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## FACTORS AFFECTING CONSUMER'S INTENTION TO CHOOSE A RETAIL CHAIN BRAND IN VIETNAM

Ai Huu Tran

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*Retailing is the final stage of the distribution channel, including businesses and people involved in the movement and transfer of ownership of goods and services from the producer to the final consumer. The customer's selection decision is a very complicated matter, where they have to decide: (1) how many types of items from each category are selected; (2) how to select purchases during shopping trips by period; (3) how to choose a different type of store. Combined with the research context in Vietnam, the author has proposed a number of factors affecting the brand choice behavior of retail chain stores, including the following 6 factors: (1) the image of the store customers, (2) price perception, (3) perceived risk, (4) attitude towards the brand, (5) brand awareness, (6) brand familiarity. A formal quantitative research was carried out on a sample size of 420 NTD. The values of the scale were analyzed using the following methods: Cronbach's Alpha, EFA, CFA and SEM to test the research hypotheses of the model.*

**Keywords:** retailing; choice decision; choice behavior; Vietnam

### Introduction

With the rapid and continuous globalization of the world economy, recent decades have seen the globalization of the retail industry, which has contributed to the creation of retail companies and brands of the largest retailer in the world. In today's increasingly competitive business environment, coupled with population growth, efficient retail businesses will make a major contribution to the global economy.

The retail landscape has changed dramatically over the past two decades. Around the world, the retail industry has been transformed from traditional retail in the domestic market in the past to modern retail on a large scale accompanied by the establishment of retail brands (Kim et al., 2012).



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## FACTORS AFFECTING CONSUMER'S INTENTION

As consumers' incomes, lifestyles, expectations, preferences and purchasing patterns are changing more and more, retail stores are opening according to the convenience of buyers. These changes require retailers to develop a new attitude, build retail branding and better organize the supply chain (Londhe, 2006).

Theoretically, there are many studies in the world of consumer behavior when choosing a retail store. Store selection is a major area of research in marketing (Solgaard & Hansen, 2003; Morschett et al., 2005).

Retail store selection consists of two levels:

- (1) choosing a location (type of outlet),
- (2) choosing an outlet brand store (Lanton, 2010).

At the first level, researchers in this field have focused mainly on store attributes to analyze and explain choice behavior. In which the 4 most notable attributes are: price, level of classification, distance/location and product quality. Most researchers have found that these 4 attributes have a significant impact on consumers' store selection decisions (Solgaard & Hansen, 2003).

There are also studies that show that: factors influencing store choice fall into two categories:

- (1) factors related to store attributes and
- (2) factors related to store attributes to NTDs (loyalty, age of buyers, number of shopping trips...).

Most studies focus on factors associated with store attributes, while there are a number of studies that consider both factors (Willems et al., 2011; Wu et al., 2011). These studies have enhanced our understanding of retail store selection decisions.

Another area of research related to the above problem is brand choice behavior (Bornmark et al., 2005; Askarova, 2002). Most of this research area is studied through probabilistic models to test the impact of marketing mix variables that are considered as predictors; variables related to situational factors, consumer's personality, social benefits, emotions, quality, brand reputation, product attributes.

In addition, according to Ajzen & Fishbein (1975), the process of buying and choice of behavior are better understood through studying the nature of purchase and intention of choice.

Thus, a lot of research has been done on BL stores in the world so far. However, most of the research on retail store choice behavior, brand choice behavior and buying behavior relates to the first stage of the choice process, that is, the choice of the store type is odd (Zulqarnain et al., 2015; Iton & Seepersad, 2014; Ardon, 2015) however, there is not much research on how BL store brand influences customer store choice.

### **Theoretical basis**

Retailing includes the activities of selling goods or services to the final consumer for personal and non-commercial use (Kotler & Keller, 2006). Therefore, retailing can be understood as the final stage of distribution of goods to the final consumer, and is considered one of the economic activities in the modern economy.

Thus, retailing can be understood as a type of commercial business activity in which goods and services are sold directly to the final consumer to satisfy a certain need (physical or spiritual), not for business (retail sale of goods or services).

- retail trade and stores

Retailing includes the activities of selling goods or services to the final consumer for personal and non-commercial use (Kotler & Keller, 2006). Therefore, retailing can be understood as the final stage of distribution of goods to the final consumer, and is considered one of the economic activities in the modern economy.

