



Factors Influencing Organization Success: A Case Study of Walmart

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ABSTRACT

Walmart was established by Sam Walton and beginning as a small discount retailer in Rogers, Arkansas in 1962. This paper investigates how Walmart become popular and successful in retail business around the world and how they perform well in sales. This study found that some factors were leading to the success of Walmart. Since then, Walmart has become the most trusted retailer that creates value for business and society.

Keywords: Largest Retailers, Leading Global Brand, Live Better, Multinational, Success Factors

INTRODUCTION

One of the aspects that contribute to an organization's success is good management of its human resources. Organizational behavior is to understand, explain, and improve the attitudes of the individuals and groups in an organization. It can help in increasing the ability to understand the people and how their behaviour impacts the performance of the organization.

Walmart is the largest retailer in the world with the stores operating in 27 countries including China, Japan, India, Chile, and Canada. It is also known as a multinational grocery store and retail corporation. Walmart has employed more than 2.2 million employees around the world and serves more than 260 million customers globally each week.

Walmart has started the company with a small grocery store consequently expanding the market into the largest retailers in the world. Walmart launches its e-commerce website to store service, enabling consumers to make a quick purchase online and pick up in stores. Besides, Walmart also makes Walmart pay which is an easy, fast and secure way for customers to make purchases with their smartphones.

Walmart's mission 'to save people money so they can live better' is to provide safe and affordable products to people around the world because it can enhance economic



opportunity and social sustainability. Walmart's vision "*Be the destination for customers to save money, no matter how they want to shop*" is to change the competitive landscape and the overall condition of the retail industry. Walmart's mission and vision bring different intensive growth strategies like market penetration and market development that contributed to Walmart's success.

Nowadays, products and services are becoming more commoditized. To differentiate their offers from competitors, companies are creating and managing customer experiences with brands. Walmart's success to manage the product and service quality keeps advantages in the highly competitive business environment. Walmart provides greater customer value and satisfaction than its competitor does since Walmart believes that high-quality products do not have to be priced high. Therefore, Walmart has offered a larger product assortment with a low price for the customers.

Today, hardly anything goes so unbranded that branding has become so strong. Consumers view brands of products as an important criterion for purchase intention. Reddy et al. (2021) underlined advertising strategy impacts on brand awareness and purchase intention. Besides, the branding of a product can add value to a consumer's purchase. Walmart is the fastest growing brand in the world. Walmart's success to promote its brand for the customer saves people money so people can live better. Walmart can provide 'everyday low price' for products to customers. Basker (2005b), Hausman and Leibtag (2007), and Basker and Noel (2009) indicated that Walmart Supercenters sold the groceries to consumers at average prices lower than other competitors in the retail industry. Hence, Walmart has a high reputation for low prices and people view the Walmart brand as convenient, cheap, and reliable.

There are around 140 million customers from the U.S will visit Walmart in person or online every week as they offer high-quality products. Srinivasan, Anson, and Ponnnavolu (2002) stated that the product assortment offered had strongly related a consumer's attitudes toward a website of a shop and also a retail store. Walmart has diversified the product to fulfill the demand of the customer. Briesch and Chintagunta (2009) and Verhoef, Neslin, and Vroomen (2007) argued that the most important for consumer's channel choice is the product assortment. Walmart offers low prices on products through different formats which include Supercentre, Discount Store, and Neighbourhood Market. These three formats of Walmart have offered grocery, household supplies, health and beauty aids, electronics, apparel, toys, home furnishings, and hardware. There are also different special shops in Walmart such as banks, hair salons, nail salons, pharmacies, and restaurants. Pan and Zinkhan (2006) contended that product assortment for a store has the highest related choice for customers by comparison to the service quality, price of the product.

In addition, Walmart Supercentre offered customers new methods to live better and healthier in September 2019, which is Walmart Health Centre. Qualified medical professionals such as physicians, nurse practitioners, dentists, and optometrists operated Walmart Health Center. It has provided services such as primary care, counseling, dental, optical, hearing, X-ray lab, and EKG. Walmart not only has wellness services for people but also for pets. In 2016, Essentials Pet Care was launched within a Walmart store in Port Richey. It provides services including routine care, treating minor illnesses, vaccinations, and microchipping.



