

A Study on the Influence of the Marketing Mix of Street-Side Vendors on Consumer Buying Behaviour

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Abstract:

The marketing mix: product, price, place, and promotion was evaluated on street-side sellers in Central Mumbai suburbs' consumer buying behavior. Street vendors provided affordable, diverse, and accessible products to consumers while creating jobs and social mobility in the informal economy. Descriptive and analytical research design collected primary and secondary data through a structured questionnaire and literature review. SPSS was used to analyze demographic data and marketing mix factors using non-parametric tests: Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis tests. Gender strongly affected place mix, while age affected product and price preferences. Education affected product and pricing, while annual income affected all four marketing mix variables. Fruits and vegetables were most popular, followed by clothes and jewelry. The study found that informal marketing practices based on trust, sensory appeal, quality affordability, and personal interaction significantly influenced consumer behaviour.

Keywords: marketing mix, street vendors, trust, quality, sensory appeal

Introduction:

People socialize and commute on streets, which are their lifeline. Worldwide, street sellers sell ordinary commodities such as fried delicacies, fruits, veggies, cell phone covers, textiles, apparels, shoes, and many more items on streets at discounted costs near residential neighbourhoods, major roads, schools, train stations, shopping centres, temples, at transport terminals, offices, and parks. Traditional street vendors sell their goods without infrastructure and move from place to place on pushcarts or baskets. The open carts help them attract customers by displaying their assortment of products.

Street sellers work in the informal economy. This prevents them from recording their trade volume and value. The informal sector is often called the shadow, underground, or unobservable economy. Informal entrepreneurship is unlawful but accepted by significant numbers of people. Some entrepreneurs ignore regional goods-related laws and regulations, such as registration or off-the-books transactions. In poor and emerging countries, the informal sector is crucial to the economy and increasing faster than the formal sector. Though illegal, street vendors are highly independent and entrepreneurial. Street vending reduces poverty, creates jobs, and promotes social mobility. Due to the lack of institutional finance, hawkers borrow from non-institutional sources, which raises capital costs and lowers profitability.

A major determinant of consumer buying behavior in street vending is consumer preferences and demand. Vendors ought to know what customers want: food, daily-use products, or specialty items and alter their offerings. Market responsiveness is an informal but strong

marketing tactic because consumers are more likely to buy when their preferences are addressed.

Review of Literature:

Product:

The product factor influenced behaviour through variety, convenience, and daily utility, as consumers valued affordable snacks, groceries, and household goods. Vendors selected assortments of fruits or vegetables based on availability and affordability while maintaining informal agreements with peers to reduce product overlap. Street vendors employed dynamic, relationship-based marketing strategies. (**Dr Nazar M H. 2025**) (**Kaur H., & Bhardwaj, M. S. 2025**). However, concerns about product quality and hygiene sometimes reduced satisfaction, indicating the need for improvement (**Mramba, N. R. 2015**) as tourists valued items that were safe, distinctive, and authentic (**Saha P., & Roy B. 2016**). Products were attractively exhibited. (**P. Anis Priya, and Dr. P. Geetha, 2019**). The product played a vital role as consumers were motivated by the availability of unique, diverse, and memorable products, especially souvenirs that helped them preserve travel experiences. Vendors often adapted their products to seasons and festivals, which increased their appeal and made them culturally relevant. (**Srivastava N. n.d.**).

Price:

The price factor was central since street vendors provided low-cost commodities, making them attractive to low- and middle-income groups while still being accessible to higher-income families due to affordability and value for money (**Kaur H. & Bhardwaj M. S. 2025**), (**Dr Nazar M H. 2025**). Price emerged as a critical determinant, since affordability, bargaining opportunities, and the perception of “value for money” encouraged consumers to buy from vendors (**Srivastava N. n.d.**), (**Saha P. & Roy B. 2016**).

