Customer Satisfaction Level Towards Shopping Malls

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ABSTRACT

Customer satisfaction plays a critical role in the success of shopping malls, particularly in today's highly competitive retail environment. This study explores the key factors influencing customer satisfaction levels in shopping malls and examines how these factors contribute to customers' overall shopping experience. Key determinants of satisfaction, including mall ambience, variety of stores, convenience, customer service, amenities, safety, and technology integration, are identified and discussed. The study highlights how these elements impact customers' likelihood to return, recommend the mall to others, and their overall loyalty to the mall. Descriptive statistics and non-parametric test like independent t-test and Anova were used. The internal consistency reliability of the measurement scales used to assess shopping mall customers' shopping motives was evaluated by calculating Cronbach's alpha values. By understanding the factors that drive customer satisfaction, mall developers and retailers can design more effective strategies to enhance the shopping experience, improve customer retention, and differentiate themselves from competitors. The research emphasizes the importance of continuously monitoring and improving customer satisfaction to ensure long-term success and competitiveness in the retail market.

Keywords: Customer Satisfaction & loyalty, shopping malls, Customer service, Shopping motives.

INTRODUCTION

Customer satisfaction in shopping malls is the overall experience and contentment that shoppers feel during their visit to purchase or for entertainment purposes. It is influenced by various factors, such as the mall's ambiance, customer service, product offerings, variety of stores, pricing, and the convenience of amenities. Shopping motivations have been a key focus in consumer behaviour research over the past decades (Wagner & Rudolph, 2010). While customers initially visit shopping malls to purchase products, they also view these visits as a form of entertainment that offers enjoyment and pleasure (Kim, Lee & Kim, 2011). The practice of shopping and spending leisure time at shopping malls is not only a reflection of customers' shopping habits and lifestyles, but also depends on the specific attributes and appealing features of the mall. These factors play a crucial role in influencing customers' decisions to visit a particular shopping mall (Hunneman et al., 2017). Loyal customers are built over the long term. Therefore, shopping centres should focus on developing lasting relationships with customers, ensuring their satisfaction, and converting satisfied customers into loyal ones Kursunluoglu, E. (2014). Moreover, customer satisfaction in shopping malls has become a key driver for increased foot traffic, repeat visits, and positive word-of-mouth recommendations. With the growing trend of e-

commerce, traditional shopping malls need to constantly innovate and adapt to customer needs to remain competitive.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To identify the various factors that drive customers to visit shopping malls, such as the desire for shopping, entertainment, social interaction, and leisure activities.

2. To determine how age & gender has an effect on customers' shopping habits, lifestyle choices, and repeated visits to malls contribute to their loyalty and satisfaction.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Customers go shopping on weekends to spend quality time with their families and unwind from the stresses of work. Furthermore, the items are inexpensive and frequently available for bulk purchase. Customers are drawn to deals and want to save money. The malls satisfy them by providing everything they need in one location, including movies, groceries, clothing, watches, cosmetics, and food to eat when they are tired, and they feel very calm when they visit the mall. It is a fun weekend destination for kids, teenagers, middle-aged people, and the elderly. As a result, age and frequency of mall visits both have an impact.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The study was carried out in chosen large-scale retail malls in Chennai. The customers of the selected shopping malls were the respondents for the study.

RESEARCH METHODOLGY

This study utilizes both **primary** and **secondary data** to understand customer satisfaction and behaviour at shopping malls in Chennai. A mixture of open and closed-ended questions was used to gather primary data from visitors to three prominent shopping malls in Chennai: **Escape Mall**, **Marina Mall**, and **VR Mall.** The study focuses on understanding general shopper attitudes towards malls, including factors like mall design, variety, and atmosphere. The sample was stratified by different age groups of shoppers to ensure diversity and representative data. Data was analysed using **Excel** and **SPSS** to identify patterns in shopper behaviour and satisfaction across different malls and age groups. With several shopping malls, department stores, and hypermarkets, the city's retail network is well established.

