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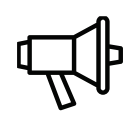


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ISSUES OF FORMATION AND MANAGEMENT OF PRODUCT ASSORTMENT IN RETAIL ENTERPRISES

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Abstract: This article analyzes modern approaches to the formation and management of product assortments in retail enterprises. The study explores consumer behavior modeling using the multinomial logit model, inventory optimization through ABC-XYZ analysis, and the application of artificial intelligence technologies. Based on the development trends of Uzbekistan's retail market, practical recommendations have been developed.

Key words: product assortment, retail trade, category management, ABC-XYZ analysis, consumer behavior, artificial intelligence.

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada chakana savdo korxonalarida tovar assortimentini shakllantirish va boshqarishning zamonaviy yondashuvlari tahlil qilingan. Tadqiqotda multinomial logit modeli asosida iste'molchilar xulq-atvorini modellashtirish, ABC-XYZ tahlili orqali inventar boshqaruvini optimallashtirish hamda sun'iy intellekt texnologiyalarini qo'llash masalalari ko'rib chiqilgan. O'zbekiston chakana savdo bozorining rivojlanish tendensiyalari asosida amaliy tavsiyalar ishlab chiqilgan.

Kalit so'zlar: tovar assortimenti, chakana savdo, kategoriya menejmenti, ABC-XYZ tahlili, iste'molchi xulq-atvori, sun'iy intellekt.

Аннотация: В данной статье проанализированы современные подходы к формированию и управлению товарным ассортиментом в розничных торговых предприятиях. В исследовании рассматривается моделирование потребительского поведения на основе мультиномиальной логит-модели, оптимизация управления запасами с помощью ABC-XYZ анализа, а также применение технологий искусственного интеллекта. На основе тенденций развития розничного рынка Узбекистана разработаны практические рекомендации.

Ключевые слова: товарный ассортимент, розничная торговля, категорийный менеджмент, ABC-XYZ анализ, поведение потребителей, искусственный интеллект.

INTRODUCTION

In the modern retail sector, the formation and management of product assortments is of strategic importance, serving as a decisive factor in ensuring a firm's competitiveness and financial sustainability. Rapid digitalization processes observed in the global retail market, the volatility of consumer demand, and the increasing complexity of supply chains require new approaches to assortment management [1]. According to data from the National Statistics Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan, retail trade turnover in the first half of 2024 amounted to 154.62 trillion soums, representing an increase of 8.4 percent compared to the corresponding period of 2023 [2]. These indicators reflect the dynamic development of the retail sector. However, the majority of retail enterprises still rely on traditional assortment management methods, which increasingly act as a factor reducing competitiveness.

The purpose of this study is to improve the scientific and methodological foundations of product assortment formation and management in retail enterprises, as well as to examine the possibilities of applying modern digital technologies and analytical methods. The object of the research is retail enterprises in Uzbekistan, while the subject of the research is the processes of product assortment management within these enterprises.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON THE SUBJECT

An analysis of the scientific literature on the theory and practice of product assortment management indicates that this field has evolved into a multifaceted area of research. Studies conducted by Kok et al. [3] identify four main dimensions of assortment planning: product variety and product line design, shelf space allocation, multi-product inventory systems, and consumer perception of variety.

Mantrala and co-authors [4] emphasize the complexity of assortment planning, characterizing it through three key components: breadth (number of categories), depth (number of SKUs within a category), and service level (inventory volume per SKU). Maintaining a balance among these parameters constitutes one of the core tasks of retail managers.

Modeling consumer behavior is a crucial component of assortment optimization. The multinomial logit (MNL) model is the most widely used approach in this area, as it is based on the principle of random utility maximization by consumers [5]. Rusmevichientong and Topaloglu [6] examined assortment optimization under conditions of uncertainty in MNL model parameters and demonstrated that efficient solutions exist even though the problem is proven to be NP-complete.

The concept of category management has been extensively studied by Cachon and Kok [7]. Their research shows that decentralized category management fails to achieve optimal solutions and leads to suboptimal levels of variety and higher prices. These findings justify the need to implement integrated management systems in retail enterprises.

Hübner and Kuhn [8] systematized quantitative research on retail category management and analyzed the interrelationship between assortment planning and shelf space allocation models. Their conclusions indicate a significant gap between academic models and practical software solutions, highlighting the need for deeper integration.

ABC–XYZ analysis plays an important role in inventory management. Research by Pandya and Thakkar [9] demonstrates that combining ABC classification (based on value) with XYZ analysis (based on demand variability) enables the formulation of more effective inventory policies. This approach divides products into nine categories and proposes specific management strategies for each.

