Relating Organization Strategy and Structure to Different Types of Retail Formats

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Abstract
The blare of e-commerce and variety of products in the market, consumers as well as retailers have shifted to a new age of retailing which brings the experience of buying and selling to next level, generally known as *brick and click* model. In the current age, the retailers work as a facilitator which gives the platform for buying and selling without investing extra cost on physical spaces which is generally known as *e-tailers* model. In such context, brick and click retailers are more capable of catering large section of the population as compared to brick and mortar retailers.
The aim of this paper is to identify the different types of retail formats from online (Brick and Click) and offline (Brick and Mortar) markets, and to relate the Organizational Structures to the operational efficiency and performance of different class of markets. Literature review is used to identify various retail formats. Also, secondary data is used to cover the large range of retailers who cater in the vast array of Indian market. The research tries to develop the reasonable argument of the current shift from offline (Physical Stores) to online buying and selling trends.
Organization structure is explained with the help of framework proposed by Pugh et al. and is being used as a measure to define the functioning of organization. The scope of this research is extended to the specific context of Indian market scenario.
The results of this research reveal that in Brick and Mortar Retail Format the degree of Formalization, specialization, trust and rational strategy process, Integration and Synergy, and flexibility is low as compared to Brick and Click Retail formats. Whereas, degree of Standardization and complexity of work-flow is low in Brick and Click Retail format as compared to Brick and Mortar Retail Format. It would be useful to test the findings of this study in other developing countries where industries are still struggling on selling their products on online e-commerce platform.
Key Words: Organization Strategy, Organization Structure, Retail Formats, Brick and Mortar, Brick and Click, e-tailer.

Introduction

In the age of modern technology where the life cycle of product is decreasing with a multiplying factor and the technology is becoming obsolete so frequently, the retailers need to keep pace with the changing market scenario. The dynamic environment puts the management in different roles from time to time. The internal interdependencies have to be aligned to the external environment to achieve organizational goals effectively (Miles, Snow, Meyer, & Henry J. Coleman, 1978). Parameters of satisfaction have changed due to the uncertainty in the market environment and to counter them companies are working and experimenting very hard to align themselves in the

competitive market. The purpose of this study is to identify the structure of brick and click retailers and find out how they are different from brick and mortar retailers. The benefits and the need of shifting of retailers from brick and mortar to brick and click itself has created the curiosity and a scope to understand the dynamics of performance and efficiency.
In past decade, retail sector has grown rapidly as compared to other sectors. Various formats of retailing have been introduced time to time which helps to cater the large variety of products amongst the existing and the potential market. Traditionally, retailers follow '***brick and mortar***' model which emphasis on the physical space allocation and

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physical selling. The progress of economy and increased disposable income gave consumers an unlimited power to demand and spend. The whole retail industry is thriving on this spending power of the consumers. Various retail formats have made the life of the customers really simple and effortless. This has resulted in aggressive competition among retailers and entry of innovative store concepts in the market (J.Maronick & M.Stiff, 1985).

With the boom of e-commerce and variety of products in the market consumers as well as retailers have shifted to a new age of retailing which brings the experience of buying and purchasing to next level, generally known as '*brick and click*' model. In this model, the time and physical constraint has been removed which helps the stakeholder to choose the convenient way of buying and selling. The knowledge sharing between the stakeholders of supply chain has increased rationally which brings the efficiency in the supply chain and helps to reduce the overall cost and time. In the current age, the retailers work as a facilitator which gives the platform for buying and selling without investing extra cost on physical spaces which is generally known as *e-tailers* model.

Review of Literature
Organization Structure

The organization structure itself defines the value and the intention behind the evolution of the organization.

There are dimensions of structure and variety of components which can be used as the building blocks by the organizations.

"Organizational structure is defined as the formal system of task and reporting relationships that controls, coordinates and motivates employees so that they cooperate and work together to achieve the organizations goals". (Jennifer and Gareth.)

In the current age, every single organization is trying to make such a structure which can be flexible as well as tough enough to counter their competitors and which can help the organization to achieve their core objectives in a stipulate time. Structure includes all the stakeholders which can have effect directly or indirectly on the function of an organization. More specifically, it refers to the established pattern of relationships amongst the various components of an organization. (Chang & Harrington, jr. 2000).

