Determinants of Egyptian Consumer's Choice for Retail Chains

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Abstract
Currently, the field of Egyptian retail business testifies a rapid development especially in retail store chains. At the same time these chains encounter a drastic competition that led every chain manager to think how to attract the largest number of consumers. In fact, consumers have different criteria when choosing which retail chain they prefer. This is what the managers of these stores should try to find out in order to attract more customers. Therefore, this paper aims to (1) find out the most important determinants that Egyptian consumers rely on when choosing the retail chain and (2) Developing a mathematical model helps the managers of retail chains operating in Egypt to predict the chain's capability to attract the largest number of consumers. The study proposed seven determinants to study its impact on attracting the Egyptian consumer to retail chain, which are the store location, store ambiance, store layout, store brand name, store parking availability, products assortment, and promotional offers. The sample covered a wide range of retail chains customers in Alexandria city. Correlation analysis and stepwise regression were used to analyze the collected data.The importance of this research lies in providing managers of retail chains with the factors that attract Egyptian consumers to pay more attention to these factors. Definitely improving such factors will increase customer satisfaction and consequently the profits of these stores. The findings of study showed that there is a positive correlation between all proposed determinants and Egyptian consumer's choice of the retail chain. The outcomes also revealed that the promotional offers and products assortment highly contribute in the decision of Egyptian consumer's retail chain choice.
Keywords: Retailing, Retail chains, Retail chain choice, Store preference
JEL classification: L81, M31

I.   Introduction

Retailing industry occupies a very important place in the economies of developed and developing countries alike. It not only contributes to a country's GDP but also helps in reducing an unemployment ratio by providing many job opportunities. In recent years, Egyptian retail business has grown exponentially. Along with this rapid growth, competition has also increased significantly and modern forms of retailing have emerged such as retail chains. Retail chains are composed of more than one retail store; all have the same brand name, sell the same products, owned by one owner, and operated by a central management. In this type of retail stores, all the goods that the customer needs are displayed under one roof (Popkowski et al., 2000). Retail chains provide convenience, product variety, and premium products with competitive prices because managers of such chains get a large discount from their suppliers due to bulk purchase.

Retail chains have grown substantially and the competition has become intense. Moreover, consumers now take many factors into account when selecting a retail chain. So, the study of how consumers choose retail store chain and what drives them to choose this or that chain will be a significant contribution to keep abreast of the continuous developments in this sector. Nowadays, the key to survival in the retail business depends on the ability to provide good service to customers in a way that exceeds that provided by competitors. Therefore, any retail store chain must ensure that it has a competitive advantage over others. To achieve this advantage, every retail chain manager tries to understand the determinants of consumer choice for certain chain over others. In fact, consumers take many factors into account when selecting the retail chain they prefer to buy from such as store environment, credit, replacement, home delivery and many other factors (Sinha and Banerjee, 2004).

It has become imperative for Egyptian retail chain managers to understand and identify the reasons why consumers prefer buying from certain retail chain and not from another. This information could enable them to create and develop effective marketing strategies that foster their competitiveness and increase the chances of getting a favorable reaction from the customers and in turn may result in repeated purchases (Peter & Olson, 2001). Certainly, if a customer does not find what he is looking for in one place, he will go to another; he will go to the store that satisfies his needs at the price that he is willing to pay (Kotler et al., 1996).

In a survey was conducted by executives of 31 large U.S. retailers when they were asked if they think their organization may decide to invest in Egypt, Approximately 87.7% of the respondents indicated they would invest in Egypt and 32.3% have already studied the Egyptian market and found it somewhat attractive (Ramzy et al., 2020). Based on this survey, it is clear that the current landscape of retail business in Egypt has become attractive to major international retailers, hence it is expected that the Egyptian retail market will be expanded within the next five years. Therefore, it is necessary for retail chains managers operating in Egypt to stand on the determinants that Egyptian consumers rely on when choosing the preferred retail chain to buy from to prepare the appropriate strategies that attract the largest number of customers. This is what this paper tries to find out.

II.   Retailing

Retail industry is a kind of business that is characterized by a high level of competition. It is the last stage in a distribution channel (Berman and Evans, 2009). Kotler and Armstrong (2012) define retailing as all the activities for selling goods or services directly to ultimate buyers for their personal use. In a similar meaning, Levy and Weitz (2009), argue that retailing is a collection of business activities that add value to products and services sold to consumers for personal or family use. The American Marketing Association has defined retailing as a set of business activities carried on to accomplish the exchange of goods and services for the purpose of personal, family, or household use.