LIMITATIONS

- The study focuses only on three shopping malls in Chennai which may not represent the entire retail landscape of the city.
- The findings of the study might not be generalizable to malls in other regions of Chennai or other cities.
- The data is based on self-reported responses from customers, which can lead to biases.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kuruvilla, S. J. and Joshi, N. (2010) The primary objective of this study was to segment) consumers into heavy, medium, and low spending categories. The analysis revealed that most mall visitors are aged 25-45, highly educated, from double-income households, and belong to middle and upper-income groups.

S. S. Makgopa. (2018) The article examines the shift of shopping malls from retail spaces to social and recreational hubs. It identifies two key customer motivations: hedonic (pleasure-seeking) and utilitarian (task-oriented). The review highlights a gap in research on customer satisfaction and loyalty, particularly in developing economies like South Africa. Demographic factors such as age and gender significantly influence shopping behaviors. The study suggests that mall managers should tailor offerings to enhance customer experiences.

S. Atulkar. (2020) The study explores how emotional attachment influences perceived quality, value, and customer satisfaction, all of which contribute to brand loyalty. It emphasizes that strong emotional connections can decrease the likelihood of customers switching to competing brands. The findings suggest that retailers need to understand these emotional dynamics to effectively build brand loyalty. Overall, the literature highlights the critical role of emotional factors in consumer-brand relationships, offering a theoretical foundation for the study's empirical analysis.

6. Ashish Adholiya et al (2019). This study explores the factors influencing customers' intentions and behaviors when visiting shopping malls and making purchases. It emphasizes the combination of shopping habits and lifestyle choices, as well as how different attributes of shopping malls impact customers' decisions to visit specific malls. The primary objective of the research is to assess the significance of the relationship between shopping mall determinants and customer visits in Udaipur, Rajasthan.

7. Dabral, P et al (2024). The study emphasis on Cognitive Appraisal Theory (CAT) to explore how cognitive evaluations shape emotions, customer satisfaction, and behavioral intentions in food courts. It identifies key satisfaction determinants, including food quality, service quality, dining environment, authenticity, and price fairness. The SERVQUAL model is highlighted as a relevant framework for measuring service quality in food services. Emerging consumer behavior trends, particularly the importance of ambiance, food variety, and social interaction among younger consumers, are discussed.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The questionnaire was meticulously designed and administered in person to mall shoppers to ensure direct engagement and accurate data collection. It was structured into two distinct sections: the first section comprised eight well-formulated questions aimed at gathering comprehensive demographic and socio-economic details, including age, annual income, and other relevant characteristics. The second section contained 12 construct-specific questions designed to capture consumer perceptions and shopping behaviors. Responses were systematically recorded using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5), ensuring a nuanced understanding of participants' opinions.

To analyze the data effectively, various statistical tools were employed. Chi-Square tests were used to examine associations between categorical variables, while correlation analysis was conducted to identify relationships between different shopping preferences. Additionally, partial correlation analysis was applied to control for potential confounding variables, providing a more precise understanding of the direct relationships among key factors. To maintain precision and relevance, the study employed purposive sampling, strategically selecting respondents who fit the research criteria.

DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

Table 1: Demographic and Socio-economic factors of Consumers visiting Shopping malls.

Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Age of the respondents		
21-30 years	25	24.5%
31-40 years	46	45.2%
41-50 years	23	22.5%
Above 50 years	08	7.8%
Total	102	100%
Gender		
Male	52	50.9%
Female	50	49.1%
Frequency of visiting the shopping mall		
Visit twice or thrice in a week	18	17.6%
Visit weekly	17	16.7%
Visits monthly once	25	24.7%
Visits on festivals	21	20.55%
Visits rarely	21	20.5%
Annual income of the respondents		
Less than 25K	20	19.6%
26K-35K	31	30.3%
36K-45K	30	29.4%
46K-55K	24	24%
Above 55K	02	0.1%

Source: Primary data

Table 2: Reliability Test

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.965	.964	30

Result

The reliability test aims to assess the questionnaire's validity and ensure the internal consistency of its questions. This meets the required threshold value of **0.50**, indicating strong internal consistency. The **composite reliability value** was used to assess internal consistency, and with a result of **0.965**, it significantly exceeds the cutoff, confirming the reliability of the measurement. As a result, further analysis of the data gathered is possible.

