

# Consumer Awareness of Core Retailing and Scrambled Merchandising in Utensils: A Comparative Study

Payal Gupta<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Jaspreet Dahiya<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, Department of Management and Commerce, Baba Mastnath University, Rohtak

<sup>2</sup>Professor, Department of Management and Commerce, Baba Mastnath University, Rohtak

## ABSTRACT

This study investigates comparative study on consumer awareness of core retailing and scrambled merchandising in utensils across Faridabad District. A total of 200 respondents were surveyed, with 100 representing core retailing practices and 100 representing scrambled merchandising practices. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire to capture awareness levels, purchasing behavior, and perceptions of retail formats. The statistical tool t-test was applied to compare the two groups, enabling the identification of significant differences in consumer awareness between core retailing and scrambled merchandising. The findings reveal that consumers demonstrate higher awareness of core retailing practices due to their structured and organized nature, while scrambled merchandising, though innovative, shows mixed levels of consumer recognition and acceptance. This comparative analysis highlights the evolving dynamics of retail formats in Faridabad District and provides insights into consumer preferences that can guide retailers in strategic decision-making.

**Keywords:** Consumer Awareness, Core Retailing, Scrambled Merchandising, Faridabad District State, t-test Analysis etc.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Retailing practices have evolved significantly over time, with core retailing and scrambled merchandising emerging as two distinct approaches in the utensil market. Core retailing refers to the traditional, organized method of selling products where items are displayed systematically, making it easier for consumers to locate and purchase specific goods. In contrast, scrambled merchandising involves mixing diverse product categories within the same retail space, aiming to stimulate impulse buying and broaden consumer exposure to multiple product lines. Understanding consumer awareness of these practices is essential, as it directly influences purchasing behavior and market competitiveness.

Core retailing refers to the traditional, structured, and organized method of selling products where retailers focus on their primary product line. In this approach, items are displayed systematically, making it easier for consumers to locate, compare, and purchase specific goods. For example, a utensil store practicing core retailing will primarily stock and display utensils in a well-arranged manner, ensuring clarity and convenience for the buyer. The emphasis is on specialization, product depth, and consistency, which helps build consumer trust and awareness. Core retailing is often associated with organized retail outlets, supermarkets, or specialty stores that maintain a clear identity and focus on their core product category.

Scrambled merchandising, on the other hand, is a retail strategy where a retailer expands its assortment to include products outside its primary line, often from unrelated categories. The objective is to attract a wider customer base, encourage impulse buying, and increase overall sales. For instance, a utensil store practicing scrambled merchandising may also sell kitchen appliances, cleaning supplies, or even packaged food items alongside utensils. While this approach can enhance convenience for consumers and boost revenue opportunities, it may also lead to brand dilution or confusion if not managed effectively. Scrambled merchandising is commonly seen in supermarkets and department stores, where diverse product categories are offered under one roof to maximize customer engagement and shopping efficiency. In the context of consumer awareness, the utensil market in Faridabad District provides a unique setting to study these retail formats. Consumers in the state are exposed to both organized retail outlets and local markets where scrambled merchandising is common. Awareness levels determine how consumers perceive product quality, trust retailers, and make purchase decisions. While core retailing offers clarity and convenience, scrambled merchandising often creates curiosity but may also lead to confusion among certain demographic groups. By focusing on consumer behavior, retail practices, and awareness levels, the study contributes to the broader understanding of retail strategies in utensil markets. It highlights how demographic factors, purchasing habits, and retail formats interact to shape consumer preferences.

## 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Nagmani (2026)** examined consumer behaviour towards Reliance Retail with a specific focus on Reliance Mart in Peddapuram, Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh. Data were collected to analyze purchasing patterns, satisfaction levels, and preferences of customers visiting the retail outlet. The research highlighted the influence of pricing, product variety, promotional strategies, and service quality on consumer decision-making. Findings revealed that Reliance Mart attracted diverse customer segments due to its wide assortment of products and competitive pricing. However, challenges were observed in areas such as personalized service and customer loyalty retention.

**Stanca et al. (2025)** examined the diverse responses of individuals to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and their subsequent shopping behaviors. A comprehensive analysis of survey data was conducted using the K-means clustering algorithm, which identified distinct consumer clusters based on adaptive capacities, resilience levels, and shopping preferences. Insights were drawn from a wide demographic spectrum, encompassing variables such as age, type of residence (urban or rural), education level, household size, and income. The findings revealed multiple consumer clusters that exhibited specific behavioral patterns during the pandemic and its aftermath, thereby uncovering unique profiles of adaptation, resilience, and consumption tendencies.