- retail brands

Retailers seek to organize specialized marketing activities within their organization, and as a result, retail brand building as a competitive advantage in retail marketing strategy has indeed received significant attention in the retail literature in the past (Ailawadi & Keller, 2004; Burt & Davies, 2010).

Traditionally, branding in the retail sector is associated with retailers' product brands (Burt & Davies, 2010), which helps retailers create an advantage in the retail industry and contributes to increased profitability, size, market segmentation and differentiation. It offers products and services that define the core differences between retail brands.

The second point of view follows the retail literature of Ailawadi & Keller (2004), who define retail branding as the retailer's products and services and help differentiate them from competitors. Chain stores are retail stores that share a common brand, centralized management, and often standardize business (Hayward et al., 1992).

Consumer choice is made in the context of a basic stimulus; consumer choice studies will facilitate various choices, some of which will represent the distribution of alternatives and information about attributes available in the environment.

The customer's selection decision is a very complicated matter, where they have to decide: (1) how many types of items from each category are selected; (2) how to select purchases during shopping trips by period; (3) how to choose a different type of store (Bhardwaj et al., 2010).

### ***The Theory of Rational Action (TRA)***

The Theory of Rational Action (TRA) model states that behavioral intentions lead to behavior, and intentions are determined by individual attitudes towards the behavior with the influence of subjective norms associated with performing that behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1975). The Theory of Rational Action is concerned with the behavior of consumers, as well as the determination of their behavioral tendencies, while behavioral tendencies are partly attitude towards behavior and partly subjective norms.

### ***Factors influencing consumer behavior when choosing retail stores***

As the number of products, brands, as well as retail outlets is increasing in the market, it becomes more difficult for consumers to choose a retail store. Choosing a retail store involves a similar process to choosing a brand.

The choice of retail stores can therefore be considered by a number of key factors such as store image, store brand, retailer advertising, store location and size, and consumer characteristics.

### ***Research model and variables in the model***

The author's research model is formed based on inheriting from the theory of planned behavior of Ajzen (1991) and previous studies on store choice behavior, and brand choice behavior.

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Overall, the author decided to study the store choice behavior at the second level, which is the retail store brand choice behavior - outlet brand (focus on the brand element associated with the type of retail chain). Moreover, the main object of research for retail brands here is a network of retail stores, so the author will exclude all factors such as location and space convenience.

Combined with the research context in Vietnam, the author proposed a number of factors influencing the initial brand choice behavior of BL chain stores, namely the intention to choose the chain store brand. Retail sales include the following six factors: (1) Store image, (2) Price perception, (3) Perceived risk, (4) Brand attitude, (5) Brand awareness, and (6) Brand familiarity.

### Research hypothesis

- Hypothesis 1 (H1): Retail store image will positively influence consumers' intention to choose a retail chain brand.

- Hypothesis 2 (H2): Price perception will have a positive effect on consumers' intention to choose a retail chain brand.

- Hypothesis 3 (H3): Perceived risk has a negative impact on consumers' intention to choose a retail chain brand.

- Hypothesis 4 (H4): Attitude towards retail store brand is positive and will have a positive influence on the intention to choose retail chain brand.

- Hypothesis 5 (H5): Brand awareness will positively influence the intention to choose a retail chain brand.

- Hypothesis 6 (H6): Brand familiarity will have a positive impact on the intention to choose a retail chain brand.

Table 1 - Constitutive elements and composition of store image

(Source: Levy & Weitz, 2009)

Components	Ingredient
Goods	The quality of the goods, the selection, the style, the price.
Service	Location, salesperson, ease of return, credit and delivery
Client	Regular customer
Infrastructure	Cleanliness, store layout, easy and attractive shopping
Utilities	Location and parking
Promotion policy	Advertising, P.O.P
Atmosphere	Shop atmosphere, fun, excitement, comfort
Institutions	The store's reputation
After the transaction	Satisfied

### Research methods

This study was conducted by surveying 423 consumers to collect survey data, conducted through a direct questionnaire.

The collected information is used to evaluate the reliability and validity of the scale, to test the scale, and to test the suitability of the model. After collecting and eliminating unsatisfactory questionnaires, the author coded and entered the data, and then the data was processed using SPSS 22.0 software.

The data of the study were analyzed through the following steps:

- Cronbach's Alpha reliability test.
- EFA exploratory factor analysis.
- Pearson linear correlation analysis.
- Analyze linear regression equations.