Hypothesis Testing

H0(Null Hypothesis)- There is no significant relationship between gender and frequency of visiting shopping malls.

H1(Alternate Hypothesis)- There is significant relationship between gender and frequency of visiting shopping malls.

TABLE 3: Chi-Square Test

Gender * Visits Crosstabulation								
			Visits					
			visit twice or thrice in a week	visit weekly	visits monthly once	visits on festivals	visits rarely	Total
Gender	Male	Count	8	10	15	7	12	52
		% within Gender	15.4%	19.2%	28.8%	13.5%	23.1%	100.0%
	Female	Count	10	7	10	14	9	50
		% within Gender	20.0%	14.0%	20.0%	28.0%	18.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	18	17	25	21	21	102
		% within Gender	17.6%	16.7%	24.5%	20.6%	20.6%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.476[a]	4	.345
Likelihood Ratio	4.531	4	.339
Linear-by-Linear Association	.000	1	.989
N of Valid Cases	102		
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.33.			

INTERPRETATION

Since the p-value (.345) is greater than 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. This means there is no significant association between the gender and frequency of visiting to shopping malls. The null hypothesis(H0) is accepted and alternate hypothesis is rejected(H1). A higher Chi-Square value would indicate a stronger deviation from the expected values, suggesting an association but the value we got is (χ^2 = 4.476) which is low.

Table 4: Correlation

H0- There is no significant relationship between age and shopping motives.

H1- There is significant relationship between age and shopping motives.

Correlations		leisure_and_entertainment	socialize	convenient_shopping	variety_of_stores_and_brands	discounts_or_special_promotions
leisure_and_entertainment	Pearson Correlation	1	.324**	.248*	.147	.201*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001	.012	.141	.043
	N	102	102	102	102	102
socialize	Pearson Correlation	.324**	1	.154	.077	.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001		.121	.444	1.000
	N	102	102	102	102	102
convenient_shopping	Pearson Correlation	.248*	.154	1	.982**	.751**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.012	.121		.000	.000
	N	102	102	102	102	102
variety_of_stores_and_brands	Pearson Correlation	.147	.077	.982**	1	.754**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.141	.444	.000		.000
	N	102	102	102	102	102
discounts_or_special_promotions	Pearson Correlation	.201*	.000	.751**	.754**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.043	1.000	.000	.000	
	N	102	102	102	102	102
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).						
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).						

INTERPRETATION

1. **Leisure & Entertainment**

   - **Socializing (r = .324, p = .001)** → Moderate positive correlation (significant at **0.01 level**). People who enjoy leisure and entertainment tend to socialize more while shopping.
   - **Convenient Shopping (r = .248, p = .012)** → Weak positive correlation (significant at **0.05 level**). People who seek entertainment may also value convenience.
   - **Discounts & Promotions (r = .201, p = .043)** → Weak positive correlation (**0.05 level**). Those who value entertainment may be slightly more responsive to promotions.

2. **Socializing**

   - Only **Leisure & Entertainment (r = .324, p = .001)** has a significant correlation. Other factors show no strong relationship with socializing.

3. **Convenient Shopping**

   - **Variety of Stores & Brands (r = .982, p < .001)** → **Extremely strong positive correlation**. Those who seek convenience also look for a variety of store options.
   - **Discounts & Promotions (r = .751, p < .001)** → **Strong positive correlation**. Convenience seekers also appreciate promotions.

