



## HOW DO THE INFLUENCING FACTORS OF WILLINGNESS TO WAIT IN QUEUES AFFECT CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN THE SRI LANKAN RETAIL SUPERMARKET INDUSTRY?

*Ishara Ranasinghe*

*School of Business, ESOF Metro Campus*

### Abstract

Customers who are purchasing goods from the retail supermarkets have to wait in queues and it seems to be an irritating issue because people become more competitive and they used to give higher value to the time. Therefore, the waiting time of the customers in queues may affect customer satisfaction significantly. The objective of this study is to identify how the external factors influencing willingness to stay in queues affect customer satisfaction. The ultimate findings of the study contribute a lot to the improvements in the queuing system and waiting environment in the Sri Lankan supermarket industry. The supermarket industry in Sri Lanka is becoming an interesting sector in the Economy of Sri Lanka. The supermarkets are being shined by changes occurring in the social and economic environment as well as by the rise in per capita income.

Since the existing literature does not discuss the effect of influencing factors of willingness to wait in queues (the queuing management by the company and waiting for environment improvements) on customer satisfaction in the Sri Lankan Retail Supermarket Industry, this new research attempts to investigate the effect of influencing factors of willingness to stay in queues towards customer satisfaction. The results of this study reveal that there is a significant relationship between influencing factors of willingness to stay in queues and customer satisfaction.

This study was conducted based on supermarkets in the Colombo district and the customers who participated in this study were also from the Colombo district. This does not reflect the satisfaction of all the ultimate customers of the supermarket industry in Sri Lanka, especially the level of satisfaction of the customers outside the Colombo district is not evaluated under the scope of this study. Supermarkets should consider more on the waiting environment and should develop the waiting environment in a more comfortable and friendly manner to keep the customers satisfied. Supermarkets should consider the speediness and efficiency of the billing counters to reduce the waiting time of customers.

Keywords: Customer Satisfaction, Influencing Factors of Willingness to Wait in Queues, Queuing Management by the Company, Waiting Environment Improvements

\* Corresponding Author: [isha2020ranasinghe@gmail.com](mailto:isha2020ranasinghe@gmail.com)



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### INTRODUCTION

Customers who buy items from Sri Lanka's retail supermarkets wait in queues which appears to be a serious concern as people become more competitive in their day-to-day lives and place a larger value on time. The supermarket industry is one of the country's fastest-growing industries. Therefore, the duration of waiting time of customers staying in queues may have a substantial impact on customer satisfaction. Therefore, the waiting time of the customers in queues may affect customer satisfaction significantly. In the current context, customers are giving major concerns about the waiting time and length of queues in supermarkets. Therefore, supermarket retailers should give more attention to the waiting environment and queuing management. since those two factors are categorized as the influencing factors of the customer's willingness to stay in queues and those factors may have an effect on customers' perception regarding waiting time (Chih-Chin Liang, 2016).

### Research Problem

Since the existing literature does not discuss the effect of willingness to wait in queues on customer satisfaction in the Sri Lankan retail supermarket industry, this new research tries to investigate the effect of willingness to stay in queues on customer satisfaction. Although the retail supermarket industry is growing significantly and customers are paying more attention to the time when they do shopping in supermarkets. Ultimately level of customer satisfaction decides the direction of the growing rate of the retail supermarket industry in Sri Lanka. The research problem is "How do the influencing factors of willingness to wait in queues affect customer satisfaction in the Sri Lankan retail supermarket industry?".

### Research Objectives

RO: To identify the relationship between influencing factors of willingness to wait in queues and customer satisfaction.

### Research Questions

RQ: Is there any relationship between influencing factors of willingness to wait in queues and customer satisfaction?

### Research Hypothesis

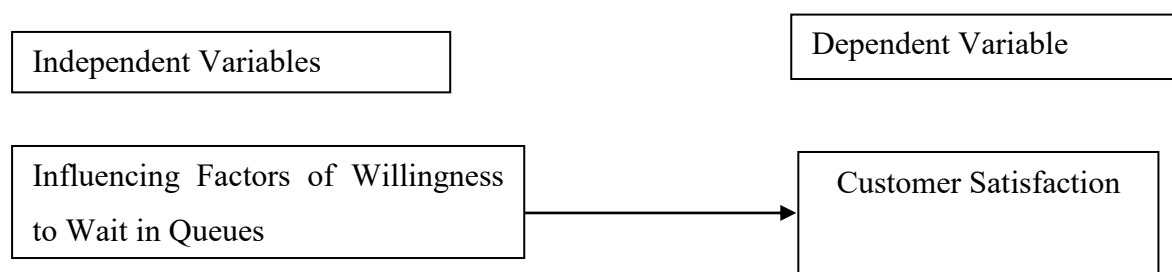
**H1:** There is a significant relationship between influencing factors of willingness to wait in queues and customer satisfaction.



## METHODOLOGY

### Conceptual Framework

The two elements (Queuing Management by the Company and waiting Environment Improvements) of the independent variable of this study have been taken based on the previous study “Queuing Management and Improving Customer Experience: empirical evidence regarding enjoyable queues”, Chih-Chin Liang, (2016). This conceptual framework assesses the effect of influencing factors of willingness to stay in queue towards customer satisfaction.



Data were collected using 265 customers. Two separate questionnaires were used to collect data from the customers. One questionnaire was directly given to the customers with relevant instructions and the other questionnaire was an observational questionnaire. It was filled by the researcher through observing the same customer who was giving the answers for the questionnaire by his or her self. Once the data had been collected, SPSS was used to analyze the collected data. The convenience sampling technique was used as the sampling method to select supermarkets for the study as well a simple random sampling technique was used as the sampling method to select the customers for the study.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1 – Results of Reliability and Validity**

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	KMO	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Sig. Value)	Extractions Sums of Squared Loadings (Cumulative %)
Queuing Management by the Company	0.872	0.725	0.000	80.738
Waiting for Environment Improvements	0.883	0.500	0.000	89.533



### Regression Analysis

The researcher has combined the two elements of the independent variable, namely queuing management by the company and waiting environment improvements to develop the main independent variable of influencing factors of willingness to stay in queues.

#### HI: There is a relationship between influencing factors of willingness to stay in queues and customer satisfaction

Since Sig. value < 0.05, there is a significant positive relationship between influencing factors of willingness to stay in queues and customer satisfaction.

**Table 2 – Results of Coefficient**

Model		Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	.930	.413		2.253	.025
	Influencing Factors of Willingness To Stay In Queues	.747	.116	.370	6.456	.000

a. Dependent Variable: How much are you satisfied with the service provided by this supermarket?

### CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

This study examines the impact of influencing factors of willingness to stay in queues on customer satisfaction using a questionnaire survey. The results of this study revealed that there is a positive significant relationship between influencing factors of willingness to stay in queues and customer satisfaction. Therefore, supermarkets should consider more waiting environments and should develop the waiting environment in a more comfortable and friendly manner to keep the customers satisfied. Billing counters in supermarkets should process the transaction accurately, without spending considerable time to re-correct the mistakes that occurred during the billing process and the staff members in the billing counters should be more motivated. When any customer in the queuing system asks anything from staff members of the supermarket, they should provide a quick response to that particular customer without making him/her frustrated.

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