Place:
The place was reflected in the accessibility and presence of vendors in convenient and crowded tourist spots, which provided consumers with flexibility and options in their purchases (**Mramba, N. R. 2015**), (**Saha P., & Roy B. 2016**). Location choices depended on socially regulated, negotiated spaces rather than formal zoning (**Kaur H. & Bhardwaj M. S. 2025**). The place factor shaped behaviour because vendors positioned themselves in accessible, high-footfall areas like markets, university campuses, and festival zones, making purchases convenient for consumers (**Dr. Nazar M. H. 2025**), (**Srivastava N. (n.d.)**).

Promotion:

Promotions were centred on trust and sensory appeal, using visual displays, lighting, vocal calls, recordings, and free samples. Through repeated interactions and personal persuasion, vendors fostered long-term loyalty, effectively creating branding similar to that in formal markets. The “touch-and-feel” experience offered consumers’ confidence in quality, giving vendors an advantage over e-commerce platforms (**Kaur H., & Bhardwaj M. S. 2025**). Street sellers in Mexico used realistic, people-centred techniques using face-to-face marketing rather than digital technologies to influence consumer purchase behaviour. They tailored their offerings by timings and context such as selling popsicles in the afternoon and cigarettes with coffee in the mornings to tourists. Vendors collaborated on referral networks, earnings, prices, and regions to build trust and market stability. Beyond sales, they shared tales, advice, and local knowledge to build rapport, loyalty, and future purchases or recommendations (**Dano C. P. et al 2025**, (**Hao D. (2021)**). Local youngsters distributed brochures in adjacent markets to direct people to the store, especially in poor visibility.

Shouting out discounts and specials was the most preferred way to get customers to stop and explore. Fixed low prices and face-to-face encounters offered consumers value and quality. Word-of-mouth (WOM) became the most credible and effective strategy as delighted purchasers shared their experiences. Their direct selling, bargaining flexibility, and familiarity with customers acted as promotional tools that encouraged repeat purchases. (**P. Anis Priya, and Dr. P. Geetha, 2019**), (**Dr Nazar M H. 2025**). Promotion was found to operate informally through showmanship and word-of-mouth. Vendors' engaging presentation styles, product display, and personalized interactions created memorable shopping experiences that acted as a substitute for traditional promotional tools (**Srivastava N. n.d.**), (**Dr Nazar M H. 2025**), (**Mramba, N. R. 2015**).

Research Gap:

The review of literature was done to study the influence of the street-side vendors' marketing mix on consumer buying behaviour was conducted. Few studies were found related to the influence of variety/assortment, affordability, convenience, face-to-face encounters, and word of mouth. Hardly any studies were found on the influence of product quality, hygiene factors, packaging, need for after-sale services, digital exposure, location, sensory appeal, and convenience. The present paper attempts to focus on these parameters and study the influence of Marketing Mix on Street Side Vendors.

Objectives:

- To understand the marketing mix of street-side vendors.
- To study the influence of the marketing mix of street-side vendors on consumer buying activity.

Hypothesis:

- There is an influence of the marketing mix of street-side vendors on consumer buying activity.

Scope:

- Geographical: The study will be focused on Central Mumbai suburbs.
- The study covers customers who are influenced by street-side vendors only.

Limitations:

- The study covers Central Mumbai suburbs only.
- The study does not cover formal & organised vendors.
- There is a limitation of time and resources.

Research Methodology:

Data Collection:

The research was descriptive and analytical in nature. Data comprised of primary and secondary data. **Primary data** was collected by using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was segregated into three parts: Demographics, Items purchased by customers from street vendors, and the influence of street vendors' marketing mix on consumers' buying decisions. This study integrated **secondary data** sourced from research papers, journal articles, blogs, books, and theses. Combining primary and secondary data provided a comprehensive understanding of the influence of the marketing mix of street-side vendors on consumer buying activity. The survey was conducted using convenience and random sampling method.

Data Processing:

The responses were edited, classified, and tabulated. Responses from a sample of 200 respondents were received. After editing, data of 186 respondents was considered for analysis.