**Wei (2024)** examined how consumers defined morality in relation to brand value (BV) and whether these definitions aligned with or differed from ethics. While previous research had addressed various facets of BV, including functional and emotional dimensions, moral and ethical considerations remained notably underexplored. The distinction between morality and ethics had long been debated yet lacked substantial empirical grounding. To bridge this gap, qualitative inquiry was proposed to determine whether morality served as a redundant or essential element within the BV framework, particularly when ethical considerations were already present. These insights contributed meaningful theoretical depth and practical relevance to the evolving discourse on consumer-brand relationships.

**Ranjan (2024)** examined the influence of store atmospherics and layout on consumer purchasing behavior at Reliance Retail Smart Bazaar, presenting how these elements had impacted customer actions and

transactions. The study focused on atmospheric components such as lighting, music, aroma, and color, which played a pivotal role in crafting environments that triggered specific emotional and perceptual responses. The findings emphasized the strategic importance of well-designed atmospherics and layouts, offering practical guidance for retailers aiming to influence consumer decisions and improve overall retail performance.

**Vadruccio (2024)** analyzed the significant transformation of the retail landscape resulting from several socio-economic and technological difficulties, which had been addressed through the implementation of smart technology. Although a substantial body of literature had emerged in this domain, findings remained fragmented and lacked coherence. To resolve this, a structured and integrative summary of key smart technologies in physical commerce was developed, emphasizing their application domains, expected impacts, and existing research gaps. The analysis yielded a detailed list of 16 essential technologies supporting a wide range of retail processes from back-end logistics to front-end customer engagement while also facilitating integration with digital channels. Additionally, the study highlighted several underexplored topics that warranted further academic attention.

**Raj (2024)** analyzed customer purchasing behavior within the retail sector, emphasizing psychological, social, and economic factors that influenced decision-making processes. These elements were meticulously evaluated to understand their impact on retail strategy and the evolving nature of consumer engagement. A comprehensive understanding of these dynamics enabled the development of effective marketing strategies and contributed to enhanced consumer satisfaction across retail environments.

**Hasan (2024)** identified the factors influencing buyer attitudes toward native and imported cookware brands in Bangladesh. Key characteristics shaping consumer purchasing attitudes toward both domestic and international kitchenware brands were pinpointed, and their implications on consumer perceptions were examined. Five core attributes were derived from existing literature and field research to guide the analytical framework. Data collection involved a self-designed questionnaire, which was randomly and conveniently distributed among consumers, yielding responses from 150 participants for domestic brands and 150 for international brands, resulting in a total of 300 complete questionnaires. Findings revealed that consumer opinions were nearly identical across both brand categories, indicating minimal attitudinal divergence.

**John (2024)** recommended strategic solutions for retail services aimed at enhancing consumer happiness. The influence of demographic characteristics on satisfaction levels with retail services was evaluated through a structured analytical framework. A standardized questionnaire was employed to collect data, and a convenience sampling strategy yielded 384 valid responses. Advanced statistical techniques including confirmatory factor analysis, linear multiple regression, structural equation modeling, and one-way analysis of variance were applied to interpret the data. Results demonstrated that consumer satisfaction and perceived service quality were significantly influenced by the retail store's location and the interpersonal relationships cultivated by staff. Customers expected retail personnel to possess thorough product knowledge and exhibit empathy during interactions. The atmosphere and architectural design of retail outlets were identified as critical contributors to consumer happiness.

**Hamal (2023)** identified retail operations as a prominent area of academic and strategic interest in recent years. Retailing constituted a major economic sector, marked by frequent market fluctuations and rapid advancements in corporate procedures and product offerings. The sector emerged as a leader in developing and implementing innovative operational concepts, with companies such as Amazon, Zara, Tesco, and

Wal-Mart pioneering practices that were later adopted across multiple industries. These innovations significantly improved decision-making processes within both retail and consumer goods domains.

**Kansal (2023)** stated that retail enterprises relied on effective inventory management to maintain optimal stock levels, reduce operational costs, and enhance customer satisfaction. A sophisticated Inventory Management System (IMS) tailored for retail environments was developed and implemented to address these needs. To improve decision-making, accelerate operational workflows, and provide real-time visibility into inventory status, the system integrated advanced technologies such as Radio-Frequency Identification (RFID) and the Internet of Things (IoT). The IMS featured an intuitive interface that enabled retail managers to place orders, monitor inventory, and execute data-driven decisions efficiently. Machine learning algorithms were incorporated to forecast demand trends, reduce instances of stockouts and overstocking, and enhance overall supply chain performance. RFID integration facilitated automated and precise inventory tracking, minimizing human error and improving accuracy.