-Analysis of ANOVA, CFA and SEM to determine the factors affecting shopping behavior in Ho Chi Minh City

-The research results will show the influence of the factors affecting the online purchasing behavior of consumers and from there the author can make appropriate conclusions and recommendations.

### ***Select the research sample***

Since the survey subjects are heterogeneous in terms of age, gender, income, etc., the author chooses a convenience sampling method. This sampling method is a non-probability sampling method, the author takes samples based on convenience and can select available objects. The author uses a convenience sampling technique in the form of a paper-based direct survey in Ho Chi Minh City.

For EFA exploratory factor analysis, the sample size must be at least five times the total number of observed variables in the scales. In this topic, the author has 30 observed variables, so the number of samples is 150 ( $30 \times 5 = 150$ ) observations.

Therefore, the author conducts a survey of 423 consumers in major districts in Ho Chi Minh City who have ever shopped online to ensure the reliability of the research paper. The study uses a 5-point Likert scale (1 - strongly disagree to 5 - completely agree), applied to 6 scales with 30 observed variables.

### **Research results**

Test the reliability of the scale with Cronbach's Alpha coefficient: The results of Cronbach's Alpha reliability analysis for the independent variable and the dependent variable both meet two conditions: (1) the correlation coefficient of all variables in the scale is greater than 0.4; (2) Cronbach's Alpha coefficients are all greater than 0.6 and have the largest value. Therefore, the observed variables are reliable.

Results of factor analysis for independent variables: KMO coefficient = 0.741, so factor analysis is appropriate and statistically significant, Sig value. (Bartlett's Test) = 0.000 < 0.05, showing that the observed variables are correlated with each other in the population. The Eigenvalue coefficient of 1.734 > 1 represents the variance explained by each factor. The total variance extracted is 73,329% > 50%, proving that 73.329% of the variation of the data is explained by 6 factors.

Results of factor analysis for the dependent variable: KMO coefficient = 0.741 and Sig value. (Bartlett's Test) = 0.000 < 0.05 concluded that factor analysis is appropriate and statistically significant. The coefficient Eigenvalue = 3.273 > 1 represents the variance explained by each factor; the factor drawn has the best statistical summary significance. The total variance extracted is 81,817 > 50%, which is within the standard.

Results of regression analysis and hypothesis testing: The results of the fit assessment of the model show that: the coefficient  $R^2$  adjusted by 0.617 indicates the appropriateness of the model or in other words 61.7% of the variance in brand and store choice behavior.

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Consumer retail sales in Ho Chi Minh City are explained by 6 factors. The Durbin-Watson coefficient (d) is 1.307. With parameter k = six, n = 423 the model has no autocorrelation.

CFA analysis: Regarding the overall quality of fit, linear structural analysis shows that this model has a statistical chi-squared value of 362.414 with 152 degrees of freedom and p = 0.000. The relative chi-squared in degrees of freedom CMIN/def is 1.862 (< 2). Indicators include GFI = 0.922 (> 0.9), TLI = 0.951 (> 0.9), CFI = 0.961 (> 0.9) and RMSEA = 0.057 (< 0.08). Therefore, it is consistent with market data.

This also allows us to conclude about the one-way nature of the observed variables. As the convergent value is of interest, the standard weights of the scales are all > 0.5 and there is a statistical significance of p < 0.5, so the scales reach the convergent value. Therefore, the components are: (1) Store Image (SI), (2) Price Perception (PP), (3) Perceived Risk (PR), (4) Brand Attitude (BA), (5) Brand Awareness (BAW), and (6) Familiarity with the brand (FB).

Table 2 - Results of testing the discriminant value between the components of the scale for choosing brands and retail stores  
(Source: compiled by the author)

Relation		Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
SI.	<--> BA.	.093	.024	3.878	***
SI.	<--> BAW.	.086	.023	3.682	***
SI.	<--> PP.	.082	.018	4.579	***
PR.	<--> FA.	.080	.022	3.627	***
PR.	<--> BAW.	.052	.021	2.523	.012
PR.	<--> PP.	.119	.018	6.722	***
FA.	<--> BAW.	.045	.022	2.035	.042
FA.	<--> PP.	.059	.017	3.489	***
BAW.	<--> PP.	.163	.021	7.965	***
PR.	<--> BA.	.057	.021	2.686	.007

### ***Testing the research model SEM***

In the research model, there are 7 research concepts, of which 6 are independent, including (1) Store Image (SI), (2) Price Perception (PP), (3) Perceived Risk (PR), (4) Brand Attitude (BA), (5) Brand Awareness (BAW), and (6) Familiarity with the brand (FB) and Consumers' intention to choose a retail chain brand (CIB) are dependent concepts.

