# Customer Satisfaction with Marts of Butwal

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## ABSTRACT

*This study examined customer satisfaction with the services provided by Butwal sub-metropolitan city marts. The data was collected from the respondents using a non-probability convenience sampling technique. The causal-comparative research design and the descriptive research design were utilized. 289 samples were collected. The SPSS 22.0 software version was used to analyze the data. The coefficients of correlation and regression were calculated. The study's findings revealed that all the independent variables studied have a strong positive link with the dependent variable. According to the regression results, among all the variables investigated in this study, facilities had the greatest impact on influencing consumer satisfaction, followed by personnel services, location, and product quality. However, the outcome revealed that the price has a detrimental impact.*

**Keywords:** *Product Quality, Personnel Services, Location, Customer Satisfaction, Marts*

## I. INTRODUCTION

In today's highly competitive marketing environment, the positioning decisions of marts from the perspective of customers can play a significant part in marketing management. According to Peter Drucker, the core of marketing is viewing the entire firm from the customer's perspective (Swaim, 2011). Consumer satisfaction is the post-purchase appraisal of a product or service by a customer (Mittal & Frennea, 2010). This only occurs when the perceived performance of a product or service matches or surpasses client expectations (Bearden & Teel, 1983; Oliver, 1980). Compared to consumers' expectations of the company's product or service to their perceptions of the product's or service's performance, determines overall customer satisfaction with the company's offerings (Oliver, 1980). Customers' purchasing habits have shifted significantly in recent years, creating new challenges for retailers. So, marts owners not only need marketing strategies that give them an edge over the competition, but they also need to make sure that these strategies don't change what makes their store unique.

For a long time, businesses relied heavily on price and product differentiation to keep customers coming back. However, times have changed as a result of severe competition from new players entering the

market, an increase in the number of new providers, a plethora of choices available to buyers, and a corresponding increase in the sophistication of buyers. This has prompted owners of marts to adopt a variety of customer-oriented strategies in order to distinguish themselves from other competitors and maintain market control. Success for the marts hinges on keeping consumers even as profit margins shrink and competition heats up. The longer a consumer shopped at a grocery store, the more money they brought in. In terms of bottom-line impact, a 2% uptick in client retention is equivalent to a 10% reduction in expenses. Similarly, reducing client defection by 5% can result in a 25-125 percent increase in profitability (Min, 2010).

The mart is a prime example of the "self-service" retail model. Maintaining a database of shoppers' reported levels of "satisfaction" with the mart's primary features is crucial for grocery store chains looking to forge lasting relationships with their customers. From the retailer's vantage point, the goal is to reduce customer complaints and dissatisfaction, as well as the expense of a service recovery plan (McCollough et al., 2000), all while keeping tabs on direct feedback from customers about their reactions to those essential features. There is a significant and necessary role that marts play as market intermediaries between producers and buyers. Marts have a huge advantage since they stock everything and offer more variety and options to customers.

Entrepreneur Clarence Saunders and his Piggly Wiggly stores pioneered the notion of the self-service market with the opening of the first location in 1916. Saunders was given a number of patents for the new ideas he tried out in his stores. In the year 1920, other enterprises, such as the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company of Canada and the United States, quickly followed suit. Now, there are several world-renowned superstores all over the world that serve billions of people while producing large profits. Wal-Mart, Safeway, SPAR, ALDI, Netto, and Lidl are just a few examples (Wikipedia, 2019). With the passage of time, retail chain businesses, both small and large, have grown significantly in Nepal, as people have become more time aware and do not have enough time to go shopping. Several Marts can be found in Butwal, one of Nepal's cities. These marts have sprung up recently, filling a need for convenient, low-cost shopping. Each day, their level of fame grows larger.

There is a lot of competition amongst these markets, so it's crucial that they treat their customers like royalty if they want to keep them coming back. Customer loyalty has become increasingly important to businesses in the modern day. Moreover, by catering to customers' nitpicky preferences, one might win their undying devotion. In the modern business world, customer acquisition is only half the battle. Grocery stores must do everything they can to hold on to their loyal consumer base. The company's unique brand image should endear it to each and every one of its customers.