The various processes that help the customers to purchase the desired merchandise from the retail stores for their end use refer to retail management which includes all the steps required to bring the customers into the store and fulfill their buying needs. This is done through an intermediary merchant called a retailer who sells primarily to end consumers at a profit margin. A retailer is a merchant or a business enterprise, whose main business is selling directly to ultimate consumers for non-business use. In addition, the retailer buys a wide range of products from different wholesalers and then offers these products to customers. Thus, the retailer performs the function of both buying and selling (Pride et al., 2018).

The retailing concept has changed dramatically in Egypt during the last two decades. The retailing industry has converted from traditional retail formats to organized retail formats. One of the organized retail formats is retail stores chains where the organized retailers provide various standardized services to their customers (Koshy and Jha, 2007). To counter those changes in the retail market environment, managers of retail chains working in Egypt have to adopt proactive strategies.One of these strategies is to identify the factors that affect Egyptian consumer choice for retail chains. Certainly, retail business success is influenced by its fast response and its ability in understanding consumers' behaviors and satisfies their needs.

III.   Retailing in Egypt

Egyptian retail industry has emerged as one of the fastest growing industries. According to a report issued by the International Monetary Fund [IMF], the Egyptian GDP grew by 5.6% in 2019, 3.6% in 2020 and 3.3% in 2021, and is forecast to reach 5.2% in 2022; the retail sector was among the greatest contributors to this growth (Oxford Business Group, Egyptian retailing: Performance& Size. Retrieved November 10, 2022, from https:// oxfordbusinessgroup.com/reports/egypt/2022-report/economy/diverse-approach-a-mix-of-legislation-private-investment-and-consumer-spending-is-spurring-steady-growth-in-the-retail-market). In addition, the retail sector has expanded steadily, posting a real growth rate of 3.9% in FY 2018/19, 3.9% in FY 2019/20 and 4.4% in FY 2020/21. According to the Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade, this was the fastest growth in the Middle East in the retail field. In terms of its contribution in employment, the retail sector was the third-largest employer in FY 2018/19 and FY 2019/20 representing 13.6% and 13.4% of the workforce respectively. In 2021, it was the second-largest employer, representing 15.3% of the workforce.

Egypt is one of the few promising emerging markets in the retail industry. In 2021, Kearney's annual Global Retail Development Index (GRDI) rated Egypt at the 7th place for retail investment (Global Retail Development Index. Retrieved November 5, 2022, from kearney.com/global-retail-development-index/2021). This is one of the reasons why investors are racing to invest in Egypt's retail market. Egypt's economic reform program and exposure to global activities has led to a new lifestyle and more modern shopping habits in the country. These changes have helped in the development of the Egyptian retail sector and the emergence of new types of retail outlets such as retail store chains. Today, there are several local retail chains in Egypt such as KhairZman, Kazyon, Metro, ALFA market, Hyperone, ...etc. In addition, there are international retail chains located in Egypt such as Carrefour, BIM, Spinneys, Panda market, Seoudi market,...etc. The emergence of such types of retail stores led to consumers having more choices in selecting the place where they make their purchase from. Therefore, it is necessary to know how consumers choose among retail outlets when purchasing their products. In other words, what are the factors that drive Egyptian consumer to deal with a specified retail chain without the other?

IV. Literature Review

The success of a retail store in maintaining its market leading position depends on its ability to adapt itself to the changing needs of customers. The more a store is able to meet the customer' needs, the more customer loyalty toward this store and consequently prefer dealing with it. Choosing the retail store is a challenging task from the consumer' point of view and a matter of concern to retailers at the same time. Consumer choice of a retail store has been studied by wide researches and from various perspectives. Freymann (2002) found in his study the store choice is highly influenced by location. Bell et al. (2001) stated the product price is a considerable factor that should be taken into account when a consumer decides to buy from a retail store and they have proved in their studies how product price affects the store choice. In addition, the role of store environment has been studied as a part of store attributes. Baker et al. (1992) has studied this factor and found a positive correlation with consumer store choice. Ahmed et al. (2007) argued that a focus on store ambience and brand image is required in order to increase consumer satisfaction. Seiders and Tigert (2000) pointed to comfort facilities and services as a reason for retail store choice. Priyanka et al. (2014) stated that store atmospheric attributes such as color, lighting, sales personnel, and music form the overall context within which shoppers make decision of their proper retail store selection. Deka (2019) studied store ambience as a determinant factor of retail store choice. The result revealed that store ambience is an important factor for preferring the store.