4. **Variety of Stores & Brands**

   - **Convenient Shopping (r = .982, p < .001)** → Almost identical to the previous insight—convenience and variety are nearly inseparable.
   - **Discounts & Promotions (r = .754, p < .001)** → Strong correlation, suggesting people who prefer a variety of stores also value discounts.

5. **Discounts & Promotions**

   - **Variety of Stores & Brands (r = .754, p < .001)** → Strong positive correlation.
   - **Convenient Shopping (r = .751, p < .001)** → Strong positive correlation.

Table 5: Partial correlation

Correlations							
Control Variables			leisure_and_entertainment	socialize	convenient_shopping	variety_of_stores_and_brands	discounts_or_special_promotions
AGE	leisure_and_entertainment	Correlation	1.000	.330	.264	.164	.208
		Significance (2-tailed)	.	.001	.008	.101	.037
		df	0	99	99	99	99
	socialize	Correlation	.330	1.000	.153	.075	.001
		Significance (2-tailed)	.001	.	.126	.455	.995
		df	99	0	99	99	99
	convenient_shopping	Correlation	.264	.153	1.000	.982	.751
		Significance (2-tailed)	.008	.126	.	.000	.000
		df	99	99	0	99	99
	variety_of_stores_and_brands	Correlation	.164	.075	.982	1.000	.755
		Significance (2-tailed)	.101	.455	.000	.	.000
		df	99	99	99	0	99
	discounts_or_special_promotions	Correlation	.208	.001	.751	.755	1.000
		Significance (2-tailed)	.037	.995	.000	.000	.
		df	99	99	99	99	0

INTERPRETATION

- **Age & Leisure and Entertainment (r = .330, p = .001):** A moderate positive correlation, meaning as age increases, the preference for leisure and entertainment also increases significantly.
- **Age & Socializing (r = .330, p = .001):** Also, a moderate positive correlation, suggesting older individuals are more likely to engage in socializing when shopping.
- **Age & Convenient Shopping (r = .264, p = .008):** A weak-to-moderate positive correlation, indicating older individuals slightly prefer convenient shopping options.
- **Age & Variety of Stores and Brands (r = .164, p = .101):** A weak correlation that is **not statistically significant**, suggesting no strong relationship.
- **Age & Discounts or Special Promotions (r = .208, p = .037):** A weak positive correlation that is statistically significant, indicating older individuals may be slightly more inclined toward discounts.
- **Convenient Shopping & Variety of Stores and Brands (r = .982, p < .001):** A **very strong** correlation, meaning people who value convenience also prefer a variety of stores.
- **Variety of Stores and Discounts (r = .755, p < .001):** A strong correlation, showing that people who value variety also appreciate discounts.

FINDINGS

- People who seek leisure and entertainment while shopping are more likely to engage in social interactions.
- Individuals who enjoy shopping for entertainment may also prioritize convenience.
- Shoppers interested in entertainment may be slightly more responsive to discounts.
- Socializing and entertainment go hand in hand while shopping.
- This suggests that socializing while shopping does not strongly relate to convenience, store variety, or discounts.
- Shoppers who prioritize convenience also value having a variety of store options.
- Convenience-driven shoppers are also highly responsive to promotions.
- Convenience and variety are nearly inseparable shopping preferences.
- Shoppers who prefer a variety of stores also tend to value promotional offers.

CONCLUSION

The study reveals key insights into shopping preferences. It highlights that convenient shopping, variety of stores, and discounts are closely linked, suggesting that shoppers who prioritize convenience also seek a diverse range of stores and promotions. Additionally, socializing is mainly connected with leisure and entertainment, indicating that those who enjoy shopping as a social activity do not necessarily prioritize convenience, variety, or discounts. Furthermore, entertainment-driven shoppers may have a slight preference for discounts but are less concerned with store variety, differentiating them from convenience-focused shoppers who seek both variety and promotions. These findings provide valuable insights for retailers aiming to enhance the shopping experience.

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