The marketing strategy of a company is heavily influenced by the level of satisfaction its customers express. A company's continued success and expansion depends on its consumers' being happy with the product or service they get. Singh (2006) argues that one of the most crucial factors in a company's success is its ability to respond to the demands and needs of its customers. Many academics have emphasized the significance of customers, who have become an integral part of any business, but notably those in the grocery retail industry. Zairi (2000) claims, "Customers are the objective of what we do, and rather than depending on us, we very much depend on them." The customer is not the cause of the issue, and we should not take action that could lead them to "go away" because doing so could threaten both our business's success and our safety. That's why companies these days are so concerned with keeping their existing customers happy.

A business can only exist if it is able to comprehend and meet the wants and demands of its customers. This requires an understanding of consumer behavior. Consumer behavior refers to a set of actions involving the acquisition, usage, and disposal of goods and services (Solomon et al., 2016). Knowledge of consumer behavior is consequently regarded as crucial for firms seeking to achieve financial success. According to Green et al. (2014), it is essential to emphasize the significance of marketing tactics to an organization's long-term performance. The relationship between consumer behavior and marketing strategy is heavily stressed, given that the effectiveness of marketing strategies depends on how well managers comprehend customer behavior (Kotler, 2014). Marketing strategies are the product of research on consumer behavior, which enables marketers to please customers (Wongleedee, 2015).

In today's increasingly cutthroat business climate, customer focus is more important than ever (Kotler, 1997). After all, marketing's basic idea is that success depends on figuring out and then catering to each individual customer's wants and needs (Day, 1994). No matter how cutthroat the market develops, a company's bottom line will always be guaranteed by a devoted customer base. Effective marketing is required in the retail industry, as it is in all other industries, in order to compete in an ever-expanding industry sector. The store must acquire the product, promote it, and sell it to clients, which requires a substantial amount of labour.

Customers are loyal if they are satisfied. Existing customer retention is especially important in retail businesses because of slower expansion and fierce competition (Sirohi et al., 1998). Increases in customer retention have been linked to an emphasis on customer satisfaction; therefore, this factor is clearly significant ( (Jones & Sasser, 1995). According to Oliver (1980), customers' attitudes are made up of subjective feelings about the store, the products, and the service they receive. In order to keep customers coming back to the mart, it is important to find out what the most important factors are that affect customer satisfaction. Therefore, this survey deals with the customer preference of marts. This study further explains the associations between a dependent variable and independent variables.

In past, consumers of the upper and middle classes had limited alternatives: they could either make many trips to the local kiosk or visit one of the huge grocery chains where everything was available. However, years of rising spending power and shifting customer preferences have expedited the retail market's transition. In addition to retail stores, traditional kiosks, and supermarkets, the country has seen an increase in the popularity and prevalence of shopping malls (Cytonn, 2018). There has also been a growth in internet purchasing, with some consumers preferring to purchase from home. This hasn't, however, taken the place of stores where people can touch, try, or even test products before buying them. The difficulty for different marts is attracting and retaining this multichannel consumer. This needs information about the behavior of these shoppers. This data might help retail companies increase their competitiveness and preserve their long-term existence (Amand, 2019).

Customer expectations serve as benchmarks for service delivery. Customers have varied service expectations. Due to the self-service approach, mart shoppers may have different service expectations than bank customers. Knowing what customers expect is crucial to getting a competitive edge since customers evaluate service quality based on these reference points. Failure to understand what customers want from customer service might lead to losing business to competitors who can meet customers' needs (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003).

In order to compete in a competitive business environment, retail companies must build an efficient marketing mix to persuade people to purchase their items. Therefore, it is essential for retail marts to provide customers with the appropriate product, at the right price, and in the right location. Due to the paucity of research on the influence of marketing strategy on customer purchasing behavior in the retail

industry, it is difficult to determine whether a firm's marketing mix influences the way consumers behave (Mohamud, 2018).

In marts, gaps in service quality and customer satisfaction have led to recurring complaints about a lack of customer care and service workers' attitudes toward consumers, but the reputation of a service organization is totally dependent on the degree of service quality (Weerasiri, 2015). Managers and academics are indifferent as to whether service quality should be measured based on the degree of management or consumer perceptions of quality (Spreng & Mackoy, 1996). So, this study aimed to find out if customers of marts located in Butwal city are satisfied with the level of service they get.

The following is a research question that will be attempted to be answered by this study:

- Is there any relationship between product quality, price, location, personnel services and facilities with customer satisfaction?
- Whether there is an effect of product quality, price, location, personnel services and facilities on customer satisfaction?