Ramaswami and Krider (2002) argued that store choice is defined by location, price, fast checkout, friendly and courteous service, special offers, and pleasant shopping environment.

McGoldrick (2002) stated that courtesy of retail staff and lower price are the main variables in selecting a retail store. Fox et al. (2004) studied the reasons for consumer choice for supermarkets and found that consumers prefer product assortments and promotions more than prices. Geoffrey (2011) stated that when a customer selects the appropriate retail store, he concentrates mainly on four notable attributes which are price, store classification level, store location, and product quality. These four attributes have a significant impact on the store choice decisions of consumers. Varley (2005) revealed in his study that consumers use store image as a basic evaluative criterion in the decision of selecting a retail outlet. Joshi and Kulkarni (2012) stated that impressive displays, ability to move freely in the retail outlet, and courteous employees significantly contribute to enhancing the retail outlet atmosphere and gives excellent experience to the customers that translates into more sales and repeat visits to the store. Yilmaz et al. (2007) developed a scale for measuring consumer behavior in retail outlet choice. They found the convenient location, price and quality of products, sales personnel attitudes and physical attractiveness play a very important role in determining a consumer's preferred retail store. Karumba and Ngigi (2018) assessed the factors that customers consider when choosing a particular supermarket for purchase, the study established that special offers, security, cleanliness, product quality, and fast customer service significantly influence customers' choice of the supermarkets and attract a large number of customers. Hutcheson and Mutinho (1998) concluded in their study that product quality, low prices, and special promotions were highly important in determining store choice and were also significantly related to the level of satisfaction felt by respondents toward their preferred store.

Likewise, a research conducted by Venkatachalam and Madan (2012) revealed the factors that attract customers to retail stores which are merchandise display, cleanliness, home delivery, and credit facility provided by retailers. Lakshmi et al. (2013) pointed in their study to the factors that motivate customers to purchase from a retail store, they stated these factors are: store space, credit, and free home conveyance. In one study conducted by Huddleston et al.(2004) to investigate the factors that motivate customers to buy from retail stores, the result showed that store location, product assortment, service, convenience, and quick checkout are the most important factors that support store choice. Hoffman & Bateson (2002) argued that the tangible factors help the consumer in making the retail store choice decision (i.e., shopping cart, basket, and escalators). Tongue et al. (2010) found that the basic amenities such as clean bathrooms, drinking water, and comfortable seating provide pleasant experience to the customers, while Kajalo&Lindblom (2010) stated that safety and comfort are important factors to choose the store.

Soderlund&Rosengren (2008) argued that a smile, pleasant voice, empathy and friendly approach of the staff affect the customer's perception toward the store. In the views of Heide and Gronhaug (2006), the store ambience (odour, temperature, color, air quality, etc.) positively affect the customers' attraction. Yavas (2003) stated to attract large number of consumers and enhance their overall experience; the shopping malls need to have pull factors which includes product quality, price, cleanliness, courtesy, assortment, security, suitable opening hours, accessibility and store atmosphere. Bloch et al. (1994) stated the availability of spacious parking facility provides the success experience to the shoppers, thus attract the customers. According to Kahn and Wansink (2004), product variety under one roof leads to attract greater customers. While Palma et al. (2003) stated the price, location, and quality have significant influence on a customer's choice of retail store.

According to Moye (2000), consumers engage in a comparison process in their minds to determine whether store attributes aligns with their perceptions. If the two factors are matched, then the consumer chooses

the store. In the same context, Engel et al. (1995) stated if consumers' perceptions of the store attributes are positive, then they may decide to purchase from the store and if it is negative, then they are unlikely to shop from that store. In a study conducted by El-Adly (2007) on UAE shopping malls, he found the attractive factors are comfort, entertainment, products diversity, convenience, and luxury. Hedhli and Chebat (2009) indicated that a shopping mall's choice can be determined according to some dimensions such as accessibility, price, promotion, store atmosphere, and products assortment. While, in the view of Rajagopal (2009), shopping malls could attract higher customers traffic on the basis of the ambience, products assortment, and sales promotions.