The introduction of artificial intelligence technologies into retail is driving a paradigm shift in assortment management. According to McKinsey research, generative artificial intelligence has the potential to create economic value ranging from USD 240 to 390 billion in the retail sector [10]. Results of a Nvidia survey indicate that 69 percent of retail companies that have implemented artificial intelligence report annual revenue growth [11].

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employs comparative analysis, a systems approach, statistical analysis, and modeling methods. The empirical data base consists of official statistical indicators from the National Statistics Agency of the Republic of Uzbekistan, reports from international research organizations, as well as scientific articles indexed in the Scopus and Web of Science databases.

For modeling assortment optimization, the multinomial logit (MNL) model was applied. This model expresses the probability of a consumer choosing a product within an assortment as follows:

$$P(i | S) = \frac{e^{v_i}}{1 + \sum_{j \in S} e^{v_j}}$$

Here:

$P(i|S)$ denotes the probability of choosing product i from assortment S ,

v_i represents the deterministic utility level of product i [12].

This model accounts for the stochastic nature of consumer choice and is used as an analytical tool in assortment management.

Inventory management analysis employed the ABC–XYZ matrix.

The ABC classification is based on the Pareto principle:

- Category A — high-value products (20% of products generate 80% of revenue),
- Category B — medium-value products,
- Category C — low-value products.

The XYZ analysis evaluates demand stability:

- X — stable demand ($CV < 10\%$),
- Y — variable demand ($10\% < CV < 25\%$),
- Z — highly variable demand ($CV > 25\%$) [13].

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

An analysis of the retail market in Uzbekistan indicates that the sector demonstrates a stable growth trend. As of July 1, 2024, the number of commercial enterprises engaged in retail trade in the republic amounted to 88,541 units, of which 324 were large enterprises and 88,217 were small enterprises and microfirms [2]. This structural distribution highlights the dominant role of small business in the retail sector (Table 1).

Table 1. Distribution of retail trade turnover by regions in Uzbekistan, January–June 2024¹

Region	Volume (trillion soums)	Growth rate (%)	Share (%)
Tashkent city	40.21	9.4	26.0
Tashkent region	15.6	9.2	10.1
Samarkand region	12.4	8.8	8.0
Fergana region	11.8	8.5	7.6
Namangan region	9.5	9.8	6.1
Surkhandarya region	8.2	9.1	5.3
Other regions	56.91	8.0	36.9
Total	154.62	8.4	100.0

The analysis of Table 1 shows that the largest share of retail trade turnover falls on Tashkent city (26.0%). The highest growth rate was recorded in Namangan region (9.8%), indicating the rapid development of retail infrastructure in this area. The share of small business and private entrepreneurship in total retail trade turnover amounts to 82.0 percent.

The analysis of the global retail assortment management software market also reveals notable trends. According to Verified Market Reports, the global retail assortment management software market was valued at USD 197.6 million in 2023 and is projected to reach USD 333.9 million by 2030. This corresponds to an average annual growth rate of 7.8 percent (Table 2) [14].

Table 2. Key indicators of the retail assortment management software market²

Indicator	Value	Year
Market size (USD million)	197.6	2023
Forecast size (USD million)	333.9	2030
Average annual growth rate (CAGR)	7.8%	2024–2030
Share of cloud-based solutions	62%	2024
Enterprises implementing artificial intelligence	28%	2024
Enterprises reporting revenue growth	69%	2024

Within the framework of the study, a conceptual model of product assortment management was developed. This model reflects the key components of assortment management and the interrelationships among them. At the center of the model is assortment management, influenced by seven core elements: demand analysis, category management, digital technologies, inventory optimization, ABC–XYZ analysis, consumer behavior, and pricing strategy (Figure 1).