The results show that this model has a chi-square statistical value of 542,665 with 226 degrees of freedom (p = 0.000). Relative chi-squared in degrees of freedom CMIN/df is 1,539 (< 0.2). Other indicators such as GFI= 0.907 (> 0.9), TLI = 0.950 (> 0.9), CFI = 0.959 (> 0.9) and RMSEA = 0.058 (< 0.08).

Therefore, this model achieves compatibility with market data. The factors include Store Image (SI), (ES = 0.028; P = 0.049); Price Perception (PP), (ES = 0.060; P = 0.000), Perceived Risk (PR), (ES = 0.686; P = 0.000); Brand Attitude (BA), (ES = 0.059; P = 0.000), Brand Awareness (BAW) (ES = 0.186; P = 0.000); Familiarity with the brand (FB) (ES = 0.226; P = 0.000) all have P < 0.05 and the normalized estimates are positive, so they have a

direct, positive influence on the whole value. This means accepting hypotheses H1, H2, H3, H4, H5 and H6.

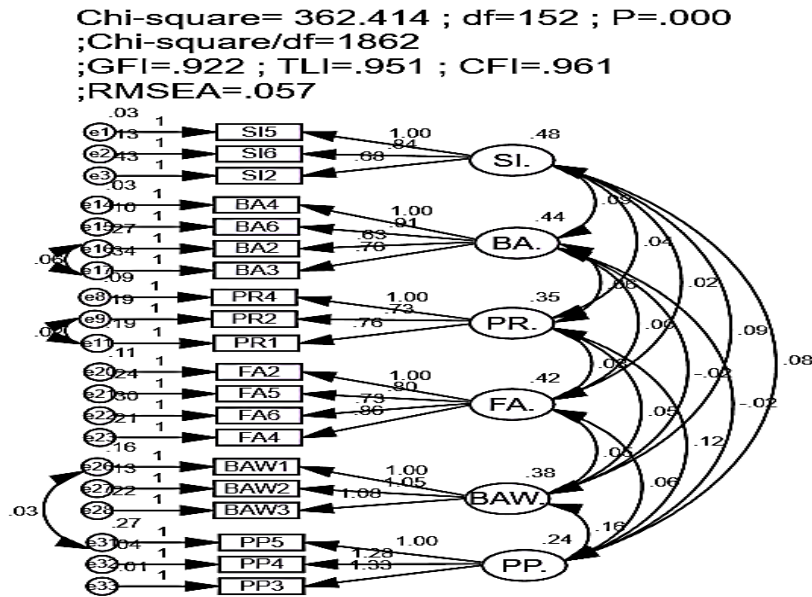


Figure 1 - CFA Analysis  
 (Source: compiled by the author)

Table 3 - Causal relationship between concepts and results of research hypotheses  
 (Source: compiled by the author)

Relation	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
BSB. <--- SI.	.028	.038	.731	.045	Yes
BSB. <--- BA.	.057	.040	1.443	.049	Yes
BSB. <--- PR.	.686	.059	11.676	***	Yes
BSB. <--- FA.	.060	.041	1.456	.040	Yes
BSB. <--- BAW.	.228	.053	4.328	***	Yes
BSB. <--- PP.	.179	.070	2.559	.010	Yes



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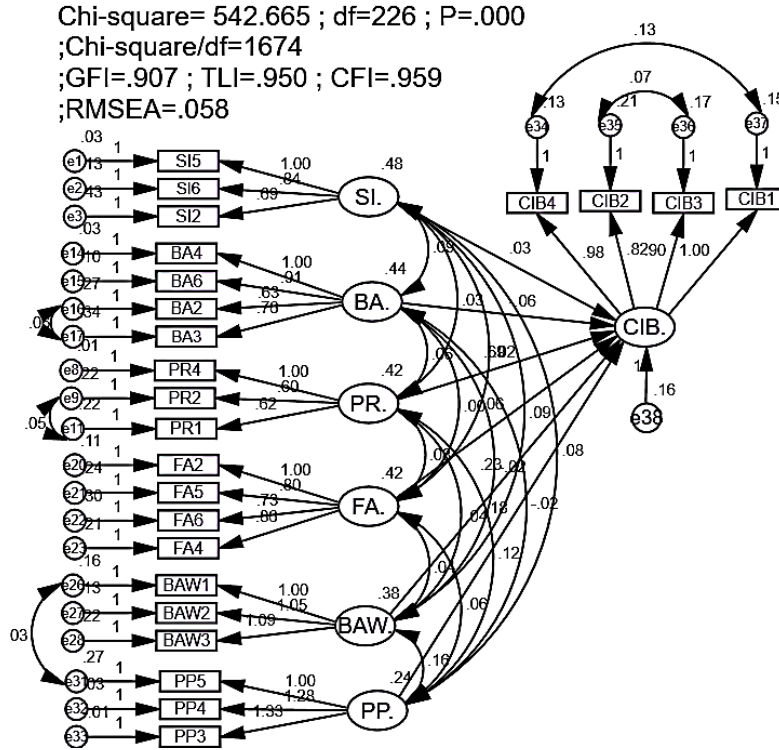