Obviously, there is no agreement on the factors that the consumer bases on when choosing the retail store he wants to buy from. Therefore, it is interesting to stand on these factors for Egyptian consumers. Based on this illustration, the researcher can suggest the conceptual framework for this study as follows:
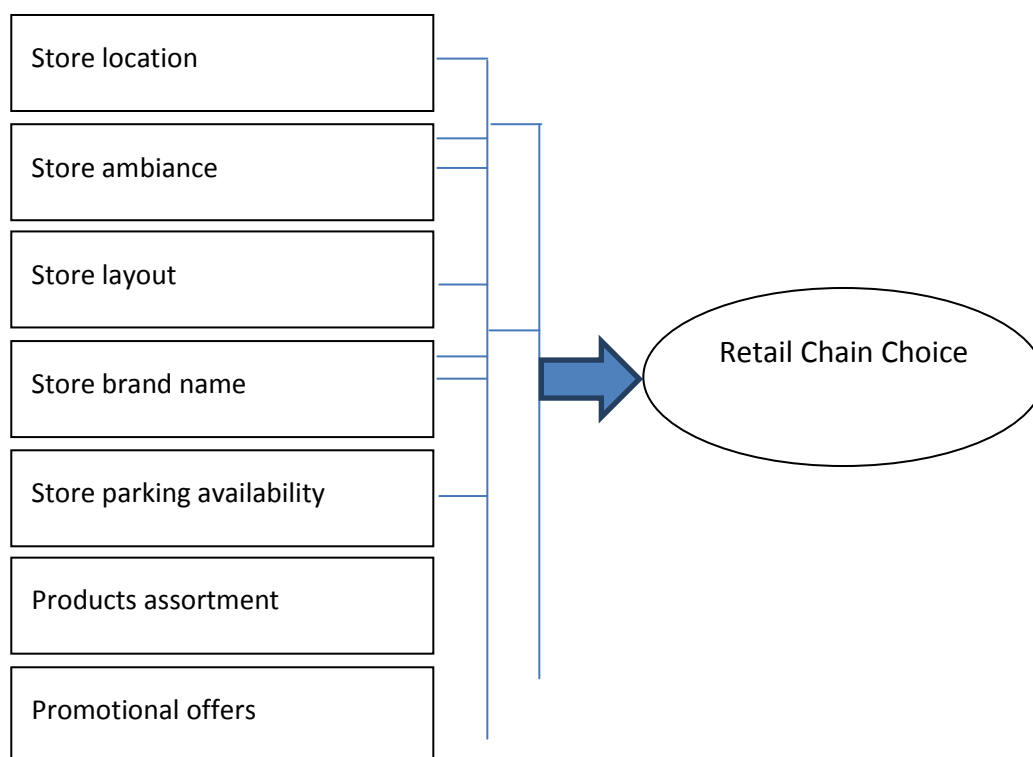
Figure1. The conceptual framework

V. Research Methodology

The survey method was used by distributing a structured questionnaire as the main instrument of data collection. The respondents were asked to show to what extent they believe the written sentence corresponds to them and leads to choice their preferred store chain. This was implemented by using a five point Likert scale ranging from 1 indicating strongly disagree to 5 indicating strongly agree. The first stage of this study involved a pilot study that was conducted to refine the data gathering instrument. Also, this stage involved ensuring both validity and reliability for the instrument.

5.1 Ensuring the Validity

Validity is the extent to which the questionnaire accurately measures what it is supposed to measure (Carmines and Zeller, 1979). Eriksson and Wiederscheim (1997) defined validity as the ability of a scale or instrument to measure what is intended to be measured. In this research, the content validity has been applied to ensure that the instrument is appropriate as well as the sentences are generally understood. For further confirmation of instrument validity, the researcher applied factor validity analysis using SPSS software. The results of factor analysis are illustrated in table 1.

Table 1: Component Matrix

Factor	Store_location				Store_ ambiance				Store_layout				Store_brand_name			
Question	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16
Component	.880	.837	.823	.804	.749	.726	.817	.728	.790	.617	.773	.826	.829	.794	.648	.741

Store_parking_ availability				Products_assortment				Promotional_offers			
Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20	Q21	Q22	Q23	Q24	Q25	Q26	Q27	Q28
.764	.766	.661	.778	.813	.758	.611	.701	.827	.752	.716	.623

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Based on the output of factor analysis, it is clear that the questionnaire is characterized by factor validity, i.e. the sentences included in the instrument actually express the variables that are required to be measured and consequently the instrument is fully representative of what it aims to measure and the statements are generally understandable.