Data Analysis:

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used for data analysis. The study further used non-parametric tests: Mann-Whitney and Kruskal Wallis tests. Normality and Reliability of the data was tested by applying Shapiro-Wilk test and Kolmogorov Smirnov tests. The independent variables were measured using Nominal Scale while the dependent variables were measured using a 5-point Likert Scale.

Table 1: Normality Testing

Variables	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Product Mix	.160	186	.000	.928	186	.000
Price Mix	.137	186	.000	.946	186	.000
Place Mix	.183	186	.000	.907	186	.000
Promotion Mix	.093	186	.000	.967	186	.000

Source: Primary data analysis

Table 1 indicated that the significant value of all four variables: product mix, price mix, place mix, and promotion mix, was less than 0.05, which meant that the null hypotheses were rejected. The data proved to be not normally distributed. Hence, non-parametric tests were used for further analysis.

Since the data was not normal, non-parametric tests was used for hypotheses testing.

Testing of Hypotheses:

Hypotheses testing was done by applying Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis tests.

1) H_0 : There is no significant difference between Gender and the basic elements of Marketing Mix (Product, Price, Place and Promotion).

H_1 : There is significant difference between Gender and the basic elements of the marketing mix (Product, Price, Place, and Promotion)

Table 2: Mann-Whitney and Kruskal Wallis**Gender and Marketing Mix influencing consumer buying activity**

Independent Variable	Dependent Variables			
	Product Mix	Price Mix	Place Mix	Promotion Mix
Gender	0.256	0.594	0.002	0.301
Post Hoc	NA	NA	Male=107.42 Female=82.99	NA

Source: Authors compilation from SPSS

Table 2 indicated that significant values of Product Mix, Price Mix and Promotion Mix were more than 0.05; hence, the null hypotheses were accepted. However, the significant value of Place Mix was found to be less than 0.05, indicating that the null hypothesis was rejected; thereafter, the post-hoc analysis revealed that the mean rank for male respondents ($M=107.42$) was higher than that of female respondents ($M=82.99$).

2) H_0 : There is no significant difference between Age and the basic elements of Marketing Mix (Product, Price, Place and Promotion).

H₁: There is significant difference between Age and the basic elements of the marketing mix (Product, Price, Place, and Promotion)

Table 3: Mann-Whitney and Kruskal Wallis				
Age and Marketing Mix influencing consumer buying activity				
Independent Variable	Dependent Variables			
	Product Mix	Price Mix	Place Mix	Promotion Mix
Age	0.000	0.000	0.397	0.324
Post Hoc	Below 25=128.37	Below 25=118.03	NA	NA
	25-50=90.39	25-50=94.98		
	Above=50=67	Above 50=56.03		

Source: Authors compilation from SPSS

Table 3 indicated that significant values of Place Mix and Promotion Mix were more than 0.05; hence, the null hypotheses were accepted. However, the significant value of Product and Price Mix was found to be less than 0.05, indicating that the null hypotheses was rejected, thereafter, the post-hoc analysis revealed that the mean rank for age; below 25 years with respect to Product Mix (M=128.37) and Price Mix (M=118.03) was higher than the mean of categories 25-50 years and 50 and above years.

3) H₀: There is no significant difference between Education and the basic elements of Marketing Mix (Product, Price, Place and Promotion).

H₁: There is significant difference between Education and the basic elements of the marketing mix (Product, Price, Place, and Promotion)

Table 4: Mann-Whitney and Kruskal Wallis				
Education and Marketing Mix influencing consumer buying activity				
Independent Variable	Dependent Variables			
	Product Mix	Price Mix	Place Mix	Promotion Mix
Education	0.004	0.021	0.199	0.461
Post Hoc	Educated=97.61	Educated=96.82	NA	NA
	No formal education=62.86	No formal education=68.77		

Source: Authors compilation from SPSS

Table 4 indicated that significant values of Place Mix and Promotion Mix were more than 0.05; hence, the null hypotheses were accepted. However, the significant value for Product and Price Mix was found to be less than 0.05, indicating that the null hypotheses were rejected, thereafter, the post-hoc analysis revealed that the mean rank for Educated with respect to the variables Product Mix (M=97.61) and Price Mix (M=96.82) was higher than that of, No formal education category.