Besides that, to increase the shopping experience for the customer in Walmart, Walmart App's store map had launched in November 2018. By using the store map in Walmart App, customers are allowed to search the item positions and this may help customers easily find the items they are searching for. Advertised items will be marked with color code maps in Walmart App for the convenience of the customer to get the detail of the product. When traveling, customers may not be familiar with the store they are in. Hence, customers may use the Walmart App to find the location of products they are needed without wasting time.

During this coronavirus pandemic, customer lives and consumption methods have changed. Walmart is working hard to provide products and services to consumers they need the most during the pandemic. In March 2020, Walmart launched Express Delivery which is a new service that may deliver more than 160,000 items from customers' orders in less than two hours. To create more opportunities for customers to shop at Walmart, Express Delivery services will expand to almost 2000 stores in the following week. Baker, Parasuraman, Grewal, and Voss (2002) suggested that most of the customers will prefer to purchase a product at a channel that may reduce the overall time taken for shopping.

Walmart set up a variety of formats, such as Supercentre, Discount Store, and Neighbourhood Market to satisfy the demand of the market and create brand loyalty. Walmart has offered a larger product assortment with a low price for the customers due to the price of product and service as a strong determinant of customer satisfaction. Walmart enters the new market with a suitable local way based on local culture. Entry barriers can be overcome with sufficient information on the markets. Table 1 below presents Walmart's market opportunity analysis.

Table 1. Market Opportunity Analysis

Strengths	Weakness
<p>1. Walmart is one of the largest retailers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Walmart is one of the largest retailers with the largest revenue, stores, employees, and customers. - Walmart had the market power over the supplier and competitor. This allows them to sell at a lower price and compete over the market. 	<p>1. High Employee Turnover</p> <p>Walmart had experience complaints related to unequal wages, poor benefits, and a poor work environment. Thus, the company lack of motivation among existing employee and lead to high employee turnover.</p>
<p>2. Technologically advanced information system</p> <p>The system can help in inventory management, order tracking, sales, and customer relationship management. It is essential for making a good decision and enhances the efficiency of supply chain management.</p>	<p>2. Negative publicity</p> <p>Walmart had faced some issues such as bribery, low wages, and poor work conditions. It also brings negative reflection on the company's image and reputation.</p>
<p>3. The wide variety of product</p>	<p>3. Little differentiation</p>

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Walmart offers a variety of brand names and categories of products which enables customers to enjoy the best selection and fulfill their needs without visiting multiple retailers.	The operation, service performance, and the products have no differentiation compared to the other retailers such as Amazon and Kmart.
Opportunities	Threat
<p>1. Expansion to developing countries Walmart offers western goods to developing countries since these countries' economy is growing. The cost-efficient product from Walmart can fulfill their needs.</p> <p>2. Expanding the online store Walmart offers an online store that provides a convenient and comfortable online shopping experience without going out. The low overhead strategy can enhance the company's revenue.</p> <p>3. Organic products As the trend of a healthy eating lifestyle and the demand for healthy food is growing, Walmart has the opportunity to introduce gluten-free and organic products.</p>	<p>1. Aggressive competition Walmart is facing competition from other retailers such as Amazon, Costco, and Tesco. These retailers shrink the price difference and offer a more enjoyable shopping experience and higher quality products at a similar level with Walmart.</p> <p>2. Rising in commodity product prices The product's prices will be driving up due to the increase in labor cost, raw materials cost, and certain regulatory issues while the profit margin and competitive advantage can be eroding.</p> <p>3. Social threat from local communities Some of the small businesses from local communities dislike Walmart entering their area because they are afraid their business will be affected since they cannot compete on price and selection. Therefore, Walmart will face some trouble in setting up their business in this kind of area.</p>

The political, economic, social, and technological (PEST) analysis as presented in Table 1 illustrates the external factors that affect Walmart. The success of the organization will be influenced by these external factors. PEST analysis can help the decision-makers to get more information about the changes that may be happening in the market.