5.2 Ensuring the Reliability

Reliability is the internal consistency of the questionnaire. The questionnaire is considered reliable when the same or similar scores are obtained in repeated testing with the same group of respondents (Miller, 2005). In this research, Cronbach's alpha coefficient is used to ensure the reliability of the questionnaire. Result of Cronbach's alpha is depicted in table2.

Table 2: Reliability test

Cronbach's alpha coefficient	N of items
.857	28

Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient normally ranges between 0 and 1. The closer Cronbach's alpha coefficient is to 1.0, the greater the internal consistency of the items in the scale (Gliem and Gliem, 2003). In general, if the value of Cronbach's Alpha is less than 0.60, the scale is considered to be poor while scores between 0.60 and 0.70 are acceptable (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007). Values of 0.7 and above are usually considered adequate values of coefficient alpha (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). In our study, Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient = .857 which means this questionnaire is highly reliable; its items have relatively high internal consistency and consequently can be used for analytical purposes. Based on the obtained results of validity and reliability, the questionnaire is finalized.

5.3 Sample Size and Data Collection

After achieving an acceptable fit for the structural data collection tool and fulfilling the assumption of validity and reliability, the researcher starts the second stage by distributing 400 questionnaires to random sample of retail chains customers in Alexandria city to find out the determinants that Egyptian consumers rely on when choosing a retail chain. The researcher determined the estimated sample size by using the statistical application EpiInfo. This sample size is based on the assumptions that the confidence level is 95% with standard deviation of 0.5 and a confidence interval of ± 5%. The usable observations were 387 respondents with response ratio 96.75%. Also, the researcher applied Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) analysis to stand on the adequacy of the sample size for analysis. Result of KMO analysis as shown in table 3 =.791 which means the suitability of the sample size.

Table 3:KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.791
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	967.512
	Sig.	.000

VI. Analytical Approach Adopted

The collected data were analyzed using SPSS software. This procedure included descriptive statistical analysis and correlation analysis. In addition, multiple regression analysis is employed to assess the relative importance for the factors that influence Egyptian consumer's choice for retail chain as well as to create a linear prediction equation.

6.1 Correlation Analysis

The main purpose of correlation is to prove if there is a relationship between two variables or not. In addition, it measures the strength and direction of such relationship. So, Pearson correlation was employed in this research to statistically clarify the nature of the relationship between dependent variable (retail chain choice) and each one of the proposed independent variables. The results of correlation analysis are listed in table 4.

Table 4: Results of correlation analysis (*r*)

		Store location	Store ambiance	Products assortment	Store brand name	Store parking	Store layout	Promotional offers	Retail Chain Choice
Store location	Pearson Correlation	1	.878**	.561**	.727**	.362**	.613**	.625**	.658**
Store ambiance	Pearson Correlation	.878**	1	.574**	.654**	.384**	.663**	.671**	.725**
Products assortment	Pearson Correlation	.561**	.574**	1	.563**	.396**	.624**	.846**	.798**
Store brand name	Pearson Correlation	.727**	.654**	.563**	1	.431**	.702**	.589**	.669**
Store parking availability	Pearson Correlation	.362**	.384**	.396**	.431**	1	.406**	.439**	.507**
Store layout	Pearson Correlation	.613**	.663**	.624**	.702**	.406**	1	.633**	.778**
Promotional offers	Pearson Correlation	.625**	.671**	.846**	.589**	.439**	.633**	1	.829**
Retail Chain Choice	Pearson Correlation	.658**	.725**	.798**	.669**	.507**	.778**	.829**	1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results above show that there is a positive correlation between the Egyptian consumer's choice for retail chain (the dependent variable) and all suggested determinants (the independent variables).
Promotional offers have a correlation coefficient of 0.829 which means it is highly correlated with Egyptian customer's choice of a retail chain, followed by products assortment 0.798, then store layout 0.778, and the last determinant is store parking availability with correlation coefficient 0.507.

