higher level of engagement or willingness to participate in the survey among women.

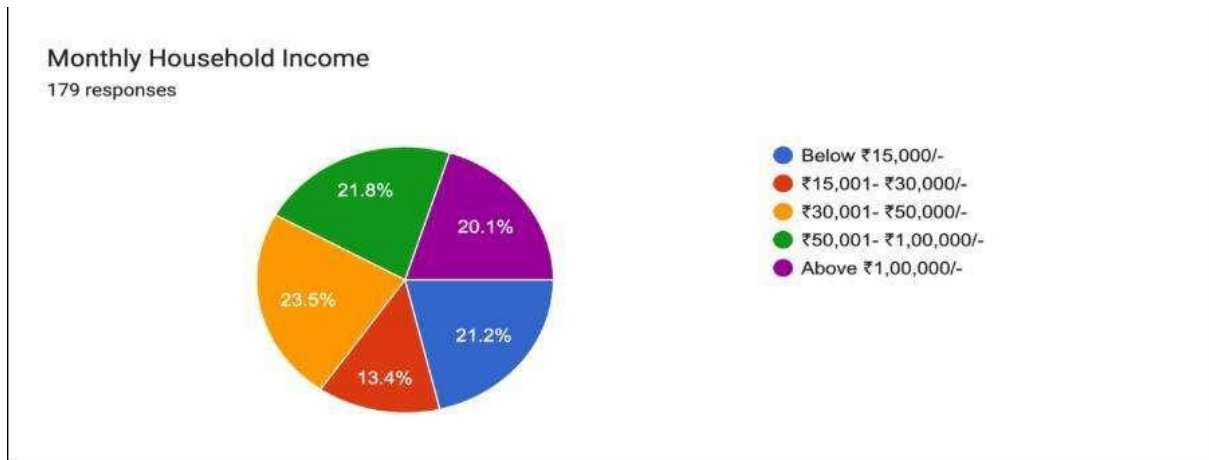


The chart shows the occupational distribution of the respondents who took part in the survey. Students form the largest group, making up 58.1% of the total participants. This indicates that the survey has a strong representation of the student population, who are generally more active in responding to online questionnaires.

Working professionals represent the second largest group at 24.6%, showing a reasonable level of participation from individuals who are currently employed. Their responses add practical insights based on regular purchasing experiences.

In comparison, homemakers, business owners, and retired individuals make up a much smaller portion of the sample. This suggests that these groups are underrepresented in the study.

Overall, the findings are largely influenced by students and working professionals, meaning the results mainly reflect the views of younger and economically active individuals rather than older or non-working segments of the population.



The distribution of respondents based on monthly household income shows a diverse economic background. The largest share of respondents, 23.5%, fall within the income group of ₹30,001–₹50,000, indicating that a significant proportion belongs to the middle-income category.

This is followed by 21.8% of respondents earning between ₹50,001–₹1,00,000, reflecting a strong presence of upper-middle-income households.

Additionally, 21.2% of respondents reported a monthly income below ₹15,000, suggesting representation from lower-income groups as well. Around 20.1% of participants belong to households earning above ₹1,00,000, indicating the inclusion of higher-income respondents in the study. The smallest proportion, 13.4%, falls within the ₹15,001–₹30,000 income bracket.

Overall, the income distribution demonstrates that the study includes respondents from varied economic segments, with a relatively higher concentration in the middle-income groups. This diversity in income levels strengthens the representativeness of the sample and provides a broader perspective for analyzing consumer behavior and research outcomes.

Where do you usually shop for groceries and daily needs?

179 responses

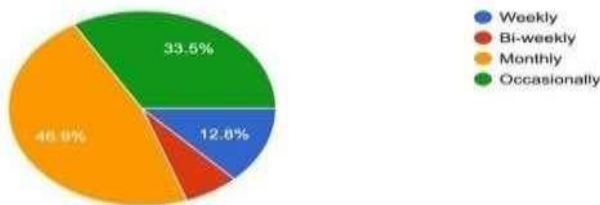


The findings indicate that DMart is the preferred destination for purchasing groceries and daily essentials, receiving the highest preference among respondents. This suggests that customers are largely influenced by DMart’s competitive pricing and extensive range of products. Local kirana stores also account for a considerable share of consumer preference, emphasizing the continued importance of convenience, nearby accessibility, and personalized customer relationships in routine shopping decisions.