'There are basically two aspects of organizational structure. The first part relates to the overall configuration or shape of the administrative hierarchy. The second concerns to the processes used to monitor, control and coordinate activities of individual and sub units of the organization'. (Lenz, 1980) Though a lot of work has been done on structures but the dimensions proposed by Pugh et al. (1968) are the most popular. Given these definitions, organization structure can be studied with respect to the dimensions suggested by Pugh et. al. and the performance of organization structure can be monitored and controlled through these dimensions. There are total seven dimensions of structure listed under:

Formalization

"Formalization is the degree to which the rules, procedures, instructions, responsibility and communications are formalized or written down". (Desphande and Zaltman, 1982). Formalization lays down specific rules, instructions and procedures which the employees are required to follow with responsibility in order to ensure that information flows from proper channels without any discrepancy. High level of formalization leads to rigid decision making supply chain structure where the stake holders are more prone to follow the norms and the rules of the organization which creates a barrier to have innovative procedures in the function. On the contrary, high level of formalization leads to clarify the confusions amongst the job and which leads to non-grievance amongst the personnel working in the organization.

Those organization having low degree of formalization is more capable to compete with the market changes on contrary more confusion is created with respect to job description and function.

"Rules and guidelines are formalized to achieve production efficiency, control daily operations and to maintain order and discipline among the employees and at the same time ensuring their safety". (Chattopadhyay, Glick & Huber, 2001).

Centralization

The degree of centralization or decentralization is determined by various factors, the scale of operation of the firm, interdependence of work flow, complexity of job, the physical barrier within the group etc. the larger the size of the firm, the more is the need for decentralization. While centralization is appropriate for small organizations that have to face tough competition from the outside world.

'Centralization deals with the amount of power distributed at among employees at various positions in the organization. The degree of centralization is measured in terms of the hierarchy of authority and the participation of subordinate in the role of decision making' (Johari, 2009)

Centralization follows a pattern of concentration of power or decision making power on a single point. Whereas, decentralization has many different decision points which sometimes create the flexibility in the supply chain but sometimes creates the confusion of 'bullwhip' effect. Although 'complete centralization is unattainable because it would mean that subordinates have no duties, power or authority'. (Chang & Harrington.jr 2000).

Standardization

Standardization can be studied in many ways, we can study standardization as the procedure with respect to supply chain standardization means following the same procedure, tools and medium of transporting goods from starting point to end customer through same channel. The degree of standardization varies with the product and product segmentation. A procedure is taken to be an event that has regularity of occurrence and is legitimized by the organization. (Pugh et.al)

The procedures concern with the following:
1. Information sharing procedures
2. Decision making procedure
3. Modes of transportation procedure
4. Distribution procedure

Specialization

In an organization, supply chain consists of different jobs and specialization refers to the degree of the job specifications in order to run the structure efficiently and smoothly. 'While some firms break down the total task into

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smaller and more precise tasks that individual workers can complete. Each employee is trained explicitly to perform the task assigned to them. It is done so that the employees become proficient in their specialized area and fulfill the task efficiently with maximum ease within the time limit set. Specialization, also known as division of labor, benefits the organization in saving time that could be lost in changing tasks by the employees and the repetition of work enables an employee to become expert in his work.' (Saba Iqbal, 2014) Specialization also helps to reduce the boredom amongst the employees by doing the monotonous job, also it helps the employees to get expertise skills by working on specific defined tasks and operations.

Complexity of Workflow

According to Fredrickson (1986) and Robbins (1990), complexity refers to the degree of differentiation that exists within an organization. The three dimensions that usually indicate the level of workflow complexity are horizontal, vertical, and spatial differentiation.

Vertical differentiation denotes the number of levels in the hierarchy of supply chain structure, spatial differentiation is the degree of which the stake holders of supply chain is located geographically, and the horizontal differentiation can be defined as the task performed by the stake holders of the supply chain. The degree of complexity differs from organization to organization.