Political stability is important for the success of the organization especially in the expansion of stores. The organization faces various types of political environments and the risks of the political system when expanding stores in other countries. When the politics of the country or location is stable, the suppliers and manufacturers can operate normally allowing suppliers to fulfill standards and focus on operations. Walmart faces the political issue of pressures for higher wages. "Stop Walmart Act" prohibits Walmart from buying back stock unless they increase and pay a minimum of \$15 wage an hour followed by other terms and conditions as well (Barreca, 2020, pp. 363-364)



In the economic environment, it will result in changes within the company's revenues if the organization is harassed by economic changes. One of the main competitive advantages of Walmart is lower pricing. According to Gereffi and Christian (2009, p. 576), Walmart's "everyday low prices" slogan shapes all its business decisions, including the use of technology, branding, imports, and broad supplier and labor relations. Walmart has also been influenced during the Covid-19 pandemic. Many organizations have cut off the worker causing the unemployment rate to rise and economic growth becomes slow in this pandemic.

Walmart's business growth and revenue are affected by the social factors of culture, consumer lifestyle, consumer attitudes, and opinions. Different labor strategies and business forms depending on the market, institutions, and culture of the host countries where it operates were developed by Walmart (Tilly, 2007, pp.1821-1822). Based on some critics in the European country, Walmart defines other cultures. This is clearly shown when Walmart Germany was developed based on American Culture. Nevertheless, social factors can present opportunities for Walmart. The variety of products required to satisfy various cultural preferences can be increased. This may attract and increase consumer demand.

Nowadays, technology is greatly influencing different industries around the world. If the organization does not update the technology and enters the digital world, the business is difficult to continue. Digital transformation and automation processes affect all businesses. During the Covid-19 pandemic, e-commerce business or online ordering becomes the heart of the business. This clearly shows that the pandemic has accelerated the shift towards a more digital world. Walmart introduces automated units and robots for store maintenance and fulfilling online orders. Currently, these technologies are operating in a few locations and will be tested for a few months and searching for a positive response. The employees can be focused on selling products and serving customers with this technology.

Walmart offers many varieties of products and services. It tries to satisfy different people's needs and desires. While developing its brand of products, Walmart also offers different brands of products, for supplying such a wide variety of brands to provide more selections for customers. Oppewal and Koelemeijer (2005) and Sloat, Fok, and Verhoef, (2006) showed that a larger product assortment was preferred for a customer due to it offers more choice for the customer and enhances the experiences of consumer autonomy. Moreover, it helps customers to easily meet their different needs as they do not need to go to other several places to find the products that they need. By offering a massive product and widely different brands, customers are becoming satisfied when shopping in Walmart. As Walmart owns these brands, it will make their products exclusive only to Walmart stores, therefore making an associate of exclusivity and increasing loyalty for retail customers.

Addedly, Walmart provides a pay machine, Walmart Pay, for faster checkouts to customers to avoid a long queue in the grocery. It is placed in every Walmart grocery store. This makes customers checking out easier. Besides, Walmart gained attention when it launched Walmart.com, one of the famous and most successful online retailers in the world. It continues to grow the market share of the company and has provided a channel to sell the items. Walmart provides express delivery to the customer who



purchases the goods through the online grocery. Customers can receive their goods within 2 hours after they place an order in the cart.

To gain customers' trust, Walmart successfully understands its customers' wants and needs by building effective and efficient communication. Thus, Walmart has introduced its mission statement 'to save people money so they can live better' by its low price strategy to attract consumers. Walmart minimizes the prices as a way to enhance its competitiveness. The price strategy has been in priority since the company was founded. Walmart offers many affordable essential goods. Customers can find good quality products at the Walmart stores at lower prices than other competitors realizing customer loyalty and repeat purchases.

Walmart has minimized its operating costs by using an advanced information system, low wages of the workers, sharing rooms with colleagues, and keeping costs at a minimum for heating and cooling for the building. Walmart used online systems and software programs to automate and precise business functions, including accounting, online website grocery, and communication. Advance information systems are useful for their high efficiency which can make Walmart minimize the operating costs in the specific area. Walmart has cut the highest operating costs in workers' wages as they only take the minimum wages according to local laws.