4) H₀: There is no significant difference between Annual Income and the basic elements of Marketing Mix (Product, Price, Place and Promotion).

H₁: There is significant difference between Annual Income and the basic elements of the marketing mix (Product, Price, Place, and Promotion)

Table 5: Mann-Whitney and Kruskal Wallis				
Annual Income and Marketing Mix influencing consumer buying activity				
Independent	Dependent Variables			

Variable	Product Mix	Price Mix	Place Mix	Promotion Mix
Annual Income	0.002	0.000	0.046	0.000
Post Hoc	Low=76.84	Low=92.59	Low=108.36	Low=61.53
	Medium=102.07	Medium=100.49	Medium=92.86	Medium=100.91
	High=66.50	High=49.30	High=71.70	High=100.92

Source: Authors compilation from SPSS

Table 5 indicated that significant values for Product Mix, Price Mix, Place Mix and Promotion Mix were found to be less than 0.05, indicating that the null hypotheses were rejected, thereafter, the post-hoc analysis revealed that the mean rank for Annual Income; Middle Income group with respect to the Product Mix ($M=102.07$) and Price Mix ($M=100.49$) was higher than the Lower Income group and Higher Income group. The mean rank for Annual Income; High Income group with respect to the Promotion Mix ($M=100.92$) was slightly higher than the Medium Income Group ($M=100.91$). The mean rank for Annual Income; Low Income group with respect to the Place Mix ($M=108.36$) was higher than Medium Income and High Income group.

Further, 12 items were identified, analysed, and ranked to understand the preference of purchase of consumers from street vendors.

Table 6: Rank of Items Purchased from Street Vendors

Items	Rank
Fruits and Vegetables	1
Apparels	2
Jewellery	3
Gift items and Pooja items	4
Utensils	5
Cosmetics	6
Footwear	7
Books/Magazine/Newspaper	8
Fast-food/ice-cream/soft drinks	9
Toys	10
Gardening plants/seeds/tools	11
Electronics	12

Source: Authors compilation from SPSS

Table 6 listed items that consumers most preferred to purchase from street vendors: fruits and vegetables, followed by apparels, jewellery, gift items and pooja items, utensils, cosmetics, footwear, books/magazines/newspapers, fast food/ice cream/soft drinks, toys, gardening plants/seeds/tools, and lastly electronics.

Findings:

The findings are divided into three parts:

- 1) On the basis of Demographics of respondents
- 2) On the basis of Testing of Null Hypotheses
- 3) On the basis of General Findings

- 1) Demographic factors such as Gender, Age, Educational Qualification and Annual Income were considered for the study.
 - a) Demographic factor Gender was understood by collecting data from males and females. 56.99 percent of the respondents were females.

b) Educational Qualification was categorized as Educated that is, respondents who have completed their 12th, Graduate, Post Graduate, Doctorate and No formal education, those who have completed their education till 10th or below. 88.20% of the respondents belonged to the educated category.

c) Age of respondents were classified into below 25 years of age, between 20 to 50 years of age and 50 years and above. 70.96% were from 25 to 50 years of age.

d) Data of respondents whose Annual Income was below Rs. 2 lakhs per annum, between Rs. 2 lakhs and Rs. 25 lakhs, and above Rs. 25 lakhs was collected. 70.44% belonged to the middle-income category, wherein their annual income was Rs.2 to 25 lakhs.