Retailing

Retailers represent the culmination of the marketing process and the contact point between consumers and manufactured products. Retailing involves those companies that are engaged in procuring products from the manufacturers and reselling the same goods to the consumers. Retailing has emerged as one of the most dynamic and fast paced industries with several players entering the market. (Akhter and Equal, 2012). While buying has always been the highest priority for retailers, the retailers now follow a more holistic approach to marketing and management. Retailers are trying to be more consumer oriented and building personal contacts with them by exploiting insights into consumer preferences and behavior. (Saba Iqbal, 2014)

Retail Institutions are economic organizations that are affected by the environment that they operate in. Customers, technology & Competitors are the dimensions of environment that directly affect these organizations. The changes in the environment can alter the working of these retail organizations. Any retailer is bound to be unsuccessful that doesn't adjust well to its environment. For example a retailer might fail to understand the consumers' choice & preferences and thus might not succeed to impress consumers and make a place in the market for itself. The best example is of Wal-Mart's failure in Germany (Knorr & Arndt).

Retailing in India

The current size of the Indian retail sector is 500 billion USD. This is expected to cross 1.3 trillion USD by 2020. Organized retail, which constituted seven per cent of total retail in 2011–12 is estimated to grow at a CAGR of 24 per cent and attain 10.2 per cent share of total retail by 2016–17, according to a study titled 'FDI in Retail: Advantage Farmers' conducted by an industrial body. The retails have already realized the untapped potential for organized retail and rising income levels of the young Indian Consumers.

The Indian retail landscape is evolving from the brick-and-mortar model to adopt technology for connecting with consumers. India has a very young, inspiring and ambitious population. Around 500 million people in India are below 25 years of age, resulting in a lot of demand for consumer products. India has since long been dominated by large Indian business houses. Groups like Future group, Aditya Birla group, Landmark etc., dominate the current retail landscape. Off late, liberal foreign trade & FDI policy of the government of India has resulted in a large number of foreign players eyeing and entering the current retail sector.

Brick and Mortar' Retail Format

(a) Convenience Store - The size of Convenience stores (c-stores) is determined by the variety of products that they store varying from as small as a kiosk with a size of around 800 sq. ft. or as vast as 4000 to 5000 sq. ft. Their prime attraction is the accessible location and convenience that they provide to the customers. (Kirby, 1986). Along with convenience of location, these stores also offer extended working hours to the public. (NACS online, 2011) The product categories range from beverages, snacks, and confectioneries, groceries, gasoline, fresh or frozen food and items of frequent use. They are typically less than 5000 sq. ft. in size. They provide the maximum ease and convenience of buying a product for the consumers (Bianchi, 2009), rather than competing on prices or product varieties (Welsh, Bent, Seaman, & Ingram, 2003), they compete more on customer convenience. They are useful for fill-in merchandise and emergency purchases. Some of the best convenience stores are 7-Eleven, am pm, FamilyMart, SPAR etc.

(b) Hypermarkets - Hypermarkets are self-service retail formats that provide a vastly wide variety of merchandise for the consumers to choose from. A hypermarket is a large establishment combining the characteristics of a supercenter and a department store. These establishments are generally larger in size and cover 1, 00,000 sq. ft. or more floor space in a retail outlet. Their business model focuses on high volume and low margin sales. They stock around 35, 000 to 60, 000 Stock Keeping Units (SKU). Food items constitute around 60 to 70 percent of the total sale of hypermarkets (Castrillo, Mira, & Gurdjian, 1998). They provide goods at prices which is always lower than the market price ranging by 5 to 50 percent. Their basic concept is providing all the products to the customers under a single roof. Of the total, around 10 to 15 percent of their products comprise of private labels. The most popular example of hypermarket are Wal-Mart stores, Carrefour etc.

(c) Specialty Stores - Specialty stores offer a vast array of product for every category of the goods that they deal in. They predominantly cater to high-end customers but some provide for mass-consumer segment as well (Datamonitor, 2009). A conventional specialty store concentrates on a limited number of complementary merchandise categories and emphasizes on a high level of service. They are generally small in size whereas the size can vary from large to small depending upon the type and category of the product. These are highly specialized stores with limited assortment of products. High emphasis is paid on customer service and after sales follow-ups. They extensively sell exclusives and sometimes related products that are highly specialized. They have high margins and generally don't

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compete on price. Their selling items are decided after intense market research and advertising and promotion play a key role in their sales. Some examples of specialty stores are Swarovski, Archie's, Toy's R, Nike, IKEA and Levis etc.