Moreover, online grocery platforms such as Blinkit, Big Basket, and DMart Ready have gained noticeable acceptance among respondents, reflecting a rising inclination toward convenient and time-saving shopping methods. In comparison, retail outlets such as Reliance Smart, Big Bazaar, and Star Bazaar received relatively low preference from respondents. Overall, the results reveal that although organized retail formats are highly popular, traditional neighborhood stores and online grocery platforms continue to hold significant relevance in shaping consumer grocery shopping behavior.

How often do you shop at DMart?

179 responses

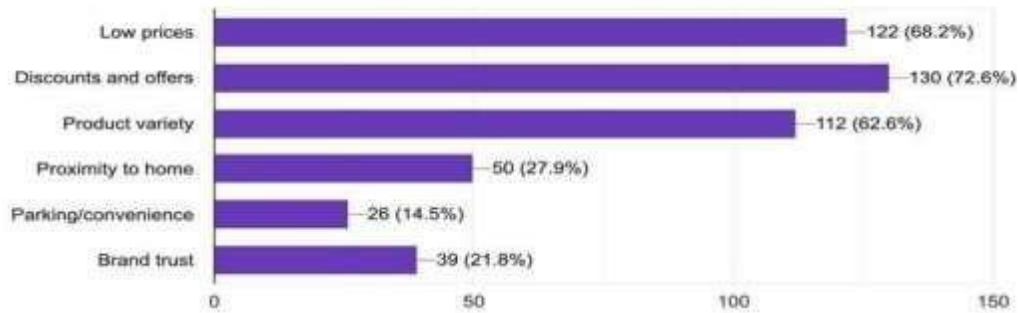


The chart indicates that most respondents prefer shopping at DMart monthly, making it the most common shopping frequency. This suggests that many customers use DMart primarily for planned purchases or bulk buying rather than for frequent small purchases. A considerable proportion of respondents also shop there occasionally, showing that DMart is often chosen as an alternative shopping option based on specific needs or convenience.

In contrast, a smaller number of respondents reported visiting DMart on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. This may be because routine or urgent purchases are often fulfilled through nearby local stores or online grocery platforms. Overall, the findings suggest that DMart is largely perceived as a destination for periodic and value-oriented shopping rather than for regular weekly grocery visits.

What are your top 3 reasons for choosing DMart? (Choose Maximum 3)

179 responses

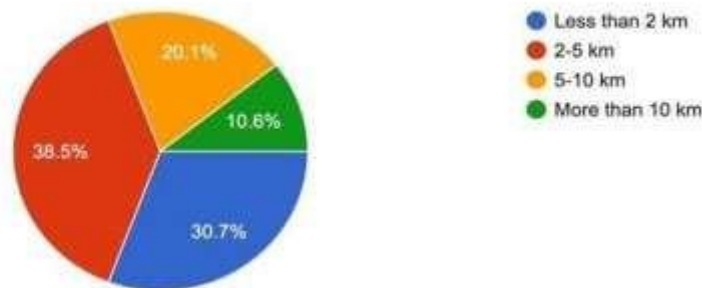


The findings reveal that discounts on promotional offers and special offers are the most significant factors influencing customers to choose DMart, followed by competitive pricing and availability of a wide range of products. This reflects that customers largely associate DMart with cost savings and better value in their routine purchases, while also appreciating the variety of choices available. Regular offers and affordable prices play a crucial role in attracting and retaining shoppers.

Factors such as location convenience, trust in the brand, and parking facilities have relatively less impact, although they remain relevant for some consumers. This suggests that convenience-related aspects are secondary, while financial benefits remain the primary motivation behind customer preference. Overall, the data emphasizes that DMart’s focus on offering economical prices along with a broad product selection is a major factor driving customer choice.

How far is the nearest DMart from your home?

179 responses

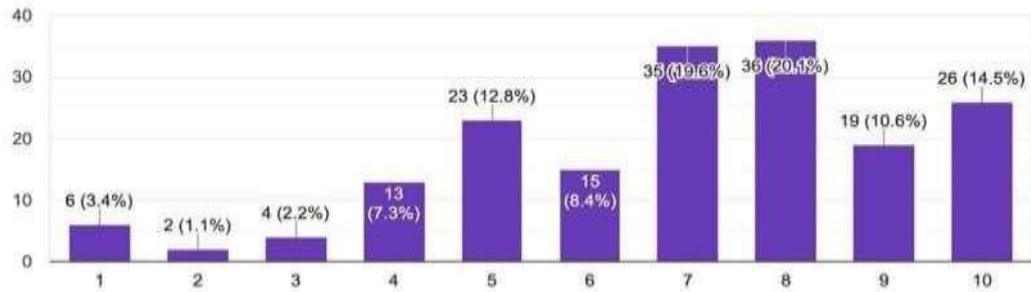


The chart indicates that many respondents reside within a convenient distance from a DMart store. The highest proportion falls within the 2–5 km range, followed by respondents living less than 2 km away. This suggests that DMart is accessible to most customers, making it a practical choice for regular and planned shopping trips.