2) The findings explain the consolidated results of the null hypotheses:

Particulars	Gender	Age	Education	Annual Income
Product Mix	A	R	R	R
	-	Under 25 yrs (128.27)	Educated (97.61)	M.I- (102.07)
Price Mix	A	R	R	R
	-	Under 25 yrs (118.03)	Educated (96.82)	M.I (100.49)
Place Mix	R	A	A	R
	Male- (107.42)	-	-	L.I- (108.36)
Promotion Mix	A	A	A	R
	-	-	-	M-I- (100.91)
				H.I- (100.92)

A=Accepted; R=Rejected; L.I-Low Income; M.I.-Middle Income; H.I.-High Income

a) Product Mix:

- Respondents below 25 years of age were strongly influenced by the product mix of street vendors.
- Educated respondents showed noticeable influence from the product mix.
- Middle-income respondents were also influenced by the street vendors' product mix.

b) Price Mix:

- Respondents below 25 years of age showed sensitivity to price.
- Educated respondents were influenced by price mix.
- Middle-income respondents also showed strong price sensitivity.

c) Place Mix:

- Male respondents were influenced by the place (location) of street vendors.
- Respondents from the low-income group were also influenced by the vendors' location.

d) Promotion Mix:

- Middle-income respondents were influenced by the promotion mix of street vendors.
- High-income respondents were also influenced by the vendors' promotional efforts.

3) It was found that when purchasing from street-side vendors, first preference was given to fruits and vegetables, second preference was given to apparels, followed by jewelry, gift items & pooja items, and utensils, and least preference was given to electronics.

Suggestions:

1.) Product:

Street vendors must emphasize the quality of their products through visually appealing presentations of their offerings. Vendors may prioritize hygiene by using portable waste bins and clean containers for product presentation. This will augment client confidence and attractiveness.

2.) Price:

Street vendors can display prices effectively by using small chalkboards or signage cards leading to transparency in prices. Transparent and competitive pricing will strengthen trust and encourage frequent buying.

3.) Place:

Street vendors must ensure that their stalls are readily accessible and easy to reach, as convenient setups can result in higher footfall. Being present at the same time and same place regularly can lead to consistent and regular footfall.

4.) Promotion:

Street vendors should create and maintain presence on WhatsApp and update their regular consumers about new and/or fresh products. The acceptance of purchase orders and their prompt fulfilment by offering home delivery services can aid the maintenance of relations with existing customers. This promptness of service will result in favourable word-of-mouth promotions, facilitating new customer acquisitions.

5.) Since consumers frequently refrain from purchasing items such as electronics from street vendors due to concerns regarding quality and the absence of after-sales services, additional services like warranties, repairs, replacements, etc., vendors should focus on providing higher-quality products and contemplate incorporating essential after-sales support, including warranties or repair services. Furthermore, consistently being present at the same location and remaining reachable via mobile communication can foster trust and accessibility. These measures can facilitate consumers in making confident purchases of higher-value products from street vendors.

Discussion:

In examining street-side vendors, it is evident that it needs to be taken into consideration, both the Product P's and the Service P's, since they collaboratively influence consumer experiences. Street vending encompasses a variety of products and services, and the integration of Product Ps (Product, Price, Place, Promotion) with Service Ps (People, Process, Physical Evidence) demonstrates that it constitutes a comprehensive and cohesive experience. The service components, vendor-customer interactions, the efficiency of the purchasing process, and the presentation of the stall frequently shape client perceptions as significantly as the products themselves. This suggests that street vending is probably best understood by examining both product characteristics and service quality concurrently to render street vending more efficient and sustainable.

Conclusion:

The interpersonal relationship between street vendors and consumers is enhanced through courtesy, familiarity, and dependability. Customer satisfaction increases with purchase efficiency, including fast service and digital payment options, especially among younger consumers who value speed and ease. Clean containers, organized displays, and basic cleanliness indicate informal retail quality. These signs lower risk and increase vendor confidence, especially for educated, hygiene-conscious consumers. The study shows that product, price, place, and promotion influence street-vending consumer decisions. The results show that consumers value product diversity, cost-effectiveness, accessibility, and trust-based interactions, which strongly influence their purchases. The study found that street-side vendors' marketing strategies strongly influence consumer purchasing behavior and that improving product quality, pricing transparency, accessibility, and targeted promotions can boost consumer trust and satisfaction.

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