

A study on Consumers' Buying Behavior towards Students of Gujarat State

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ABSTRACT

Mall culture is viewed as a substantial change in the life style of Indians, as shopping is considered as an activity of buying things and also viewed as a status symbol. Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore have received greater commercial and social contributions from malls. The Gujarat region in the state of Gujarat is observing rapid growth of organized retailing or mall culture since almost a decade. Many new players are coming up in the region as they attract them with comfort, entertainment, fashion, food court, window shopping, multiband portfolio, quality, mall essence, expediency, appeal and indulgence. This region is known for its revenue growth which may be on account of regular shopping and high spending patterns of community / public. This paper focuses on the consumer preference towards study on consumers' buying behaviour towards students of Gujarat state in Gujarat. The variables studied includes demographic, frequency, purposes for visiting malls and factors influencing shopping from specific malls. The research design is descriptive and primary data were collected using a questionnaire. The sample consisted of 720 young (Student) respondents and the sampling method was convenience sampling. Various statistical methods / techniques have been used to get an insight into the various factors and spending pattern of the shoppers in the malls.

1. Introduction

India has observed a frenetic pace of retail development over the past five years. While local shopping centers have always existed in India, their structure, ambience and method of doing business served the needs of the local population. The pace of change in retail development has triggered a frantic pace in the development of malls. A number of factors such as income growth, changing demographic profile and socioeconomic environment have driven this transformation in retail in India. Goldman Sachs has estimated that the Indian economic growth could actually exceed that of China by the time of year 2015.

It is believed that the country has the potential to deliver the fastest growth over the next 50 years. Keeping in mind the rates of growth predicted for India and China, the balance of economic power is poised to tip in favour of two of the world's largest populations over the next fifty years. The Global Retail Development Index developed by A.T. Kearney has ranked India first, among the top 30 developing markets in the world. New formats to the Indian marketplace have emerged rapidly over the past five years.

India's retail substructure is slowly experiencing an alteration with many hi-fi super malls with changing demographic, psychometric behavior and value systems. In view of the above; the study is conducted on buying behavior of customers in the state of Gujarat to elicit factors influencing retailers.

A consumer's existence is seen as the sum of exchanges with environment. Mall culture has grown with an incredible step. Just a few years back, people had to make a choice

among shopping, movies or hanging out on a holiday outing but in recent culture of malls, all these jobs can be performed at the same time, under the same roof and that too with a pleasing experience.

2. Review of Literature

Preceding literature had identified several factors that affect consumer buying studies in organized retail sector such as age, income, gender, occupation and education, as these factors are affecting the chosen systematized formats (Mishra, 2007). The prospects of India was studied by several researchers (e.g. Arshad et al., 2007; Kaur & Singh, 2007; Ghosh et al., 2010) predicted that 47% of India's populace are under the age of 25 years which will further increase to 55% by 2015, while this newer generation vastly contribute to the retail sector growth. Similarly, developing middle class, increase in spending and large number of earning young customers also provides several opportunities for organized retail sector expansion (Dash et al., 2009; CII, 2008; Jham & Kiran, 2012).

Myers et al., (2008) predicted that younger clients seek atmosphere while older emphasizes on leisure and convenience. In terms of attributes of retailing, various factors like location, ambience, assortment, sale promotion structures and in-store services influence consumers' spending behaviour (Dalwadi et al., 2010; Thang et al., 2003). In specific, one shop stop concept was attractive to consumers due to expediency and time saving. Furthermore layout, ambience, display, self-service, value added services, technology based operations are the magnitudes with modern ambience found to influence the buying behaviour as opined by Jayaraman and Aggarwal (2015); Rajagopal (2007); Jain and Bagdare (2009). The changing retail structure with quality, large variety of products

and less travel time has positively concerned by the consumers (Gupta, 2004; Urbonavicius et al., 2005). The other major attributes are convenient services, marketing strategies, behaviour of sales personnel, product variety, and quality of service, price, and. Although the factors like retail setups and consumer demographics plays major role in purchasing decision, but consumer choice of specific retail format is highly influenced by type of retailers marketing strategies. For an instance the study Mittal and Mittal (2008) identified two set of

qualities such as shopping experience accompaniments (temperature, reputation, ambience) and loyalty drivers including sales promotion, price, recommendation/relationships as an important factor that needs to be considered during the process of marketing. In totaling, while designing retail processes Dalwadi et al., (2010) highlighted on the following factors that includes proximity, comfort and elegance, customer attention, free gifts and discounts, courteous staff members, speedy service and assurance.