At the same time, a considerable number of respondents travel 5–10 km or even more than 10 km to visit the nearest DMart outlet. This means that some customers are willing to cover longer distances, possibly due to the store’s affordable prices and attractive promotional offers. Overall, the findings suggest that although proximity influences store choice, factors such as value for money and savings motivate customers to shop at DMart even when the store is located farther away.

How satisfied are you with DMart's pricing?

179 responses

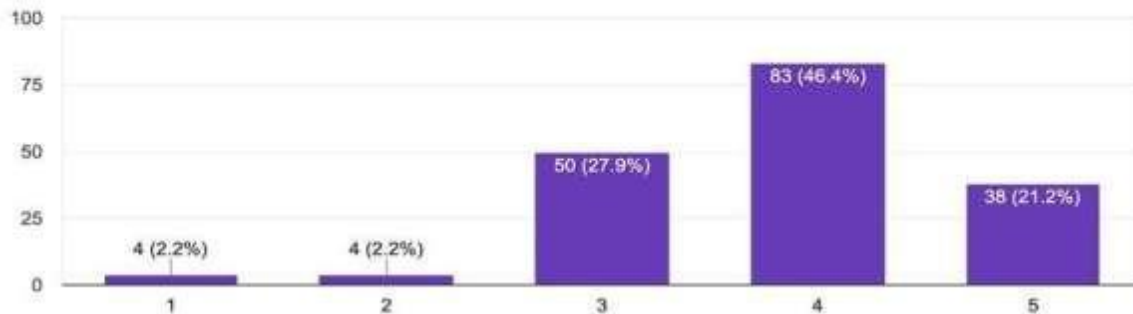


The chart reflects a strong positive perception of DMart's pricing, with most respondents expressing satisfaction. A significant share of participants provided ratings between 7 and 10, with ratings 7 and 8 receiving the highest responses. This suggests that customers generally consider DMart's prices reasonable and believe the store provides good value for money.

In contrast, only a small number of respondents assigned lower ratings between 1 and 3, indicating that dissatisfaction with pricing is relatively limited. Some responses are concentrated around the middle ratings, such as 5 and 6, which may represent customers who find the pricing satisfactory but not outstanding. Overall, the findings indicate that customers largely hold a favorable opinion of DMart's pricing, with satisfaction levels outweighing negative perceptions.

How would you rate the product variety at DMart?

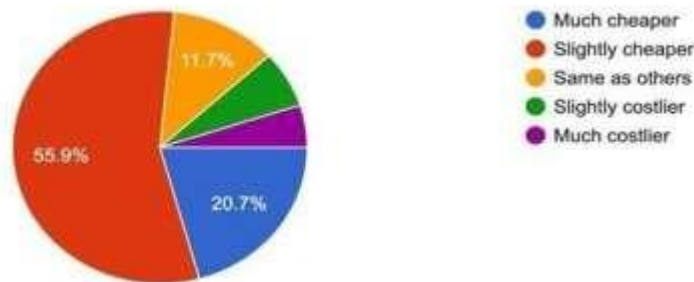
179 responses



The chart indicates that customers hold a generally favorable opinion regarding the product variety available at DMart. Most respondents provided higher ratings, with rating 4 receiving the largest share of responses, followed by rating 5, showing that customers are largely

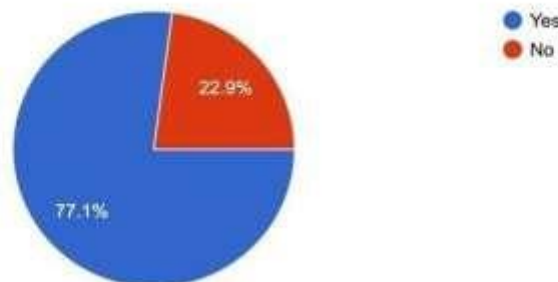
satisfied with the range of products offered and feel it meets their shopping requirements effectively. Only a small proportion of respondents gave lower ratings such as 1 or 2, suggesting very limited dissatisfaction with product assortment. Meanwhile, some respondents selected rating 3, indicating a moderate level of satisfaction and suggesting there may still be scope for improvement in expanding or diversifying product options. Overall, the findings show that DMart is widely appreciated for its product range, while also leaving some room for further enhancement.

