

Wal-mart's positive effect on a community

[Sociology](#), [Community](#)



When it comes to shopping for clothes, groceries, and other belongings; there is one question customers must ask themselves. Do you shop with your head or your heart? Shopping with your head refers to looking for discounts and saving as much money as you can while, shopping with your heart is going to a local store and paying extra to support a family-owned business. Most respond with saving money and getting discounts. Wal-Mart is one of the largest employers in the United States and their inventory includes groceries, pharmacies, automotive and hardware supply areas.

It is a store that provides plenty of things you need in one place at the lowest prices. Low income, middle-class or upper class; Wal-Mart helps the majority of the community. Although many people believe Wal-Mart shuts down and overruns small businesses, what Wal-Mart brings to the table is that it employs a vast amount of jobs. I am for Wal-Mart because I believe the lives of people in less fortunate communities benefit from these stores, instead of the common belief that they suffer for them.

Their slogan of "Save money, Live better" is exactly what they are able to do for their customers. The best feeling you can get when shopping is coming out of a store and getting all the items and goods you desired for a manageable price. Wal-Mart gives you the opportunity to achieve that feeling. With the low prices for large quantities, these huge stores help out the whole community (especially rural areas). "The Case for Wal-Mart," by Karen De Coster and Brad Edmonds clarifies, "If the truth be told, Wal-Mart improves the lives of people in rural areas because it gives them access to a lifestyle that they otherwise would not have- a gigantic store showcasing the world's greatest choice of products from groceries to music to automotive

products" (633). I absolutely agree with Coster and Edmonds statement that customers should be obligated to buy brand labels accessories for discounted prices.

Wal-Mart gives discounts, up to seventy percent off, prices all year around-unlike other supermarkets or clothing stores that only have seasonal discounted times. Wal-Mart gives shoppers the chance to go into their stores and purchase close to anything they can think of at lower prices than Wal-Mart's competition. When all is said, Wal-Mart improves the lives of everyone in a community because it allows consumers to buy goods for relatively cheap prices. Unlike any other retailers, Wal-Mart employs people for jobs not careers.

There is a possibility to climb the ladder within the company, but working at Wal-Mart doesn't really jump-start to any other job opportunities. But the fact is that Wal-Mart does provide a vast amount of people. The number of different departments and employees that are required to run one Wal-Mart store hires a great number of people. With the amount of people needed for each section and subsection at these stores, Wal-Mart has the ability to give many people jobs. Wal-Mart has been one of the most successful anti-povertyprogrammers in America. It provides entry-level jobs that unskilled workers badly want - there are often five or 10 applicants for each position" (Urbach). Wal-Mart is also beneficial with giving high number of jobs because most of the jobs that they are hiring don't need a high school or college degree. For areas with high number of people who don't have diplomas, Wal-Mart gives the opportunity to them by supplying them a steady supply of money.

These are unskilled workers that aren't exactly looking for job progression, but are looking for any job they can get and keep. It's the perfect combination of a company that needs to hire a great amount of people, and the kinds of workers that don't really have many other options. Wal-Mart's geographic position is very helpful and convenient to many communities. These mega-stores may seem like they just follow whichever area is large enough to hold their enormous square footage, but actually they are positioned in just the right place.

The fact that most are within short driving distance to other supermarkets, makes it worth for the consumers to go to Wal-Mart first, see what they have, and then from there go to the other stores. People who shop at Wal-Mart, trust that they will be able to find most if not all of their shopping list. Even if it is farther than another store, people are willing to go the extra mile or two to get the savings they would not be able to find anywhere else. Wal-Mart's slogan sums up how their customers shop and enjoy the savings, "Save money, live better".

I couldn't agree more. With people being able to save money, community's benefit immensely. Especially low-income communities, Wal-Mart is good because it gets money into the citizen's pockets and encourages them to spend more than they would or could have before. "This then allows them to have some money to invest in productive assets or to buy those other things that will make their lives more comfortable and enjoyable" (Urbach). Customers of Wal-Mart aren't just happy because of the deals they get by shopping at those stores.

What makes Wal-Mart customers the happiest is knowing that from the money they saved, they have extra to spend on other things. Many nonbelievers against Wal-Mart state that it will shut down small businesses and affect the economy in a negative way. Putting a Wal-Mart in a striving community is a positive. One reason is because it drives up competition. What we strive for as human beings is competition. It is a life essential tool for business. Opposing common belief, "after a new Wal-Mart is built, other small businesses sprout up nearby and cash in on the new retail traffic" (Gruss).

Studies have shown that other businesses and companies do better and grow when Wal-Mart is in close proximity to them. Critics of Wal-Mart have understandable reasons to question this huge corporation; they don't want to have to lower their prices to compete with Wal-Mart's. Instead of trying to battle with them, they claim that Wal-Mart is bad for communities and small businesses. But there is proof that small businesses open and flourish once a Wal-Mart is opened. Wal-Mart's drive up competition that encourages people to go to multiple stores to compare to the prices they offer.

Wal-Mart has over 1.2 million employees and more than 3,600 stores nationwide. The fact is that everyone has shopped at Wal-Mart once in their life. To be accused for ruining small businesses and communities is nonsense. Wal-Mart is the number one place to buy all your goods without spending too much money. And with that savings, customers can afford to save for other necessities they need to pay off. Employing huge amount of people and creating jobs in the economy has helped the United States. Americans love Wal-Mart and Wal-Mart loves America right back.

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