6.2 Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is a statistical technique for estimating the relationships between a dependent variable often called 'response variable' and one or more independent variables often called 'predictors'. It is also used to develop an equation to express the relationship between two variables and provide estimation for the value of the dependent variable based on the value of the independent variable. In addition, this analysis allows us to confidently determine which factors are statistically significant and which factors can be ignored. Before conducting the regression analysis, it must be confirmed that there is no significant correlation between the independent variables with each other to avoid which is called multicollinearity problem. Multicollinearity occurs when the multiple linear regression model includes several variables that are significantly correlated to each other. Multicollinearity makes some of the significant variables under study to be statistically insignificant and leads to misconceptions and impractical explanations of the results. Moreover, the presence of multicollinearity increases the standard errors of each coefficient in the model, which in turn changes the result of the analysis. In addition, presence of multicollinearity can prompt skewed results in understanding or predicting the dependent variable in the statistical model which means the model with multicollinearity may not be trustworthy (Frank, 2001; Hosmer, 2013). So, the researcher tries first to detect if there is a multicollinearity problem among the independent variables before proceeding with the multiple regression analysis. For this purpose, the researcher will apply Variance Inflation Factor analysis (VIF) which measures the strength of

correlation between the independent variables with each other in the regression model. The results of multicollinearity test are shown in table 5.

Table 5: Multicollinearity Test

Model	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
Store location	.782	1.279
Store ambiance	.795	1.257
Store layout	.778	1.285
Store brand name	.898	1.114
Store parking availability	.883	1.132
Products assortment	.937	1.067
Promotional offers	.850	1.176

Dependent Variable: Retail Chain Choice

Based on the output of Variance Inflation Factor, it is cleared that none of the VIF values for the predictor variables are greater than 5, which indicates that multicollinearity will not be a problem in the regression model; the variables in the model are not correlated and consequently the model is reliable for prediction.

6.2.1 Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Multiple Linear regression analysis is a statistical process that can be used to analyze the relationship between the dependent variable and all independent variables. The main objective of multiple linear regression analysis is to use the independent variables to predict the dependent variable. The obtained weights denote the relative contribution of the independent variables to the overall prediction and facilitate interpretation as to the influence of each variable in making the prediction. To find out whether the predictor variables (the independent variables) do a good job at predicting the outcome variable (the dependent variable) and to determine which independent variables in particular are important predictors of the outcome variable, the multiple linear regression analysis will be conducted. The results of this analysis are listed in Table 6, 7, and 8 respectively.

Table 6: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.911	.830	.827	.32325	1.735

a.   Predictors: (Constant), Promotional offers, Store parking availability, Store brand name, Store ambiance, Store layout, Products assortment, Store location

-       Coefficient of determination 'R-Square' is a statistical measure in a regression model that measures the percentage of the change in the dependent variable caused by the independent variables. Also, R-square shows how well the regression equation depicts the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. Generally, the closer r-square to 1, the higher the quality of prediction model in depicting this relationship.

-       In our study, R-Square has the value of 0.830 which implies that %83 of the retail chain choice decision (the dependent variable) is caused by the proposed independent variables while 17% left was by other factors. In other words, 83% of the total variation in retail chain choice decision has been explained by predictor variables.

-       Durbin-Watson value is 1.735 which indicates that the variables in the model are not auto correlated and consequently, the model is reliable for prediction.

Table 7: ANOVA

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	193.319	7	27.617	264.308	.000[a]
	Residual	39.601	379	.104		

Total	232.920	386			

a.   Predictors: (Constant), Promotional offers, Store parking availability, Store brand name, Store ambiance, Store layout, Products assortment, Store location
b.   Dependent Variable: Retail Chain Choice

- ANOVA results show that the independent variables have a significant effect on dependent variable. This means that the independent variables can collectively explain the variation in Egyptian customer's choice decision of retail chain. Generally, ANOVA outcomes indicate that the model as a whole is statistically significant.