The main objectives of this study are as follows:

- To measure the relationship between product quality, price, location, personnel services, facilities, and customer satisfaction.
- To examine the effect of product quality, price, location, personnel services and facilities on customer satisfaction.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A literature review is when you examine a piece of literature from a surface level or aerial perspective. The literature review or survey in a project report is the section that demonstrates the numerous analyses and research conducted in your area of interest and the published results, taking into consideration the various characteristics and scope of the project. It is the most significant section of our report since it provides direction for your investigation. Literature reviews are secondary sources and do not describe new or unique experiments.

### 2.1 Conceptual Review

### Concept of Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is defined as the amount or percentage of customers whose reported experience with a company, its products, or services (rating) surpasses predetermined satisfaction goals (Farris et al., 2010). Individual customer satisfaction is measured, but it is almost always reported at the aggregate level. It is frequently measured along numerous dimensions. As research on consumption experiences expands, it reveals that consumers purchase products and services for a combination of hedonic and utilitarian rewards. Hedonic benefits are related to the product's sensory and experiential qualities. A product's utilitarian benefits are related to its more instrumental and functional characteristics (Batra & Ahtola, 1991). In a market where companies compete for customers, making customers happy is seen as a big differentiator and has become an increasingly important part of corporate strategy (Gitman & McDaniel, 2005).

### 2.2 Empirical Review

K.C. and Paramasivam (2013) conducted research on Nilgiri's supermarket in Coimbatore, India, looking at customer satisfaction and shopping habits. It used a sample size of 60 and a sampling technique called "purposive sampling" to choose customers. Results were analyzed using a variety of

methods, including Chi-Square, Percentage Analysis, and Scaling Analysis. The value, availability, and layout of products in Niligiri's shop, as well as general satisfaction with the supermarket, were the primary considerations in this study's data analysis. The authors concluded that people were most satisfied with the quality of the products sold at Nilgiri supermarkets (56.67%) and then with the service (26.66%).

Kumar (2016) examined store quality, customer satisfaction, and consumer loyalty in India. Using a structured questionnaire, 600 respondents from sixty retail formats provided primary data. For data gathering, systematic stratified sampling was used. Multiple regression was used to examine the data. All four dimensions of store quality were discovered as important predictors of customer satisfaction and word-of-mouth communication. However, only product quality and customer sacrifice were significant for consumers' behavioral intentions. The author found that, out of four aspects of a store's quality, the quality of the products was the most important predictor of all dependent variables and the most accurate predictor.

Nguyễn (2016) conducted a study on the factors affecting customer satisfaction in Thai Nguyen City, Vietnam supermarkets. The purpose of this study was to identify the factors that influence consumer satisfaction with supermarkets in Thai Nguyen City. In this study, 200 responses from four selected supermarkets in the city of Thai Nguyen were collected using a convenience technique. According to a survey of the relevant literature and expert opinion, the aspects of consumer satisfaction include product, pricing, personal interaction, convenience, services, and physical appearance. Regression Analysis was employed to determine the influence of these variables on customer satisfaction. The outcomes of the study indicated that products, pricing, human interaction, convenience, services, and physical appearance significantly influenced consumer satisfaction with the supermarkets under study. Price has the greatest impact on customer satisfaction among these factors. Based on these findings, suggestions were made.

In this study, based on a thorough review of the literature, the theoretical framework has been presented:
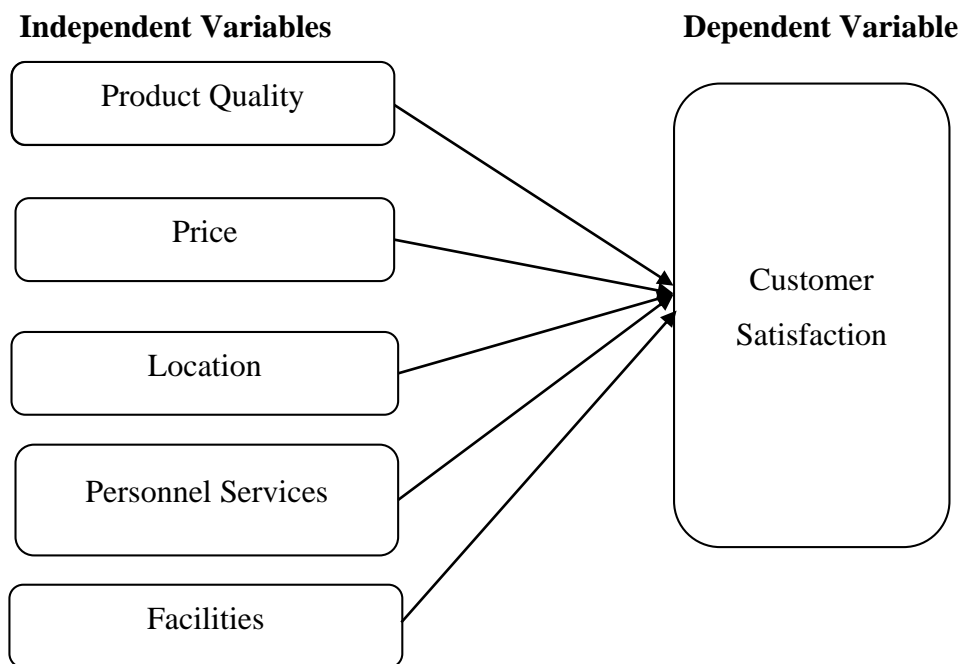