Also, Walmart has introduced the replenishment application system as one of its advanced information systems. It helps Walmart keep their cost low and well-stocked in the warehouse. With the advanced technology system, Walmart can identify the fast-selling products, when the management needs to be replenished in the stores, and to put how many products on the shelves. It increases the efficiency in inventory management and gives Walmart an easy way of dealing with the manufacturers and suppliers.

Walmart's management staff can access the inventory system through the replenishment application system. This system also helps Walmart save a huge amount of money on storage costs as it efficiently controls the inventory by replacing the product in the store very quickly. Moreover, it ensures that stocks are in control and products are available in store for the customer.

RESEARCH METHOD

We applied the quantitative research method. The journals and articles are used to confirm the theories and establish generalizable facts about the research topic. The data were collected using quantitative methods by online survey. It is one of the convenient platforms to collect data and information from respondents. It consists of multiple-choice questions and designed rating scale questions. It consisted of demographic questions such as gender, age, ethnicity, and nationality, in addition to questions related to how respondents hear about Walmart, Walmart's attraction, satisfaction respondents about Walmart, and factors that drive Walmart's success as well as questions of respondents while shopping at Walmart. The online survey was closed by asking for recommendations to improve the customer satisfaction of Walmart.



A probability sample was used to select participants of this research. Relevant and statistical inferences were created from the respondent's opinions. The data were analyzed and discussed by this method. The survey has been conducted online via Google Form and the number of total participants was one hundred respondents. The participation of respondents was fully voluntary.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Walmart is one of the largest retailers offering a variety of products by providing well-known brand names and its private label brand to fulfill customers' needs. The consumer product categories are food, automotive, household essentials, sports equipment, stationery, health, and skincare products. It provides a wide range of goods available within 50 steps and attracts you to purchase them (Chekwa, Martin, & Wells, 2014).

As a trend of the healthy eating lifestyle, Walmart has also increased sales of organic foods and popularized healthy food purchases since 2011 (Taillie, Ng, & Popkin, 2016). This is an opportunity for Walmart to introduce organic products.

As a result of Walmart's influence, supplier profit increases by 17.77%, supplier shipment increases to 45%, and 8 of 10 shoppers are preferred to shop at Walmart due to its wide variety of products. Walmart is able to offer consumers a one-stop shopping experience as they could shop and purchase with a wealth of products without visiting multiple grocery stores. Our survey research underlines 83% out of 100 respondents agreed that Walmart provides a wide variety of products. They are willing to shop at Walmart in the future because the store can fulfill their needs. The high satisfaction of customers helps Walmart to gain their loyalty whilst increasing their sales as well.

Strength in Both In-Store and Online Grocery Sales

The data collection shows 82% of respondents chose strength in both in-store and online grocery sales as the factors that drive Walmart's success. Besides the physical grocery store, Walmart has expanded its business with online ordering and in-store pick up which provides a convenient and comfortable online shopping experience to customers. Walmart not only focuses on getting the customer in the stores but also creates online grocery sales to attract customers buying or shopping online. This allows customers to purchase goods without visiting a physical store. After the customer makes an order and payment in the Walmart app or Walmart grocery website, the goods and groceries will be delivered to the customer. The Walmart app also makes customers convenient to check off their shopping and grocery list.

Walmart is making e-commerce more widely to meet customer needs. Secure shipping provided by Walmart ensures a higher level of service for customers who purchase online. Kozareva (2015, p. 1329) stated that the ability to quickly and accurately retrieve the desired products for the customers is one of the successful key components for online shopping platforms. Meanwhile, in-store sales provide many services to keep existing customers and attract new customers. Moreover, customer satisfaction can be fulfilled by good services in both in-store and online grocery sales. Walmart's promotion or mega sales both in-store and online grocery sales increase the sales demand. These can be held through advertising media, social media, and even its e-commerce platform.