Table 8: Results of multiple linear regression analysis

Model	β
Constant (-.269)	
Store location	.127
Store ambiance	. 211
Products assortment	.219
Store brand name	.193
Store parking availability	.099
Store layout	.231
Promotional offers	.247

 Predictors in the model: (Constant), Promotional offers, Store parking availability, Store brand name, Store ambiance, Store layout, Products assortment, Store location

- The results obtained from the regression analysis show that the greatest predictor of Egyptian consumer's choice for retail chain is promotional offers ($\beta=.247$) followed by store layout ($\beta=.231$).The lowest predictor variable is store parking availability ($\beta=.099$)
- The positive values of the regression coefficients confirm that the decision of consumer's choice for the retail chain (dependent variable) moves in the same direction as the independent variables move.
- Based on results of table 8, it is possible to derive the prediction model that Egyptian consumers rely on when choosing the preferred retail chain to buy from as follows:

$Y = a + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \beta_3 x_3 + \beta_4 x_4 + \beta_5 x_5 + \beta_6 x_6 + \beta_7 x_7$

Where, a is a constant;
Y is the dependent variable (Retail Chain Choice);
X1, X2, X3, X4, X5, X6, X7 are the independent variables which are (store location, store ambiance, products assortment, store brand name, store parking availability, store layout, promotional offers) respectively.
$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4, \beta_5, \beta_6, \beta_7$ are the regression coefficients for the previous mentioned independent variables
So, the general regression model can be reformulated as follows:
$Y = -.269 + .127$ store location $+. 211$ store ambiance $+ .219$ products assortment $+ .193$ store brand name $+ .099$ store parking availability $+ .231$ store layout $+ .247$ promotional offers

6.2.2 Stepwise Regression
To assess the relative importance for the most important variables that strongly influence Egyptian consumer's choice for retail chain and to develop a linear prediction equation based on the candidate variables, the stepwise regression analysis was conducted. The results of this analysis are depicted in table 9.

Table 9: Results of stepwise regression analysis

Model	β
Constant (-.268)	
Promotional offers	.303
Store layout	.234
Products assortment	. 290
Store brand name	.104

Store ambiance	.156
R Square = .828	

Predictors in the model: (Constant), Promotional offers, Store layout,
Products assortment,Store ambiance, Store brand name

-        From the results of table 9, it is clear that thepromotional offers is the highest importance variable (β=.303), hence it can be interpreted that it has the strongest impact on the decision of Egyptian consumer's choice for retail chain.The products assortmentprovided by the retail chain has the second importance (β=.290). Store layout also has a significant impact on consumer's choice for retail chain (β=.234). Store ambiance has the fourth relative importance (β=.156). The store brand name came as the lowest variable in terms of relative importance that influences the decision of Egyptian consumer's choice for retail chain (β=.104).
-        Based on this explanation, the regression model according to stepwise analysis can be formulated as follows:
Y = -.268 + .303 promotional offers +. 234 store layout + .290 products assortment + .104 store brand name + .156 store ambiance.

VII.   Results

The main objective of this study is to stand on the determinants that Egyptian consumers rely on when choosing their preferred retail chain. Another goal of this study is to find out the relative importance for each one of these determinants. Then, developing a mathematical model helps managers of retail chains operating in Egypt to predict the chain's ability to attract the largest possible number of consumers. The study shows that there are seven keys determinants that play a crucial role in retail chain selection by the Egyptian consumer. These factors are: store location, store ambiance, store layout, store brand name, store parking availability, products assortment, and promotional offers.

The results reached about the correlation analysis show that there is a positive relationship between all suggested determinants and the Egyptian consumers' choice of the retail chain they prefer to buy from. The correlation coefficient between promotional offers and retail chain choice is the highest = 0.829 followed by products assortment; its correlation coefficient withretail chain choice is 0.798. The correlation coefficient between store parking availability and retail chain choice is 0.507; it is the lowest correlation which means the Egyptian consumers do not care with the presence of a car park for the retail chain as long as they find attractive offers and a variety of products.

However, the stepwise regression analysis reveals only five factors are the most important determinants that the Egyptian consumer relies on when choosing the retail chain he/she prefers to deal with. Promotional offers is the most important determinant (β=.303). Products assortment emerged as the second in terms of relative importance (β=.290), followed by store layout (β=.234). The fourth important determinant is store ambiance (β=.156), and the last determinant is store brand name (β=104). The mentioned factors contribute %83 to Egyptian consumer's choice for retail chain. So, managers of retail store chains should pay more attention to such dimensions to attract the largest number of customers.

Positive β coefficients indicate that, the more store promotional offers, products assortment provided, well store layout, Attractive store ambiance, and store brand awareness, the more likely to choose the retail chain to buy from.

ANOVA results show that the research model was conducted properly and valued to study; it shows that the independent variables can collectively explain the variations in customer's choice decision of retail chain. Generally speaking, ANOVA results indicate that the model as a whole is statistically significant.

