

Universiti Teknologi MARA

**Retail Patronage at Six To Six Wardrobe, Taman
Desa Ilmu, Kota Samarahan**

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Report submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

**Master of Business Administration
Faculty of Business Management**

January 2012

Abstract

Retailers and other consumer service businesses are continually compelled to make decisions directly towards meeting the varying and changing demands of prospective customers. The more nearly a store's products and services offering meet customers' expectations, the more likely the store will induce customers to become regular patrons. Retailers must also examine and understand the attributes or store characteristics that are most critical in influencing patronage patterns.

Basically, the study is to investigate overall sales performance of the company since its opening in November 2011 as well as to identify the customers' shop choice orientation factors towards Six To Six Wardrobe which is located in Kota Samarahan, Sarawak. Since Six To Six Wardrobe is still new in the market and highly depends and focuses on the customer buying volume, it is essential for the management to measure their target customers' overall shop choice orientation factors towards the shop.

KEYWORDS: *retail patronage, shop choice orientation factors, Six To Six Wardrobe, apparel shops*

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In today's increasingly volatile business environment where retailers face stiffening inter and intra competition (Sivadas and Baker-Prewitt, 2000), increasing operational costs and declining profit margins (Yasin and Yavas, 2003), they find themselves under constant pressure to capture a larger portion of tightly held customer dollars. We focus on apparel products which are very "high touch", (Levin et al., 2003) tangible products (Vijayasathy, 2003b, 2003b), and on the specific types of the product information such as price, promotion, style/trends, and merchandise availability.

The distribution and retail environment has never been as complex and competitive as it is today. Today's customers are spoilt for choice, they will no longer settle for mere satisfaction. They want to feel the excitement and pleasure with the services they are getting. Persuading and enticing consumers to shop at one's store is also harder than ever. Today's consumers have moved away from being a simple purchaser of preferred brands at a local store. They have to make choices about dozens of issues unknown to yesterday's consumers: the type of outlet they prefer, what promotions and specials they choose to respond to, how much time they can afford to allocate to shopping. In short, purchasing is increasingly based around the perception of the "total shopping environment". In this environment, retailers need better marketing information on customers in order to position their stores to meet the needs of increasingly demanding and wise shoppers. Understanding the factors that shape shopping behaviour is a key element in designing strategies for the future and planning tactics for the present.

Retailers and other consumer service businesses are continually compelled to make decisions directly towards meeting the varying and changing demands of prospective customers. The more nearly a store's products and services offering meet customers' expectations, the more likely the store will induce customers to become regular patrons. Retailers must also examine and understand the attributes or store characteristics that are most critical in influencing patronage patterns.

1.2 Background of the Company

With a starting of self-fund of RM30, 000.00, Six To Six Wardrobe Six To Six Wardrobe officially opened on 18 November 2010 that located at SL 61, Ground Floor, Desa Ilmu, Kota Samarahan, Sarawak initiated by a couple, Jefry Bin Bujang and Haslina binti Abu Bakar. The outlet is a wholly owned by Six To Six Enterprise which was incorporated in 26 August 2010.

The idea started when Haslina was 15 years old, as a part time worker at a clothing store called Economy Market Sdn. Bhd in Penang, she developed an interest in the women's fashion clothing. The company has initiate their business from home to retail store in Kota Samarahan and expanded since then, to online, in which it was setup a year later in August 2011.

It focuses its business efforts on the selling of casual and comfortable women's fashion clothing and accessories including non-fashion items. Six To Six Wardrobe's strategic business philosophy is to buy cheap and sell cheap, letting the amount and also volume to generate the profit. The company's mission is to offer modern, good quality and affordable price apparel to women. Other than normal advertising, mouth to mouth marketing among the loyal customer also helping to boost company's sell.

Over the years, their strategy of providing quality and value-priced fashion apparel has certainly paid off as Six To Six Wardrobe has emerged into a successful fashion retailer today.

1.3 Problem Statement

Many small and new businesses are having a difficult time in the competitive retail industry. Consumers have more options than ever. Competition and new technology have helped to expand these options; for example, the Internet and giant chain have been tough for some small local retailers. Small local retailers attempt to provide offerings that will produce consumer attitudes that are loyal to local businesses. Small businesses hope that consumers will believe that they owe it to the community to shop locally.