Especially, during the Covid-19 pandemic online shopping and food delivery have become more safe and famous. People have also changed their consumption patterns by increasing the demand for takeout and food delivery (Naveen & Anders 2020). Everyone just makes an online ordering and stays at home to wait for their groceries or food. Indirectly, cashless payments are encouraged when online shopping. The spread of the coronavirus can be reduced by using online transactions instead of cash. All this is just at the fingertips on smartphones or laptops with an internet connection. Customers feel convenient, easy, and fast by using e-grocery. This can save time, money, and effort. Thus, during this pandemic, Walmart's online grocery sales have risen. The strength in both in-store and online grocery sales contributes to the high sales and profit of Walmart. Obviously, strong in-store sales and the e-commerce platform bring success to Walmart.

Walmart Mission and Purpose

In our survey, 48% of respondents agree with the mission statement 'to save people money so they can live better' has driven Walmart's success. Since then, every strategic decision in Walmart is based on this mission statement. It had sent out a powerful message to the public. It is clear to see that the business strategy Walmart is using the price to attract target consumers to shop at Walmart.

To achieve the mission, Walmart used a predatory pricing strategy which is charging a low price for products and services. Walmart always takes out the price comparison of products and services with other competitors such as Tesco, D-mart, and Amazon. After comparing the price of the products and services with competitors, Walmart tries to cut off the highest price of the products and services as possible as it can make customers feel satisfied. Customers save money by spending low costs to buy products and services from Walmart compared to the same products and services of Tesco, D-mart, and Amazon.

Customer demand for Walmart products and services is high for it focuses to keep prices as low as possible to create more value for consumers. Hausman and Leibtag (2007) contended that the increase in consumer surplus occurs after the lower prices of products and services. Walmart gained a large volume of sales enabling Walmart to make substantial profits even though individual margin on the single item will be slimmer than other competitors. Hence, Walmart has built a strong loyal customer base because of the mission statement that makes Walmart consistently striven to offer low everyday prices to customers.

In addition, Walmart had set up some best times of the year to help customers. They can take advantage of one of their bigger sales events, such as the Walmart Black Friday sale, Walmart's Public Holiday Sale, and Walmart seasonal sale. In the Walmart Black Friday sale, customers can shop to purchase headphones at less than half of the usual prices and also save up to \$250 on a gaming laptop. In addition to these sales, Walmart launched a Big Save Sale in line with Prime Day 2020 which has a deep discount on nearly 2000 items to enhance the saving capacity of the customer.

Minimizing Operating Costs

Walmart strives to minimize the operating costs as low as possible by implementing the low price business model (Chang & Hu, 2020). Walmart implements the strategy of large discounts on its products successfully attracting a large number of customers (Hunt,



Watts, & Bryant, 2018). To achieve the low price business model, Walmart minimizes the costs by using its bargaining power and making innovations in supply chain management.

As one of the largest retailers, Walmart's huge purchasing power enables it to convince the supplier and demand lower wholesale rates than other retailers. Walmart has huge bargaining power since it offers a great number of businesses to manufacturers and suppliers. Also, it is one of the largest distributors for manufacturing. For instance, 17% of the total sales of P&G and 38.7% of the total sales of CCA Industries rely on Walmart stores. Without Walmart, these businesses would be unable to operate. Therefore, leveraging its bargaining power with suppliers could minimize its costs.

Besides that, its innovation in supply chain management (SCM) helps to drive down the operating costs. It is commonly used in different areas such as retailers, manufacturing, transportation, logistics firms, government agencies, and service firms. SCM can effectively help many ventures to enhance their profits. The successful applications of SCM in Walmart can be an example. Therefore, Walmart can be a leading company in the market. SCM is considered an effective method that helps Walmart to reduce the cost and increase the efficiency of the product flow (Venugopal, Sundeeep, & Venkatesh, 2020).

Other strategies Walmart implements are a low margin, high turnover, and low-cost retailers. This implies that Walmart is a low-cost leader among mass retailers. It carries out certain strategic activities such as the aggressive deployment of systems and leveraging its bargaining power with suppliers to reduce the costs (Stankevičiūtė, Grunda, & Bartkus, 2012).