E-Retailing in India

Over the last two decades, rising internet and mobile phone penetration has changed the way we communicate and do business. While in countries such as the US and China, e-commerce has taken significant strides to achieve sales of over 150 billion USD in revenue, the industry in India is, still at its infancy. However over the past few years, the sector has grown by almost 35% CAGR from 3.8 billion USD in 2009 to an estimated 12.6 billion USD in 2013. If this robust growth continues over the next few years, the size of the e-retail industry is poised to be 10 to 20 billion USD by 2017-2020, according to 'Internet and Mobile Association of India research report'. This growth is expected to be led by increased consumer-led purchases in durables and electronics, apparels and accessories, besides traditional products such as books and audio-visuals.

Brick and Click' Retailers

Brick and click retailers work by exploiting synergies between their offline and online presence to provide better customer service, especially through the transfer of customers' trust of the offline to the online presence. (Stewart, 2003)

The e-commerce industry offers great benefits to the Indian economy, the customers and the society at large, especially to small businesses and small merchants, semi-urban and rural population. (Animation Xpress.com, 2014).

Traditionally most multi-channel retailers have siloed structures, where the physical store division and the internet store division operate independently of each other. (Gallino and Moreno, 2014; Rigby 2011)

Theory Development

Traditionally retailers follow 'brick and mortar' model which consists of physical spaces and face to face selling, but this model has some downfalls because of constraints like time, distance, customer faith, and also after sales services. In past decade, with the evolution of internet and e-commerce, new model of retailing has emerged named 'brick and click' which has the benefit of physical retailing and with the added feature of online information sharing. Now the Indian retailing industries are entering into the third phase of retailing known as 'click and click' model, which completely vanishes the physical spaces and rely on the virtual space created by 'e-tailers'.

Previous studies have been done on different types of Physical Stores on **Brick and Mortar** Models where they have been identified and classified with respect to organization structure and functioning. Major three classifications based on the space allocation and variety of products include - Hypermarket, Specialty stores, and convenient stores. This study classifies the **Brick and Click** Retailers into these three kind of stores. Parameters of classification are – Geographical reach to consumer and ability to cater variety of products.

Table 1 : Classification of Retailers

Retailer Model / Types of Markets	Brick and Mortar	Brick and Click
Hypermarket	Larger size covers 1lakh sq. ft. or more floor space, 35000-60000 stock keeping units, Parameters : Physical network and geographical coverage, Ex – Walmart, Big bazaar, etc.	Cater online large and versatile variety of products. Physical space needed is much less as compared to brick and mortar Hypermaket. Parameters: Market share, Consumer Population and Geographical Reach. Ex – Amazon.com, Flipkart.com, Snapdeal.com, etc.
Specialty Stores	Highly specialized stores with limited assortment of products. Generally small in size. Ex – Nike, McDonalds, etc.	Deals in specialized products or target niche customers. The market share amongst the niche segment is comparatively large. Ex – Lenskart.com, Healthkart.com, Neulife.com, etc.
Convenient Stores	Smaller in physical size, 800 sq. ft. to 5000 sq. ft. Parameters: Accessible location and convenient to reach. Running day and night Ex- 24X7, am pm, family-mart	Deals in small variety of general products Physical size is negligible. Concentrated on a particular geographical region. Ex- attachawal.com, onlinerationwala.com, etc.

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Hypothesis

In the brick and click model, operations are formalized and follow particular set of norms and rules, communication is formal and information sharing is limited and authentic. All the functioning is held under standard processing with a formal channel of communication. New technologies like ERP and CRM is introduced in the supply chain which leads to be more formal structure.

