

# My personal experience in shopping in walmart

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Do you like Walmart? Do you shop there? If so, how frequently? If not, why not? Personally, I enjoy Walmart for the low prices as I am a college student. Walmart boasts their rollback prices and it is true that they offer goods for a competitively low price. If I had more disposable income, I would travel to places such as Whole Foods to shop as I feel that the quality of the goods and services is much higher. Although I rarely travel to supermarkets as I have a meal plan within my college which allows me to have three meals a day, I visit Walmart approximately once a month. These visits are usually for snacks, medication and other miscellaneous products.

Is there a Walmart store in your area? If so, has it had any impact on your community or the behavior of local consumers? If there's no store in your area, would you be in favor of Walmart opening one? Explain why or why not. Having moved from Ireland, a country without Walmart, to Cincinnati where there is a store right down the street, I have a view on both sides of the spectrum. Living at Cincinnati Christian University, there is a Walmart store approximately 15 minutes away. I believe that this store attracts a lot of low income members of society and college students. I feel that this takes the image of the area down as there is a lot of loitering around the store from homeless people and from personal experience it is often a hostile environment. With this hostile environment, I would imagine that a lot of local consumers would be turned away from attending Walmart. I personally, would not attend a Walmart alone at night due to the people who loiter around the store. On the other end of the spectrum, I would not like Walmart to open in Ireland. Coming from a small town with local businesses, I feel that opening a Walmart would wipe away all of its competitors and bring the

image of the area down. I believe that it is important to walk into a store and be greeted warmly by a member of staff you know or recognize. With Walmart, you do not get this sort of service as employees often seem uninterested and not welcoming. I understand that Walmart prides itself on having low prices, but with the level of customer service it provides and the negative image that is associated with Walmart I would not want Walmart opening in my local town.

Is Walmart's rapid rise to retail dominance a positive or a negative development for our society? What does it tell us about capitalism, globalization and the plight of workers? I believe that Walmart's rapid rise to retail dominance is resulting in negative development for our society. Walmart is taking away the uniqueness of owning a business by mass producing stores which produce no level of customer service. Walmart are using their market dominance to eliminate the threat of local businesses by offering the lowest prices. Along with their market power, Walmart's bargaining power is unmatched. If Walmart decided to discontinue a certain product, there is a likely chance that the company that produces the product would go out of business. This sort of behavior is unethical but it has helped Walmart in gaining market share and negotiation power. The globalization of Walmart has led to the crumble of local businesses. It is said that when a new Walmart store opens, within five years, two local stores close. With the closing of local businesses, jobs are being lost and unemployment levels are on the rise. I believe that treatment of Walmart employees isn't right. For a company as large as Walmart, over 46% of their employees are uninsured. This is a big problem as the average sales clerk earns \$8.23 an hour which

is not enough to afford insurance and living expenses. As Walmart doesn't have a labor union, they have no bargaining power when it comes to workers' rights which leaves room for exploitation.

Can a retailer ever become too large and too powerful? I believe a retailer can become too powerful if there is an absence of competition. If Walmart keeps taking over local businesses and continues to grow at the current pace that it is, it may crush all small businesses and traders. Walmart is gaining more and more strength as they have a high command of bargaining power among distributors. The market has allowed Walmart to gain so much strength that they predict the price scale which they purchase goods. For this reason Walmart is the leader of cost efficiency which appeals to the majority of the population. The market system has allowed Walmart to appeal to the majority of consumers by their low prices but they also lack quality service. I feel that once Walmart lacks enough quality they will have trouble completely conquering the market. There is a need for customer service which keeps companies such as Kroger and Target alive in this economic market.

Is opposition to Walmart's expansion a legitimate part of the political process or is it unfair interference with our market system and a violation of the company's rights? Do opponents of Walmart have any valid concerns? I believe that opposition to Walmart's expansion is a legitimate part of the political process and there are many valid concerns from its oppositions. If Walmart continues to buy out the smaller, local stores, they will end up monopolizing the market. Once this happens, the supermarket market will be

Walmart and there will be no more competition. With no competition, Walmart can change to having extremely high prices, and consumers will be forced to shell out large amounts of money for low quality products and service because there is no other choice. In addition, Walmart employees aren't treated correctly in terms of pay and health insurance, as many employees earn below the poverty line. This puts pressure on local government officials and tax payers to cover Walmart employees with federal aid. Not only does it limit the consumer's choice on where to shop, it drives family and local businesses out of the market. I believe that zoning laws should come into effect to protect areas and local businesses. With these zoning laws, Walmart would not be able to enter certain areas which would allow local business to thrive.