VIII.   Strategic Implications

This research presents an extensive study of the factors that Egyptian consumers rely on when deciding which retail chain they prefer to buy from, and then the managers of these chains must focus their efforts on these factors and not focus on other factors that are not important. Accordingly, an effective marketing strategy can be designed by paying more attention to these factors.

This research model was properly conducted and carefully derived by using an appropriate and adequate sample. Therefore, the retail chains operating in Egypt can apply this study to set up their business strategies in order to enhance its efficiency in the current retail environment which is characterized by intense competition.

This study enables us to identify the factors that the Egyptian consumer considers when choosing retail stores. It has become very important in today's competitive retail markets to understand consumers' needs and

provide not only the required products and services, but also the appropriate factors that lead to a pleasant shopping experience in order to increase customer satisfaction.

Detecting the determinants that motivate Egyptian consumers to choose the retail chain is an important contribution to the retail sector as managers of such chains can use these results to increase their understanding of these determinants and thus developing the appropriate marketing strategies.

IX.   Recommendations

There is no doubt that the retail business is the backbone of any economy. Hence, it has become important for those in charge of this business to understand customer preferences regarding the retail chain choice in order to satisfy their customers and provide them with a good buying experience. The objective of this study was to find out the factors that Egyptian consumers rely on when choosing the preferred retail chain to buy from. Based on the findings of this study and conclusion arrived by analysis, the following are recommended for retail chains managers:

The study found that promotional offers have a significant positive influence on customer choice of retail chain. In this regard, retail chains managers have to follow various promotional programs through which they can attract more customers, for examples, announcing an offer for a short period during the customer's shopping time, providing coupons, discounts, providing free gifts if the customer's purchases exceed a certain amount, announcing special offers, creating a loyalty program, doing lucky draws on customers' billing numbers, accumulating purchasing scores to achieve specifics points which can be exchanged for cash or products, offering discounts and promotion, advertising the promotion in local newspapers or through e-mails, participating in special events (Black Friday, Retail chain birthday, ...etc.). Definitely, these various promotional strategies will attract more customers to the retail chain and lead to increasing their satisfaction and their loyalty toward this chain.

The study also revealed the products assortment has the second relative importance on customer choice of retail chain. Therefore, retail chains managers should quickly replace the sold items and ensure that there are all kinds of products demanded by customers and availability of a wider choice of merchandise. The bottom line is that all products required by customers should be provided at one place under one roof and on one time.

Store layout has emerged as the third important determinant in this study. In this regard, retail chains managers should ensure that the design of the store allows easy movement within the store, enables customers to find the required products easily, and facilitates entry and exit to the store. Also, a good store layout should enable the customers to locate the products effortlessly, and thus providing an enjoyable experience for consumers and encouraging them to return again.

Furthermore, the study revealed the store ambiance has the fourth importance on retail chain choice. So, managers of retail chains should provide an appropriate store environment for purchase in terms of proper lighting, pleasing colors, background music, decoration, product presentation method, odor, clean floors, proper temperature, and any other stimuli which influence customers' perceptions and motivate them to purchase through providing a pleasant shopping experience.

As long as the study revealed that store brand name has a significant influence on customer choice of retail chain, managers of retail chains should differ from competitors in providing the service in order to improve their image in customers' mind. In addition, the greater the confidence stores create in their brands, the more likely customers are willing to purchase from these stores.

X.   Further Studies

This research provided an insight into managers of retail chains operating in Egypt about the factors that Egyptian consumers rely on when choosing the preferred retail chain to buy from. However, there are more factors that should be examined to determine its impact on the Egyptian consumer when choosing the retail chain, such as: store personnel, customer Service, loyalty programs, home delivery, ..etc.

The demographic information could be taken into consideration in the future studies to better serve the needs of the customers. The factors reached or its relative importance may vary according to age, gender, income, or education level.

This study was conducted using 400 respondents. In the future, such a study can be validated through using more samples by employing online survey. The findings of such work may provide additional validity and support the findings of this study.

Similar studies could be conducted in other cities in Egypt to compare the proposed factors among the populations of each city. The results can lead us to develop a model for each city, and then have a comprehensive view of determinants of Egyptian consumer's choice for retail chains in all Egyptian cities. This type of research will be helpful in providing comparisons and setting of standards by the retailers.

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