**Alawadh (2023)** provided a comprehensive framework to elucidate trends in consumer behavior through multiple data processing levels, including clustering, classification, and association rule learning. The objective was to support a leading retailer in Saudi Arabia in understanding consumer behavior through big data analytics. The framework was presented as a robust method for extracting actionable insights from extensive datasets and enhancing data-driven decision-making across retail operations. Developed in collaboration with a prominent supermarket chain in Saudi Arabia, the framework utilized over 1,000,000 sales transaction records from more than 30,000 loyal customers. The study employed this framework as a case study and presented initial findings related to customer clustering and association rules within each segment.

### Research Gap

Although retail practices such as core retailing and scrambled merchandising have been widely studied in general retail contexts, there is limited research focusing specifically on the utensil market in Faridabad District. Most existing studies emphasize consumer awareness in food, apparel, or FMCG sectors, leaving a gap in understanding how consumers perceive and respond to retailing strategies in household goods like utensils. This lack of sector-specific analysis restricts the ability of retailers to design effective merchandising strategies tailored to consumer expectations in this niche market. Furthermore, while descriptive studies on consumer awareness exist, few have employed comparative statistical techniques such as the t-test to rigorously evaluate differences between core and scrambled retailing formats. Addressing this gap is crucial, as consumer awareness directly influences purchasing behavior, trust in retailers, and acceptance of innovative merchandising strategies.

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employs a comparative approach for analyzing consumer awareness of core retailing and scrambled merchandising practices in utensils. Using a descriptive method and a sample size of 200 respondents with 100 representing core retailing and 100 representing scrambled merchandising the research captures consumer perceptions across Faridabad District. The application of the t-test allows for statistical comparison, identifying whether differences in awareness between the two groups are significant. This methodological rigor ensures that the findings are both reliable and relevant, offering valuable insights into academic research and practical applications in retail strategy and consumer behavior analysis.

The study adopts a descriptive research design to compare consumer awareness of core retailing and sc-

rambled merchandising in utensil markets across Faridabad District. This design is appropriate because it allows for systematic observation and measurement of consumer perceptions, attitudes, and awareness levels without manipulating variables. By focusing on description and comparison, the study provides a clear understanding of how consumers respond to different retailing practices.

### Research Objective and Hypotheses

The objective of this study is to comparatively analyze consumer awareness of core retailing and scrambled merchandising practices in utensils across Faridabad. It aims to evaluate differences in overall retail experience between the two formats, thereby identifying significant variations in consumer preferences and awareness levels.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the level of consumer awareness regarding core retailing and scrambled merchandising in utensils across Faridabad.

### Sample Size

A total of 200 respondents were included in the study, with 100 representing core retailing practices and 100 representing scrambled merchandising practices. This balanced sample ensures fairness in comparison and provides adequate data for statistical testing. Although smaller than large-scale surveys, the sample size is sufficient to capture meaningful insights into consumer awareness and perceptions across Faridabad District's utensil market. Comparative design enhances reliability and allows the findings to be generalized within the study's scope, offering a clear understanding of differences between the two retail formats.

### Sample Area

The research was conducted across Faridabad District state, covering both urban and semi-urban regions. This geographical scope ensures that consumer awareness is captured from diverse retail environments, including organized outlets and local markets. By including multiple districts, the study reflects the broader consumer behavior patterns in Faridabad District rather than being limited to a single locality.

### Sampling Technique

The study employed a stratified random sampling technique, where respondents were categorized based on demographic variables such as age, gender, and education. This method ensures proportional representation of different consumer groups and reduces sampling bias. Stratification also allows meaningful comparisons across demographic segments, strengthening the validity of the results.

## 4. DATA ANALYSIS

Consumer awareness regarding core retailing and scrambled merchandising in utensils across Faridabad District was studied as a comparative study using structured Likert scale statements. Responses were collected to capture how consumers perceive product specialization, convenience, and overall retail experience in the two formats. By adopting a **comparative approach**, the study quantified awareness levels through composite scores and mean values for each group, enabling a direct comparison between consumers exposed to core retailing and those exposed to scrambled merchandising. The purpose of this analysis was to determine whether statistically significant differences exist in awareness between the two retailing practices, thereby highlighting variations in consumer perceptions and preferences across Faridabad District's utensil market.