*Source:* Lu and Lukoma (2011)

## III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research is a rigorous and systematic investigation of a particular problem requiring a solution. This investigative procedure consists of a sequence of operations aimed to gather, record, evaluate, and interpret data to resolve issues.

**Research Design:** Descriptive research design and Causal Comparative research design were used for this study.

**Population and Sample:** The population for this study were those customers who have visited Marts of Butwal sub-metropolitan city once for buying. So, the population size is unknown.

According to Cooper and Schindler (2014), sample size is a subset of the wider population that is carefully picked as a representative of the population, and it is the responsibility of the researcher to assure proper analysis. As the population size is unknown, the Cochran formula was used to determine the required sample size for the study. According to Cochran (1963), the required sample size for the study can be calculated using the following formula:

$$n_0 = \frac{z^2 pq}{e^2}$$

$$n_0 = \frac{1.96^2 * 0.50 * 0.50}{0.05^2}$$

$$= 385$$

**Sampling Method:** Sampling technique is described by Sekaran and Bougie (2016) as the methods used to draw a sample for representation. A convenience sampling method was employed in this study.

**Nature and Sources of Data Collection:** The study relied on primary sources of data collection. Primary data were obtained through the administration of questionnaire that were designed according to the research questions of this study. Five-point Likert scale ranging from (5) "Strongly Agree" to (1) "Strongly Disagree" was used.

### Methods of Data Analysis

According to Kothari (2015), the data analysis procedure involves packaging the acquired data, organizing it, and structuring its primary components so that the findings may be communicated clearly and effectively. The study employed various statistical tools based on the appropriateness of the data. The data obtained from the questionnaire survey were processed and analyzed using Microsoft Excel and SPSS 22.0. A mean and SD was computed under descriptive statistics. As part of inferential statistics, correlation analysis, and regression analysis, were performed for the discussion and findings**.**

## IV. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

### Respondents' Demographic Profile

This section seeks to give participant profiles for study sample participants. This study is based on the replies of 289 customers who have visited Marts of Butwal sub-metropolitan city once for buying. The demographic component includes the gender, age, marital status, education, and occupation of the respondents.

Table 1 Demographic Profile of the Respondents

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Gender | | |
| Male | 154 | 53.3 |
| Female | 135 | 46.7 |
| Total | 289 | 100.0 |
| **Age** | | |
| Below 20 years | 32 | 11.1 |
| 20-30 years | 147 | 50.9 |
| 31-40 years | 66 | 22.8 |
| 41-50 years | 32 | 11.1 |
| 51 years and above | 12 | 4.2 |
| Total | 289 | 100.0 |
| **Marital Status** | | |
| Married | 154 | 53.3 |
| Unmarried | 127 | 43.9 |
| Widow | 2 | .7 |
| Divorced | 6 | 2.1 |
| Total | 289 | 100.0 |
| **Education** | | |
| Below SLC | 21 | 7.3 |
| SLC | 11 | 3.8 |
| +2 level | 101 | 34.9 |
| Bachelor level | 87 | 30.1 |
| Master's and above | 69 | 23.9 |
| Total | 289 | 100.0 |
| **Occupation** | | |
| Student | 79 | 27.3 |
| Business | 67 | 23.2 |
| Govt. Sector Employee | 23 | 8.0 |
| Private Sector Employee | 96 | 33.2 |
| Other | 24 | 8.3 |
| Total | 289 | 100.0 |

According to the preceding table, male respondents made up 53.3% of the total, while female respondents made up 46.7%. Similarly, respondents aged 20–30 years comprise 50.9%, 31–40 years comprise 22.8%, under 20 years comprise 11.1%, 41–50 years comprise 11.1%, and 51 years and above comprise 4.2%. Similarly, 53.3% were married, 43.9% were single, 2.1% were divorced, and 0.7% were widowed. Similarly, 30.1% have a bachelor's degree, 34.9% have a +2, 3.8% have an SLC, 7.3% have a level lower than an SLC, and 23.9% have a master's degree or higher. In terms of occupation, 23.2% ran their own business, 33.2% worked in the private sector, 27.3% were students, 8% worked for the government, and 8.3% worked in other sectors.