Compared to other stores, how affordable is DMart?
 179 responses



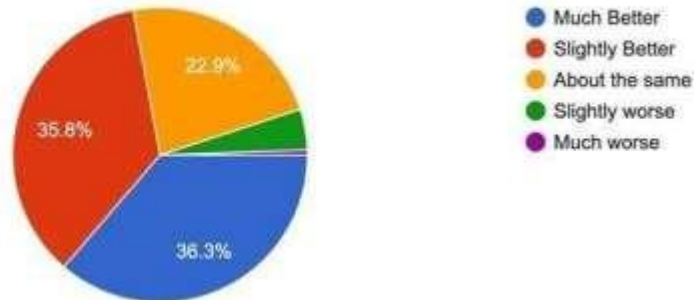
The chart indicates that most customers consider DMart more affordable than other stores, with the highest proportion of respondents perceiving it as slightly cheaper. This highlights DMart’s strong image as a cost-effective retail destination where customers expect better pricing compared to competitors. Only a limited number of respondents believe that DMart’s prices are like other stores or view it as slightly or significantly more expensive, suggesting that dissatisfaction regarding pricing is relatively low. Overall, the findings show that affordability is one of DMart’s major strengths, and customers strongly associate the brand with savings and value for money.

Have you shopped at other chains like Reliance Smart, Star Bazaar, Vishal Mega Mart?
 179 responses



The chart shows that a large majority of respondents have shopped at other retail chains such as Reliance Smart, Star Bazaar and Vishal Mega Mart. About 77.1% of customers answered “Yes”, which means most people have experience with multiple retail stores and are familiar with different shopping options available in market. Only 22.9% of respondents said they have not shopped at these other chains, indicating a smaller group that may be more loyal to a single store or have limited exposure to competitors. Overall, this suggests that customers are aware of alternative retailers, making their comparisons and opinions about DMart more informed and based on real shopping experiences.

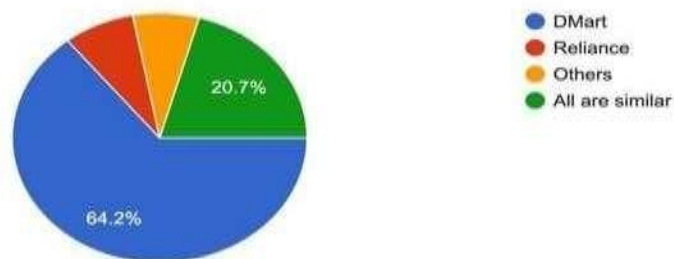
If Yes, how does DMart compare to them overall?
 179 responses



The chart indicates that many respondents perceive DMart performing better than other retail chains. A significant proportion rated DMart as either much better or slightly better, reflecting a clear customer preference based on overall shopping experience. This suggests that factors such as pricing, value for money, and convenience contribute to DMart’s strong competitive position.

A notable share of respondents believe DMart performs about the same as other stores, indicating that while it meets customer expectations, it may not be seen as distinctly superior by this group. Only a small percentage rated DMart as slightly worse or much worse, showing limited dissatisfaction among customers. Overall, the findings reveal a positive perception of DMart, with most respondents considering it a more favorable option compared to competing retail chains.

Which store has better offer/discounts?
 179 responses

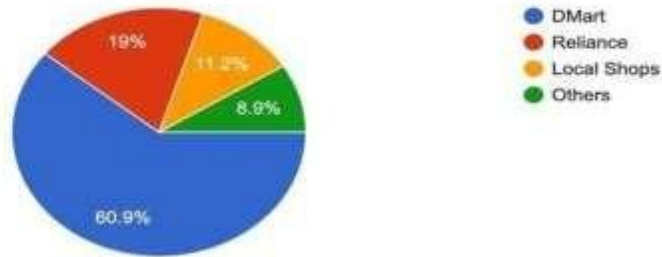


The chart indicates that most respondents believe DMart provides the most attractive deals and discounts, reinforcing its strong reputation for consistent savings and competitive pricing. This suggests that customers strongly associate DMart with better value in terms of promotional offers when compared to other retail stores.

A notable proportion of respondents feel that all stores provide similar discounts, showing that some customers do not perceive significant differences among retailers in this aspect. Only a smaller share preferred Reliance or

other stores for better offers, suggesting they are viewed as comparatively less competitive in terms of discounts. Overall, the findings strengthen DMart’s image as a preferred destination for value-driven and budget-conscious shopping.