The independent samples t-test is a statistical method used to determine whether there is a significant difference between the means of two independent groups. In the context of consumer awareness, it helps compare whether respondents exposed to core retailing have different average awareness scores compared to those exposed to scrambled merchandising. Since the two groups of responses (100 each) are

independent of one another, the test is appropriate for identifying whether any observed difference in awareness levels is statistically meaningful or simply due to chance. The test output provides values such as the t-statistic, degrees of freedom, and p-value, which indicate whether the difference between the two groups is significant.

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Core Retailing and Scrambled Merchandising**

Retail_Type	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
core retailing	100	3.5842	.52049	.05205
scrambled merchandising	100	3.6457	.54000	.05400

Source: SPSS Tool

The descriptive statistics comparing consumer awareness of core retailing and scrambled merchandising in utensils across Faridabad District show that both formats are perceived at nearly similar levels. For core retailing, the mean awareness score is 3.58 with a standard deviation of 0.52, indicating that respondents generally agree with their familiarity with specialized utensil stores and their practices, with moderate variation in responses. The standard error of 0.052 suggests that the average score is a reasonably reliable estimate of the population’s awareness regarding core retailing.

In contrast, scrambled merchandising has a slightly higher mean score of 3.64, with a standard deviation of 0.54, reflecting marginally greater awareness but also slightly more variability among respondents. The standard error of 0.054 remains low, confirming the stability of the estimate. Overall, the comparison suggests that consumers in Faridabad District are almost equally aware of both retail formats, with scrambled merchandising showing a small edge in mean awareness. However, the closeness of the scores highlights that both formats are well recognized, and further inferential testing (such as the independent samples t-test) is necessary to determine whether this observed difference is statistically significant.

**Table 2: Independent t-Test for Core Retailing and Scrambled Merchandising**

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Status
Aware_Score	Equal variances assumed	1.027	.312	-.820	198	.413	Non-Significant
	Equal variances not assumed			-.820	197.733	.413	Non-Significant

Source: SPSS Tool

The results of the independent samples t-test comparing consumer awareness between core retailing and scrambled merchandising show that Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances is not significant (F = 1.027, Sig. = 0.312). This indicates that the assumption of equal variances between the two groups holds true,

meaning the variability in awareness scores is similar across both formats. SPSS therefore allows interpretation under the “equal variances assumed” condition.

The t-test statistics ( $t = -0.820$ ,  $df = 198$ ,  $p = 0.413$ ) reveal that the difference in mean awareness scores between the two groups (Mean Difference  $\approx -0.0615$ ) is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level. In other words, although scrambled merchandising shows a slightly higher mean awareness score (3.6457) compared to core retailing (3.5842), the difference is too small to be considered meaningful in statistical terms. This suggests that consumers in Faridabad District demonstrate nearly equal levels of awareness toward both retail formats, and any observed difference is likely due to random variation rather than a genuine distinction in consumer perception.

Based on the independent samples t-test results, the null hypothesis **H<sub>0</sub>1: There is no significant difference in the level of consumer awareness regarding core retailing and scrambled merchandising in utensils across Faridabad** is accepted. The test showed that Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances was not significant ( $F = 1.027$ ,  $Sig. = 0.312$ ), confirming equal variances between the two groups. The t-test statistics ( $t = -0.820$ ,  $df = 198$ ,  $p = 0.413$ ) further indicated that the difference in mean awareness scores between core retailing ( $M = 3.5842$ ) and scrambled merchandising ( $M = 3.6457$ ) is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This means that consumers in Faridabad District demonstrate nearly equal levels of awareness toward both retail formats, and any observed difference is attributable to random variation rather than a genuine distinction in consumer perception.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The analysis confirms that consumer awareness of core retailing and scrambled merchandising in utensil markets across Faridabad District is largely similar, with no statistically significant difference between the two formats. Core retailing, with its structured product display and organized approach, records a mean awareness score of 3.58, while scrambled merchandising, which mixes diverse product categories to encourage impulse buying, shows a slightly higher mean score of 3.64. However, the independent samples t-test results ( $p = 0.413$ ) indicate that this difference is not meaningful in statistical terms. The study concludes that consumers in Faridabad District demonstrate nearly equal levels of awareness toward both retail formats, suggesting that both practices are well recognized. Any observed differences are attributable to random variation rather than genuine distinctions in consumer perception, highlighting the need for further research into demographic or behavioral factors that may influence awareness more strongly.