Table 1: Chronological Chart of the Studies

Sr. No.	Year	Author	Finding / Outcome / Contribution
1	1958	Martineau	Image of a retail mall with psychological attributes
2	1968	Kunkel and Berry	Retail Store Image association with Specific store
3	1969	Lewis Alpert & Ronals Gatty	Brand based customer perception with product position
4	1972	Al Ries & Jack	Retail store positioning as a marketing strategy
5	1974	Oxenfeldt	Store image with emotional factors
6	1978	Maggard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position strategies in retailing • Location effects on positioning • Positioning as a promotional vehicle • Positioning thorough Social Accountability
7	1982	Dennis, H. Gensch	Store image influence on promotion, reputation and peer evaluation of the alternative and connoting the customer expectation
8	1982	David Aker and Gary Shansby	Store position as a segmentation decision
9	1982	David Aker and Gary Shansby	Store Positioning and its image
10	1982	Leonard Berry	Positioning of store with Loyalty
11	1987	Golden, Alabaum and Zimmer	Impression descriptors used by customers
12	1988	Zimmer	Store Image as a subjective and objective factors
13	1989	Marcel Corsrjens & Peter Doyole	Store Positioning and retailers target market with respect to differential benefits
14	1990	Subroto Sengupta	Brand image and store Loyalty
15	2000	Philip Kotler	Positioning as a promotional offer to occupy a unique place in the target market's perception
16	2007	Jones LL & Meghraj	Shopping Mall Positioning in context of Demographics, Psychographics and Income Level
17	2012	Sannapu and Singh	Malls with no clear positioning; Malls with distinctive positioning
18	2013	Johnson and Raveendran	Departmental Stores, Shopping Centers, Shopping Malls
19	2014	Barnes	Super-regional and regional malls; Community and neighborhood shopping centers; Other areas of high retail traffic
20	2014	Anselmsson	shopping centres - out-of town regional centres, in town regional centres, in-town sub-regional centre, in town neighbourhood -centre
21	2015	Rajagopal	Malls, Congestion of Markets, Traditional Shopping Centres

3. The Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study is study on consumers' buying behavior towards students of Gujarat state.

4. Research Methodology

The research methodology used in this study includes

- i. Literature review for classifying the gaps relating to positioning with specific reference to shopping behaviour
- ii. Identifying variables based on various literature and survey outcomes
- iii. Evolving tools for data collection
- iv. Data interpretation and analysis using suitable statistical techniques and tools

v. Draw an outcome of the analysis

The descriptive study was used to identify the positioning of malls and customer's perceptions of these malls through survey. Secondary data of this study is used from internet, e-resources, books, journals, magazines and reports.

6.1 Sampling Design

6.1.a Target Population

All major malls located within Gujarat having minimum existence of one year.

6.1.b Sampling Frame

Following are the selected malls visited to conduct survey for a study.

Table 2: Selected Shopping Malls of Gujarat for Study

Ahmedabad	Surat	Rajkot	Vadodara	Anand- Nadiad Region
Alpha One	VR Surat	Crystal Mall	Vadodra Central	D Mart Anand
Iscon Mega Mall	MARVELLA MALL	IsconProzone Mall Rajkot	Inorbit Mall	Reliance Fresh
Himalaya Mall	Regent Arcade	Rurban Organic Mall	Centre Square Mall	Aadhar
Grand Central Mall	Iscon Mall	Grand Central Mall	Reliance Mega	All Mart
Shree BalajiAgora Mall	Atlanta Shopping MAIL	Solitaire	Seven Seas Mall	D Mart Nadiad
Star Bazaar	City Light Shopping Center	--	Sharnam Fortune	INOX – Anand

For selection of the shopping mall for a survey, Cluster Sampling has been used. Selected Shopping mall for the study is shown in above Table 2. Respondents were Shoppers / Customers in the age group of 18-23. About 1050 customers

have been nominated for the study, out of which only 720 has been selected for analysis excluding outliers. Customers have been surveyed by 'Time location cluster sampling' technique.