Figure 2 - SEM analysis  
 (Source: compiled by the author)

***Check the reliability of the estimate using Bootstrap***

The Bootstrap method was used to test the model estimates in the final model with the number of repeated samples of N = 1000. The estimated results from 1000 samples averaged with bias are presented in Tab. 4.

The absolute value of CR is very small compared to 2, so it can be said that the bias is very small; and not statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

Thus, we can conclude that the estimates in the model can be trusted.

Table 4 - Estimation results by bootstrap with N = 1000  
 (Source: compiled by the author)

Parameter			SE	SE-SE	Mean	Bias	SE-Bias	CR
BSB.	<---	SI.	0.046	0.001	0.035	-0.003	0.002	-1.50
BSB.	<---	BA.	0.046	0.001	-0.051	-0.003	0.002	-1.50
BSB.	<---	PR.	0.077	0.002	0.697	-0.01	0.005	-2.00
BSB.	<---	FA.	0.061	0.001	0.062	0.002	0.002	1.00
BSB.	<---	BAW.	0.073	0.002	0.224	-0.003	0.002	-1.50
BSB.	<---	PP.	0.112	0.003	0.171	-0.008	0.004	-2.00

## **Conclusion**

In recent years, Vietnam's retail market is considered one of the most attractive emerging markets in Asia. There is evidence that a number of big bosses in the retail sector are willing to invest in new or acquire brands in Vietnam. Consumer competition in brand choice is of great interest to retailers. Retailers choosing the best solutions to promote their brands are also considered one of the new competitive opportunities.

Manufacturers or retailers want to be able to retain and satisfy their customers. How to increase customer loyalty when there are so many different retail brands to choose from is also a motivation and a big challenge for businesses in this field.

To do this, it is increasingly important to find out what factors may influence consumer brand choice behavior. The purpose of the author's research is to help managers identify a number of factors influencing the brand choice behavior of retail stores among Vietnamese consumers in general and consumers in Ho Chi Minh City in particular. Through that, it is possible to know the level of influence and direction of the impact of each factor. This can help promote consumer retail store brand choice behavior.

To build and develop a retail chain brand, positioning it in the minds of customers, it is necessary to have a combination of marketing promotion activities of retailers and manufacturers.

Therefore, manufacturers must also strengthen the implementation of trade marketing activities at the point of sale.

- Strengthening support for communication activities, developing policies for each type and point of sale such as rewards paid on time, a salary of sales staff at retail points accordingly, having the right order reward system progress..., encourage consumers to try and convince them to see the difference of their products in retail stores, have policies such as payment discount, trial delivery, currencies rewards, coupons..., makes consumers feel less risk when choosing retail chain brands as a place to shop.

- Improve display methods to attract buyers: the rules for each type of distribution should be uniform to suit the shopping culture of the Vietnamese. When displaying, you need to choose places with a lot of people, the stalls can be located at the intersection of 2 or 3 traffic streams, and the stalls should be on the right side, because Vietnamese consumers have the habit of using their right hand.

## **Limitations of the study**

In this study, the author focuses on identifying and studying 6 independent variables: store image, price awareness, risk perception, brand awareness, brand attitude and brand perception. However, there are many other factors that may influence consumer brand selection behavior that the author has not studied.

Therefore, other studies can explore and consider expanding on other factors influencing Vietnamese consumers' retail store brand selection behavior.

This study focuses on a limited number of consumers concentrated in Ho Chi Minh City in retail chains.

Future research should extend the study to the entire Vietnamese market.

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