For functioning of supply chain standard channels are followed. Big players try to inculcate standardized process in their structure to reduce ambiguity but due to changing demand and market needs, to increase the flexibility, procedure need to be modified with the product to fulfill the demand. Same procedure of operations cannot be followed for different regions to cater the variety of population. To tackle them the procedure has to be evolved to make a match between the demand and the process to fulfill the demand.

H1: Brick and click retailers have high degree of Formalization as compared to brick and mortar retailers.

Integration of ICT into supply chain helps in specialization of jobs which leads to more professional jobs and requires different skills' sets which have to be performed by professionals. As work is distributed uniformly without any overlapping, the supply chain works smoothly and more efficiently as compared to the brick and mortar supply chains. Outsource the non-core activities, i.e., logistics, aftersales services will get the more cost saving on core operational activities. (Sears case by Frayer, 1989)

H2: Brick and click retailers have high degree of specialization as compared to brick and mortar retailers.

Adding IT to supply chain helps to convert supply chain into informative value chain. (Shere, 2005). Integration of Technology with existing physical resources helps to increase the flow of goods, reduce delivery time and help to retain existing customers. (Herhausen et. al., 2015).

H3: Brick and click retailers have low degree of Complexity of Workflow as compared to brick and mortar retailers.

Hsiao et al. (2000) studied the impact of retailer and supplier relationship on supply chain performance. Integration in logistics plays important role for better performance of online retail marketing (Alverado and Kotzab, 2001). Hau Lee and Whang (2001) talk about the supply chain integration. Integration gives birth to synergy amongst the stakeholders of supply chain. Lack of synergy leads to increase of cost of product fulfillment and it goes out of control. By integrating the physical facility with internet technology which can share the information brings the synergy up as well as the flexibility goes up. (Steinfield et al, 2002) Steinfield (2004) argues that integration in practical is not happening.

H4: Brick and click retailers have high degree of trust and rational strategy process between supplier and vendor as compared to brick and mortar retailers

H5: Synergy goes up with the integration of different retail formats (Brick and Mortar, and Brick and Click) which leads to enhancement in the performance of Retailers.

Big players try to inculcate standardized process in their structure to reduce ambiguity but due to changing demand

and market needs, to increase the flexibility, procedure need to be modified with the product to fulfill the demand. Same procedure of operations cannot be followed for different regions to cater the variety of population. To tackle them the procedure has to be evolved to make a match between the demand and the process to fulfill the demand. Because retailers do unique differentiation to increase the flexibility and as synergy goes up with the collaboration of vendors, suppliers has to modify and non-standardize their process and structure.

H6: Brick and click retailers have low degree of Standardization as compared to brick and mortar retailers.

Grammans et al. (2001) discuss the shift from Brand Loyalty to e-loyalty. Inter and intra firm alliances go upwards to bring the flexibility on high side and to use the synergy of alliances in expanding and capturing market share.

H7 : *Brick and Click retailers have high degree of flexibility due to the infusion of Information Technology, multiple vendor assignments, and flexible mode of transaction.*

Theoretical Framework

This framework helps to study the structure of Brick and Click Model and helps to understand how they are different from Brick and Mortar Model by taking the parameters suggested by (Pugh et al, 1968). The degree of dimensions of supply chain structure can be represented with respect to each model.

Table 2: Supply chain structure of different retail models

Retail Model / Dimensions Of Supply chain structure	Brick and Mortar	Brick and Click
Formalization	↓	↑
Centralization	↓	↑
Standardization	↑	↓
Specialization	↓	↑
Flexibility	↓	↑
Complexity of work flow	↑	↓
Synergy	↓	↑

* ↑ *means high degree, and ↓ means low degree.*

Conclusion

With the infusion of internet and information technology, the siloed structure is vanishing due to the trust building on e-commerce and the flexibility offered through these retail-formats. Integration between offline-online and online-offline stores are commonly seen in the modern day's retail structure where both can synergize their expertise, resources to maximize profit and to reduce the risk.

In Brick and Mortar Retail Format the degree of Formalization, specialization, trust and rational strategy process, Integration and Synergy, and flexibility is low as compared to Brick and Click Retail formats. Whereas, degree of Standardization and complexity of work-flow is

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low in Brick and Click Retail format as compared to Brick and Mortar Retail Format.

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