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Customer Attitude Towards Shopping Malls in Mumbai

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Abstract

Today, supermalls are replacing 'kirana' stores all over India. India's retail infrastructure is slowly undergoing a change with many hi-fi supermalls being constructed and operating in various cities. The mall concept has come to stay for good. The Indian consumer seems to be undergoing a shift in terms of personality, buying motives, interests, attitudes, beliefs and values when he or she is making a shift from 'kirana' stores towards shopping malls. In this context it assumes significance to study the buying behaviour of consumers in Mumbai especially with changes taking place in India's retail scenario.

The scope of this research is to assess the overall customer satisfaction, response of customers with regard to the availability and quality of products and services offered at shopping malls and the comfort level of the respondents towards shopping in the shopping malls in Mumbai. This study is restricted to 5 shopping malls in Mumbai. Factors influencing the customer to shop in the shopping malls of Mumbai such as socio-economic profiles, income, frequency of visit, period of relationship between the respondents and shopping malls, purpose of visit, occasion to visit shopping malls are some of the aspects studied in the present study.

Keywords: *shopping malls, retail, 'kirana' stores, customer, customer's attitude, Mumbai*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Today, super - malls are replacing 'kirana' stores all over India. Lifestyle marketing is a process of establishing relationships between products offered in the market and targeted lifestyle groups. Lifestyle is a distinctive mode of behaviour centered on activities, interests, opinions, attitudes and demographic characteristics distinguishing one segment of the population from another. A consumer's lifestyle is seen as the sum of his or her interactions with his or her environment.

Many consumers make their purchases from the local 'kirana' stores also known as India's mom and pop stores. But recently, India's retail infrastructure is slowly undergoing a change with many hi-fi super - malls being constructed and operating in various cities. The mall concept has come to stay for good. The Indian consumer seems to be undergoing a shift in terms of personality, buying motives, interests, attitudes, beliefs and values when he or she is making a shift from 'kirana' stores towards shopping malls. In this context, it assumes significance to study the buying behaviour of consumers in Mumbai especially with changes taking place in India's retail scenario.

2. CONCEPT AND IMPORTANCE OF A SHOPPING MALL

A shopping mall, shopping center, shopping arcade, shopping precinct or simply mall is one or more buildings forming a complex of shops representing merchandizers, with interconnecting walkways enabling visitors to easily walk from unit to unit, along with a parking area-a modern, indoor version of the traditional marketplace. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines a shopping mall 'as a large building or covered area that has many shops / stores, restaurants, etc. inside it'[1]. The shopping mall concept is a big hit with the sole purpose to provide everything under the sun under one roof or in one big complex. It also heralded in a new urbanization concept where everything was taken to the consumer in his comfort zone, suburbia. Customers state that malls, supermarkets and hypermarkets are well organized and that there are no quality issues, the range of choices and value-for-money deals make them happy, the ambience is good, there are better deals across categories with more choices and they get everything under one roof and they get good deals on bulk buying and at the same there is more variety. Organized retail chain and mall stores are mushrooming in all major cities and towns of India. Apart from private players in the organized retail chain business like 'Shoppers Stop', 'Spencers', 'Food Bazar', 'Hypercity', 'Inorbit', 'Big Bazar' and so on, major industrial houses like Tata, Birla, Reliance, Bharti, etc. have entered the retail business and have announced very ambitious future expansion plans. Multinational retailers are also coming to India to set up retail chains in collaboration with big Indian companies. Modern retail formats such as hypermarkets, superstores, discount stores, convenience stores are widely present in major cities of India[2].

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Pirakatheeswari (2010) - The Indian Retail sector is estimated to have a market size of about $180 billion, but the organized sector represents only 2% share of this market. Liberalization of the Indian economy has brought an opening for consumer goods and this has helped many MNC's to serve with a wide variety of choices to Indian consumers. Consumers have shifted their demands towards foreign brands like Pizza hut, Mc Donald's and so on. The internet has also been a tool for this revolution as Indian consumers are more accessible to the growing influences of domestic and foreign retail chains[3].

CII (2005) - In India the retail sector is the second largest employer after agriculture, although it is highly fragmented and predominantly consists of small independent, owner – managed shops. There are over 12 million retail outlets in India, and organized retail trade is worth about Rs.12,90,000 crores (September,2003). The country is witnessing a period of boom in retail trade, mainly on account of a gradual increase in the disposable incomes of the middle and upper-middle class households. More and more corporate houses including large real estate companies are coming into the retail business, directly or indirectly, in the form of mall and shopping center builders and managers. New formats like super - markets and large discount and departmental stores have started influencing the traditional looks of bookstores, furnishing stores and chemist shops. The retail revolution, apart from bringing in sweeping, positive changes in the quality of life in the metros and bigger towns, is also bringing in slow changes in lifestyle in the smaller towns of India. Increase in literacy, exposure to media, greater availability and penetration of a variety of consumer goods into the interiors of the country, have all resulted in narrowing down the spending differences between the consumers of larger metros and those of smaller towns[4].