Technologically Advanced Information System

Based on the survey, a technologically advanced information system has been chosen by 54% of respondents. In the age of advanced technology, the system can help Walmart in inventory management, order tracking, sales, and customer relationship management to maximize sales. Out of 100%, 54% of respondents agreed that technologically advanced information systems are one of the successful reasons that Walmart has.

To develop a better customer experience and maintain a competitive way in this increasing grocery landscape, Walmart has been investing in technology. There are two technological advancements it uses in the grocery and warehouse.

Walmart is using robots to facilitate the process. A shelf-scanning robot can restock shelves, find and return the misplaced product, and can track the inventory levels. These technological advancements help the grocery to collect the data, make sure the price tag is updated and accurate, identify the products that are out of stock, and check the overstock product on the shelves. This will result in efficiency and cost savings as only a few workers are involved in this process. Walmart has improved its inventory accuracy, reduced workers turnover with a huge amount of stock, and enhanced customer experience. The information provided by the shelf-scanning robot is important for Walmart to squeeze the sales.



Besides, Walmart has introduced an alphabot system between online grocery and warehouse. The alphabot uses an autonomous cart to retrieve ambient, refrigerated, and frozen items. The items are then brought to a workstation where the worker will do double checks for the item have packed. Lastly, the workers will deliver the order to the customers. By using this alphabot system, Walmart has created a convenience for customers that allows them to place orders closer to the pick-up time and reduce the time when they are waiting for pick-up. Moreover, the real-time data of inventory will become more accurate because the data will immediately update once the stock increases or decreases and making the substitution easier for the workers.

The innovative and advanced system helps the workers to reduce the amount of time they spend on the repeatable task in stores and allow the worker to switch to selling merchandise to customers and other customers services role to improve the customer's satisfaction.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper concludes that the respondents are largely heard and know about Walmart through social media. The convenience of obtaining groceries becomes the most attractive of respondents when shopping at Walmart. Moreover, the respondents were satisfied with Walmart as the place for grocery and most of them will not consider other grocery stores other than Walmart. They are also willing to continue to shop at Walmart in the future. This clearly shows that Walmart's success is due to retaining regular customers and fulfilling customer satisfaction. This paper highlighted the most important factor that drives Walmart's success is its wide variety of products in which customers can purchase anything they want in daily life. Our research summarised that Walmart is successful in multinational grocery stores and retail corporations.

However, Walmart should increase the wages and the benefit of the workers to ensure their concern and responsibilities. Workers are one of the most important elements that a company needs to run a store. Workers' satisfaction can be seen based on the wages a company is given. If a worker is not satisfied with the wages paid, their work performance must be taken into consideration. Every worker should receive appropriate wages according to their working hours and medical benefits that suit the workers. When workers perceive that they are getting paid more than before, it will compel them to expend extra effort into the work. Workers will work harder to demonstrate to Walmart that they deserve the wages and produce a high-quality working performance.

This paper suggests that Walmart should understand consumer's preferences and tastes before widening the market to developing countries. The method that Walmart used before to enter the new markets was by joint venture into foreign countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Indonesia, China, and Japan. Nevertheless, the operation in this foreign country had a series of setbacks. This is because the merchandise of Walmart failed to match the customer's taste and face strong loyalties to other brands. As it is highly difficult for Walmart to attract consumers, Walmart should pick up new ideas from other foreign countries by conducting preliminary surveys to get some new ideas from the opinion, taste, preference, buying habits, needs, and wants of the consumers in foreign countries.



Subsequently, Walmart should provide and emphasize training and development to their employee in the workplace to enhance their skills and knowledge. This will help the employees to do their job well and improve their performance. They will put more effort and do their best for the company. Besides, providing opportunities to engage with top leaders causes the relationship between top leaders and employees to become closer. The employees can interact and learn from leaders. The employees will have more motivation and feel happy during working. The motivation of the employees can lead to Walmart's goal achieved. The productivity of Walmart increases along with the profit.

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