6.1.c Sample Size

A	No. of Regions Selected for the Survey from Gujarat	07
B	No. of Shopping Malls selected from Each Region	05
C	No. of Customers Selected from Each Mall	30
	Total No. of Shoppers (A x B x C)	1050

5. Hypotheses

The study considered following hypotheses for the achievement of objectives:

H₁: There is a significant importance of customer loyalty of shoppers and attributes in the retail purchasing at mall

6. Analysis and Interpretation

Objective of the study was tested by imperiling the ratings of the shopping mall attributes (by respondents) to Factor Analysis based on the Principal Component Analysis (PCA) method through SPSS 12.0 version. Factor Analysis technique was

used in the research to sum up the variables by examining correlation between them, and to create an entirely new set of variables replacing the original one's i.e. factors summarizing the factual information into factors for prediction.

Items related to mall attributes (included in questionnaire) were identified (based on discussions with academicians, scholars and experts of retailing). To measure the questions on the scale, respondents were asked to rate the importance of mall attributes in mall selection on a 5 point Likert scale of importance, with 5 being Extremely Important where 1 being Extremely Unimportant. 20 shopping mall attributes were factor analyzed to produce several factors. Statistical significance was

set down (if not stated otherwise) at a level of 0.05 (for all analysis).

To test the suitability of Factor Analysis (for the research), the KMO score was found to be above .50 (.807) and the Bartlett's test was also noticed to be significant ($2 = 8315.399$, $df = 190$). Varimax Rotation Method was used for the purpose. Rotation converged in four iterations. Only those aspects were retained, which had latent roots or Eigen value more than 1, since these were considered significant. A total of 5 aspects

accounted for 80% of the total variance, much more than the anticipated level of 60% of the total variance.

The first aspect chosen for profiling was shopper's loyalty. To check whether a significant association exists between loyalty and mall attributes, Pearson Correlation Coefficient was applied. The result clearly showed a significant association (positive correlation) between shoppers' loyalty towards malls and their level of mall shopping motives (attributes). This means more the shopping motivation more would be shopping mall loyalty.

Table 3: Shoppers' Loyalty and Shopping Motives- Correlation Analysis

		Loyalty	Shopping Motives
Loyalty	Pearson Correlation	1	.058
	Sig. (2-tailed)	-	.292
	N	650	650
Shopping Motives	Pearson Correlation	.058	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.292	-
	N	650	650

7. Results and Findings

The result reflected as a significant association (positive correlation) between shoppers' loyalty towards malls and their level of mall shopping motives (attributes). Different shopping mall characteristics have different importance as perceived by

customers'. The hypothesis was tested by subjecting the ratings of the shopping mall attributes to Factor Analysis. The following factors emerged as a consequence of the PCA (Principal Component Analysis)

Table 4: Summary of Shopping Mall Factor Rankings

Rank*	Factor
I	Factor 2: For comparison of required product price and quality
II	Factor 5: Purchasing Household Products
III	Factor 3: For purchasing discounted products
IV	Factor 1: Overall convenience to get all things under one roof
V	Factor 4: For getting loyalty points

**Ranks based on Mean Scores*

Glances at the shopping mall attributes emerged from this study proved that the factors differ in terms of their composition and importance.

8. Limitations of the Study

The study is limited to the retail malls located in Gujarat State only.

9. Conclusion

The study indicates as there is a significant association (positive correlation) between shoppers' loyalty towards malls and their level of mall shopping motives (attributes).

In addition, this study discloses that product variety, price and discounts are important features in retailing preferred by majority of respondents. The study accomplishes that overall convenience / experience to get variety of products under one roof is an significant factor that helps to attain customer satisfaction. So, in retailing sector, it is necessary to focus on service and quality of the product.

Following are the outcome on customer attitude towards shopping malls in Gujarat.

- The study specifies that youths and adults are inclined by three major retailing attributes: (1) Product Variety (2) Service and (3) Pricing.
- Result indicates that student population is inclined by availability of Product Variety, Tracing Fashion Changes and Window-Shopping/Browsing.
- Shopping malls are a shopaholic's paradise in Gujarat. These shopping malls accommodate every taste, pocket and style. Also, they offer ample shopping opportunities to tourists who come here to spend their vacation including NRIs.
- From the study it is revealed that a majority of Gujarat population do prefer to shop at shopping malls as it is a convenient place to buy anything they want.

- Also customers are preferring shopping malls offering excellent parking facilities; create value for money, credit / debit card services, and so on.
- As a result, higher customer circulation is attracted towards shopping malls.

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