**Reliability Test**

The extent to which a measurement reproduces consistent results if the measuring process is repeated is referred to as its reliability.

Table 2 Reliability Statistics

| Variables | Cronbach's Alpha | No. of items |
|---|---|---|
| Product Quality | 0.656 | 5 |
| Price | 0.704 | 5 |
| Location | 0.678 | 5 |
| Personnel services | 0.611 | 5 |
| Facilities | 0.759 | 5 |
| Customers Satisfaction | 0.828 | 6 |

| Overall | 0.880 | 31 |
|---|---|---|

Cronbach's alpha, a widely used measure of internal consistency, was calculated using SPSS version 22.0, and all the scales employed in this study were found to be reliable, with alpha values greater than 0.6 and, in most cases, closer to 1.

## Descriptive Statistics

### Table 3 Descriptive Statistics

|  | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Product Quality | 289 | 2.20 | 5.00 | 3.5633 | .45815 |
| Price | 289 | 1.60 | 5.00 | 3.6837 | .46701 |
| Location | 289 | 1.40 | 5.00 | 3.6997 | .46192 |
| Personnel services | 289 | 2.20 | 4.60 | 3.3931 | .50712 |
| Facilities | 289 | 1.40 | 5.00 | 3.6457 | .51598 |
| Customer Satisfaction | 289 | 2.17 | 5.00 | 3.6839 | .53717 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 289 |  |  |  |  |

Table 3 depicts the mean value of the dependent variable, i.e., customer satisfaction, at 3.6839, with a standard deviation of 0.53717 (labeled agree on the measurement scale). Similarly, the mean value of product quality, price, location, and facilities is 3.5633, 3.6837, 3.6997, and 3.6457 with a standard deviation of 0.45815, 0.46701, 0.46192 and 0.51598 (Labeled agree on the measurement scale). Likewise, the mean value of personnel services is 3.3931, which means that the response of customers is near to neutral, and the standard deviation is 0.50712, which means the value of personnel services can deviate by 0.50712.

## Correlation Analysis

A correlation is a quantifiable relationship between two variables, and the statistic that offers an indicator of a link is known as the correlation coefficient r, which is a measure of the association between two intervals or ratio variables. It is a very effective method for summarizing the connection between two variables with a single number ranging from -1 to +1 (Field, 2009).

### Table 4 Correlation Analysis

| Variables | Product Quality | Price | Location | Personnel Services | Facilities | Customers Satisfaction |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Product Quality | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Price | .546** | 1 |  |  |  |  |
| Location | .548** | .646** | 1 |  |  |  |
| Personnel Services | .399** | .517** | .522** | 1 |  |  |
| Facilities | .444** | .556** | .595** | .645** | 1 |  |
| Customer Satisfaction | .463** | .502** | .603** | .615** | .650** | 1 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The result shows that the five factors have a strong statistically significant positive correlation with customer satisfaction at 1% level of significance since the p-value is less than 1%. From the above table

it is revealed that and the independent variables product quality (r = 0.463, p < 0.01), price (r = 0.502, p < 0.01), location (r = 0.603, p < 0.01), personnel services (r = 0.615, p < 0.01), and facilities (r = 0.650, p < 0.01), have positive moderate degree of correlation with customer satisfaction.

**Multicollinearity Test**

The term multicollinearity was coined to characterize the relationship between independent variables. If there is a significant correlation between two or more predictor variables, it may be difficult to determine the relative contribution of each predictor variable to the model's effectiveness. In this study, multicollinearity was assessed using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and the tolerance value.

Table 5 Multicollinearity Test

| Variables | Tolerance | VIF |
|---|---|---|
| Product Quality | .629 | 1.590 |
| Price | .488 | 2.051 |
| Location | .464 | 2.156 |
| Personnel services | .538 | 1.857 |
| Facilities | .476 | 2.102 |

The collinearity test among the independent variables in Table 5 above, entail absence of multicollinearity problem among the independent variables since mean VIF = 1.9512 < 10 and ToL > 0.1.