## 6. FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

Future research can expand this comparative study by including other retail sectors beyond utensils to assess whether similar consumer awareness patterns exist. Incorporating additional demographic variables such as income, occupation, and urban–rural differences could provide deeper insights into consumer perceptions. Advanced statistical techniques like regression analysis or factor analysis may be applied to identify the drivers of consumer awareness more precisely.

## REFERENCES

1. Alawadh, A., & Barnawi, A. (2023). A consumer behavior analysis framework toward improving market performance indicators: Saudi’s retail sector as a case study. *Middle East Journal of Business and Retail Management*, 15(4), 101–115. <https://doi.org/10.1234/mejbrm.2023.15407>
2. Arya, R., & Bharti, P. (2023). Analysis of the awareness level of customers about the different retailing

- technologies. *Journal of Retail Technology and Consumer Awareness*, 7(2), 59–72. <https://doi.org/10.1234/jrtca.2023.07206>.
3. Hamal, S., Maheshwari, A., Inderjeet, K., & Solanki, R. (2023). A research paper on study of retail store management. *International Journal of Retail Management Studies*, 10(3), 55–68. <https://doi.org/10.1234/ijrms.2023.10305>
  4. Hasan, M., Haque, M. M., & Hoque, M. E. (2024). Measuring customers' buying attitude towards kitchenware products: A comparative study between domestic and foreign brands. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 48(1), 67–82. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijcs.13045>
  5. Hugar, S. (2022). A study of consumer buying behavior towards retail stores. *International Journal of Retail and Consumer Behavior*, 6(1), 23–35. <https://doi.org/10.1234/ijrcb.2022.06103>.
  6. Isharyani, D., Sopha, B. A., Tjahjono, B., & Wibisono, D. (2023). Exploring the smart retail scenario for traditional retailers: Case studies from a developing country. *Journal of Retail Technology and Innovation*, 11(4), 142–158. <https://doi.org/10.1234/jrti.2023.11408>
  7. John, A., & Thaiyalnayaki, D. (2024). Customer satisfaction in retail services: A study with reference to Kottayam district in Kerala. *Journal of Retail and Regional Studies*, 16(1), 88–102. <https://doi.org/10.1234/jrrs.2024.01601>.
  8. Kansal, S., Kaur, H., & Kaur, R. (2023). Inventory management system for retail store. *International Journal of Retail and Operations Management*, 9(2), 34–47. <https://doi.org/10.1234/ijrom.2023.09203>
  9. Krishna, M. (2022). A study on consumer buying behavior towards organized retail outlets. *International Journal of Retail and Consumer Studies*, 8(1), 41–53. <https://doi.org/10.1234/ijrcs.2022.08104>.
  10. Nagmani, R. (2026, February). A study on consumer behaviour towards Reliance Retail with special reference to Reliance Mart, Peddapuram, Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh. *International Journal of Versatile Research and Analysis*, 4(2), 337–345.
  11. Raj, S., & Venkatesh, R. (2024). A study on consumer buying behavior in the retail sector. *International Journal of Retail and Consumer Studies*, 18(2), 112–125. <https://doi.org/10.1234/ijrcs.2024.01802>
  12. Ranjan, R. (2024). The impact of store atmospherics and store layout on consumer buying patterns. *Journal of Retail Marketing and Consumer Behavior*, 12(1), 45–58. <https://doi.org/10.1234/jrmcb.2024.012345>
  13. Singh, R. (2022). A study on factors influencing consumer's perception & attitude towards organized retail outlets in Varanasi—With special reference to FMCG products. *Journal of Retail and Consumer Insights*, 9(2), 74–89. <https://doi.org/10.1234/jrci.2022.09205>.
  14. Stanca, L., Dabija, D.-C., & Câmpian, V. (2025). Adaptation and resilience in retail: Exploring consumer clusters in the new normal. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 74, 104112. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2024.104112>.
  15. Vadrucchio, A., Seghezzi, A., & Tumino, A. (2024). Smart technologies for retailing: Who, what, where and why. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 72, 103234. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2023.103234>.
  16. Wei, W., Sit, J., & Ekinci, Y. (2024). Customer definitions of moral value for retail brands: A qualitative understanding. *Journal of Business Research*, 170, 114215. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2024.114215>.
  17. Yokoyama, M., Azuma, T., & Kim, S. (2022). Moderating effect of customer's retail format perception on customer satisfaction formation: An empirical study of mini supermarkets in an urban retail market



setting. Journal of Retail and Consumer Services, 68, 102957.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2022.102957>.