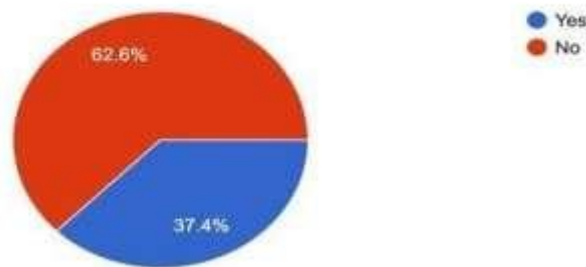
Which store gives you better quality and branded products?
 179 responses



The chart indicates that DMart is the preferred choice for quality and branded products, with a majority of respondents associating it with superior value. This reflects strong customer trust in DMart’s product quality, availability of branded goods, and consistency in offerings. It also suggests that customers perceive DMart as providing reliable branded products at reasonable prices.

Reliance emerges as a secondary preference, though with a considerably lower share compared to DMart. Meanwhile, local shops and other stores receive relatively lower preferences, which may reflect perceptions of limited brand variety or less consistency in product quality. Overall, the findings show that although alternative options are available, customers largely favor organized retail formats, particularly DMart, when seeking assured quality and branded products.

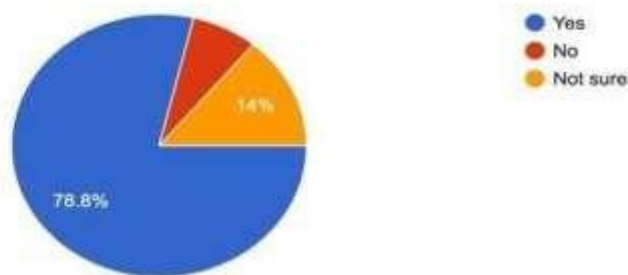
Have you used DMart Ready (online delivery)?
 179 responses



The chart shows that many respondents (62.6%) have not used DMart Ready, while 37.4% have tried the online delivery service. This indicates that although DMart is highly trusted for in-store purchases, a large section of customers is still not engaging with its online platform. Many shoppers may prefer visiting physical stores or may not be fully aware of the online

Would you recommend DMart to others?

179 responses



The chart demonstrates a high level of customer satisfaction with DMart, as a large majority of respondents stated that they would recommend the store to others. This strong willingness to recommend suggests that customers have had positive experiences related to pricing, product quality, and overall dependability. It also indicates that word-of-mouth promotion serves as a significant strength for DMart.

A smaller share of respondents was uncertain, which may imply that while they are reasonably satisfied, they may still identify areas for improvement such as service efficiency, crowd management, or product availability. Only a limited number of respondents responded negatively, indicating relatively low dissatisfaction. Overall, the findings highlight DMart's strong brand reputation and customer trust, while also suggesting opportunities to further strengthen loyalty by addressing the concerns of undecided customers.

At the same time, the fact that over one-third of respondents have used DMart Ready shows there is a growing acceptance of online grocery shopping. With better awareness, smoother app experience and faster delivery options. DMart Ready has strong potential to attract more users in the future. The results suggest an opportunity for DMart to convert its loyal offline customers into online shoppers.

Conclusion

The study concludes that DMart has established a strong and favorable position among customers, driven by its affordable pricing, quality products, and wide assortment of branded goods. The findings show that customers across different demographic groups perceive DMart as a value-oriented retailer that offers both savings and reliability. Many consumers are willing to travel longer distances and make periodic shopping visits, indicating that the benefits offered by DMart outweigh convenience-related challenges. This reflects a high level of customer trust and satisfaction developed over time.

The research also highlights strong customer loyalty and positive brand perception. A significant number of respondents expressed their willingness to continue shopping at DMart and recommend it to others, demonstrating that customer preference is influenced not only by low prices but also by consistent quality, dependable service, and an overall positive shopping experience. Despite the presence of competing retail chains, DMart continues to emerge as a preferred choice for most customers.

At the same time, the study identifies certain areas where improvement can further enhance customer satisfaction. Strengthening DMart Ready and expanding its online services could help the company meet changing consumer preferences toward digital and convenience-based shopping. Similarly, addressing concerns related to crowd management, service efficiency, and product availability can improve the shopping experience for customers who remain uncertain.

Overall, the study concludes that DMart is widely recognized as a trusted, value-driven retailer with strong customer loyalty and significant growth potential. By continuing to adapt to evolving customer expectations while maintaining its core strengths, DMart can further strengthen its market position and sustain long-term customer satisfaction.

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