**Multiple Regressions**

Multiple regression allows researchers to investigate the impact of multiple factors on a single result at the same time. Multiple regression is used to learn more about the relationship between several independent or predictor factors and a dependent variable.

Table 6 Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .736a | .541 | .533 | .36697 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), F, PQ, P, PS, L
b. Dependent Variable: CS

Table 6 depicts that the linear combination of attributes " i.e., product quality, price, location, personnel services, and facilities explain 54.1% of the variance in customer satisfaction and the remaining 45.9% is explained by extraneous variables, which have not been included in this regression model.

Table 7 ANOVA

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 44.991 | 5 | 8.998 | 66.817 | .000b |
| | Residual | 38.111 | 283 | .135 | | |
| | Total | 83.102 | 288 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: CS
b. Predictors: (Constant), F, PQ, P, PS, L

The above table depicts that the proposed model was adequate as the significance value (F = 66.817, P-value = 0.000) is less than 5% level of significance.

Table 8 Coefficients

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | .199 | .207 | | .960 | .338 |
| | Product Quality | .116 | .060 | .099 | 1.951 | .052 |
| | Price | -.010 | .066 | -.008 | -.146 | .884 |
| | Location | .279 | .069 | .240 | 4.056 | .000 |
| | Personnel services | .277 | .058 | .262 | 4.769 | .000 |
| | Facilities | .311 | .061 | .299 | 5.125 | .000 |

a. Dependent Variable: CS

From the above table 8, we can elaborate that the p value of location, personnel services, and facilities is 0.000 which is less at 5% level of significance, which means that there is a significant effect of location, personnel services, and facilities on customer satisfaction. Likewise, the dependent variable customer satisfaction was regressed on predicting variable product quality and acquired the p value of 0.052 which is higher than the significant level of $\alpha = 0.05$ but is lower than the significant level of $\alpha = 0.10$. This indicates the variable of product quality has a significant influence on customer satisfaction if using the significant level of 0.10. On the contrary, the p value of price is 0.884 which is greater at 5 % level of significance, that means there is no significant effect of price on customer satisfaction.

Similarly, from the above table, it is found that the value of unstandardized beta coefficients of product quality, location, personnel services, and facilities 0.116, 0.279, 0277, and 0.311 which infers that one unit increase in product quality, location, personnel services, and facilities will bring 0.116, 0.279, 0277, and 0.311 units of increase in customer satisfaction. Moreover, it is found that the value of unstandardized beta coefficients of price is -.010 which infers that one unit increase in price will bring 0.010 units of decrease in customer satisfaction.

## V. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Customer satisfaction is critical to the success and expansion of retail centres. Customer satisfaction can provide a considerable edge over competitors in a competitive market. This study identified the five most important characteristics influencing customer satisfaction in Butwal Marts, which can assist mart retailers in developing strategies and marketing efforts to attract and keep customers. A correlation study revealed that the five variables have a statistically significant positive relationship with customers. This means that an increase in these variables is related to an increase in customer satisfaction. Furthermore, the regression findings demonstrated that product quality, personnel services, location, and facilities all had a favourable and substantial effect on consumer satisfaction with Butwal sub-metropolitan city shopping marts.

Customers, shopping mart owners and managers, Retail Industry Professionals, Researchers and Academics, Investors and Analysts, policymakers, and Regulators can all profit from customer satisfaction with marts. Customers are the key beneficiaries. They gain an understanding of the significance of customer satisfaction and its impact on their buying experience. They can make informed selections about where to shop and what elements to consider when comparing different shopping malls. This research will persuade shopping mall owners and managers to prioritize customer pleasure in their company strategies and operations, resulting in better customer experiences and long-term success. It will provide vital insights and best practices for improving customer satisfaction levels to retail

professionals such as marketers, managers, and customer service personnel. They can learn about effective methods and approaches for improving customer experiences, retaining customers, and gaining a competitive advantage in the market. Furthermore, researchers and academics interested in customer happiness, consumer behaviour, and retail management can benefit from this research. It could be used as a reference or as a starting point for more research on the topic. Furthermore, policymakers and regulators in the retail business can benefit from the findings of this study on customer satisfaction with marts. It can assist students in comprehending the customer-centric strategies that contribute to a thriving and competitive retail sector.

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