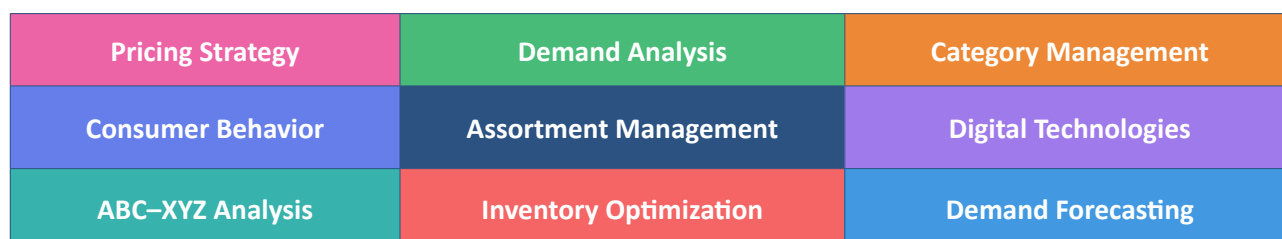


Figure 1. Conceptual model of product assortment management³

ABC–XYZ analysis serves as an effective tool in inventory management and assortment optimization. This methodology forms nine strategic categories by classifying products according to value (ABC) and demand stability (XYZ). Each category requires a specific management strategy (Figure 2).

1 Manba: O'zbekiston Respublikasi Milliy statistika qo'mitasi ma'lumotlari asosida tuzildi [2]

2 Manba: Verified Market Reports, Nvidia Survey, Global Growth Insights ma'lumotlari asosida tuzildi [11], [14], [15]

3 Manba: Mualliflar tomonidan ishlab chiqilgan

ABC / XYZ	X (Stable)	Y (Variable)	Z (Uncertain)
A (High value)	AX – High priority, continuous monitoring	AY – Medium priority, flexible planning	AZ – Caution, risk management
B (Medium value)	BX – Standard management, automation	BY – Flexible approach	BZ – Improvement of demand forecasting
C (Low value)	CX – Minimal control, automatic replenishment	CY – Periodic analysis, optimization	CZ – Assortment delisting analysis

Figure 2. ABC–XYZ analysis matrix and management strategies⁴

The impact of artificial intelligence on retail assortment management is increasing significantly. According to SymphonyAI research, AI-based demand forecasting can reduce forecasting errors by 20–50 percent, which in turn leads to a 65 percent reduction in stockouts [16]. McKinsey analyses indicate that the implementation of artificial intelligence enables optimization of inventory levels by 20–30 percent [10].

Table 3. Impact of artificial intelligence on retail assortment management⁵

Area of impact	Effectiveness (%)	Source
Improvement of demand forecast accuracy	20–50	McKinsey [10]
Reduction of stockouts	65	SymphonyAI [16]
Inventory level optimization	20–30	McKinsey [10]
Reduction of operating costs	72	Nvidia [11]
Reduction of assortment planning time	50	SymphonyAI [16]
Productivity improvement	25	SymphonyAI [16]

The development of the e-commerce market in Uzbekistan is also placing new requirements on assortment management. According to government statistics, in 2024 the volume of the e-commerce market in Uzbekistan amounted to USD 1.2 billion, accounting for 3.8 percent of the retail market. According to KPMG forecasts, e-commerce penetration is expected to reach 9–11 percent by 2027 [17]. Consumers mainly purchase household appliances and electronics (35%), fashion products (19%), and home furnishings (3%).

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the research results, the following conclusions were drawn and practical recommendations were developed.

First, in modern retail, product assortment management is a multifactor process that requires the integration of consumer behavior modeling, category management, inventory optimization, and digital technologies. Forecasting consumer choice based on the multinomial logit model increases the effectiveness of assortment decisions.

Second, ABC–XYZ analysis provides a differentiated approach to inventory management. High-value products with stable demand (AX category) require continuous monitoring and a high service level, whereas low-value products with uncertain demand (CZ category) necessitate delisting analysis.

Third, artificial intelligence technologies are driving a paradigm shift in assortment management. Research shows that the implementation of artificial intelligence can increase demand forecast accuracy by 20–50 percent, optimize inventory levels by 20–30 percent, and significantly reduce operating costs.

For retail enterprises in Uzbekistan, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Implement the ABC–XYZ analysis methodology and develop differentiated management strategies for each product category. This will enable optimization of inventory costs and improvement of service levels.
2. Apply the category management concept and establish integrated management systems by category. A centralized approach ensures consistency in assortment and pricing decisions.
3. Gradually introduce artificial intelligence technologies, starting with demand forecasting and inventory management, and subsequently expanding to assortment optimization and dynamic pricing.
4. Develop e-commerce channels and implement an omnichannel strategy, enabling the creation of a unified assortment management system across online and offline sales channels.
5. Develop staff training programs and organize training sessions on modern assortment management methods and the use of digital tools.

⁴ Manba: Pandya & Thakkar (2016) asosida mualliflar adaptatsiyasi [9]

⁵ Manba: McKinsey, SymphonyAI, Nvidia tadqiqotlari asosida tuzildi [10, 11, 16]

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