Balamurugan (2011) - The retail sector in India can expect to witness a second big revolution in the not too distant future, in spite of setback faced due to the current economic slowdown. New market equilibrium will be achieved where both organized and unorganized retailers will be able to thrive. The market size too is expanding, giving enough scope for all. At the same time, organized retailing is expected to generate a large number of employment opportunities across its entire supply chain activities like procurement, logistics, preservation, repacking, merchandising, front-end sales, security, according, advertising and marketing. Specific advantages offered by the organized retail together with changing consumer behaviour and supporting environmental factors are likely to make a strong positive impact on the organized retail sector. Retailers need to analyze the forces that are affecting retail transformations. The success of new retail formats will depend heavily on customer's acceptance.

Panchanatham and Gnanaguru (2008) - Retailing is interlinking the individual consumer with the manufacturing and distribution chain. Retailing is highly consumer driven and the customers are being exposed to new retail formats frequently. If well planned and organised, the retail business would ensure that the consumers will benefit not only by way of quality products but also in prices due to the bulk buying capacity of big retailers[6].

Kearney (2006) - India is more attractive than ever to global retailers. India's economic growth, forecasted at 8 percent GDP in 2006, continues to support the retail industry. The estimated $350 billion retail market is expected to grow 13 percent and the top five retailers account for less than 2 percent of the modern retail market. And with one billion people, it is the second largest population in the world. There are also fundamental changes underway in India. In early 2006, the government announced that it would allow foreign companies to own up to 51 percent of a single-brand retail company[7].

Sengupta Anirban (2008) Emergence of modern retail in India is not just a result of increasing consumer buying power – manufacturers and unorganized retailers also have an important role to play in this process at the macro-level. At the micro-level, the trigger came from diverse angles like entrepreneurial desire to provide better service to consumers, social desire to provide relief to the masses in the form of lower prices, desire to capitalize on emerging business opportunities being provided by the changing business environment, etc[8].

Srivastava (2008) - The findings presented show that malls in 2006 are more developed in the North and West part of India. Food, groceries and apparel purchase by customers contributed to 52 percent. On an average 75 percent of customers spend about 1-3 hours in the mall. Malls with multiplexes such as cinema theatres, food courts, and play places for children are becoming the center for family outings. Small retailers have improved their service to cater to Indian consumers. Credit limits and home service are helping them to hold on to their customers. Retailing focus is changing towards satisfying the different hierarchy of needs of customers[9].

Ernst & Young's report– 'The New Market Shehers: Tapping Potential beyond the Metros' (2010) – throws light on the growing clout of the key urban towns in India. The key findings of the report indicate retail presence in the **Key Urban Towns** (KUTs) and the **Rest Of Urban India** (ROUI) through organized retail chains and malls has increased considerably over a two-year period; the percentage growth in the number of malls in the KUT (55%) was more than twice that of the metros (24%)[10].

Table-1: REACH OF MALLS IN INDIAN CITIES

CITY	POPULATION (IN '000)	NUMBER OF MALLS	NUMBER OF MALLS PER '000
Ahmedabad	**5342**	**14**	**0.0026**
Amritsar	**1452**	**10**	**0.0069**
Bengaluru	**6763**	**26**	**0.0038**
Bhopal	**1784**	**02**	**0.0011**
Chandigarh	**955**	**19**	**0.0199**
Chennai	**4498**	**16**	**0.0036**
Cochin	**1573**	**02**	**0.0013**
Coimbatore	**3396**	**02**	**0.0006**
Delhi	**16065**	**42**	**0.0026**
Hyderabad	**4248**	**15**	**0.0035**
Indore	**2071**	**04**	**0.0019**
Jaipur	**3159**	**00**	**0.0032**
Jamshedpur	**1239**	**00**	**0.0000**
Kanpur	**3319**	**05**	**0.0015**
Kolkota	**4701**	**18**	**0.0038**
Lucknow	**2747**	**05**	**0.0018**
Ludhiana	**1962**	**15**	**0.0076**
Madurai	**1545**	**01**	**0.0006**
Mumbai	**13071**	**77**	**0.0059**[10]
Nagpur	**2937**	**04**	**0.0014**
Nasik	**2283**	**03**	**0.0013**
Patna	**2331**	**00**	**00**

Pune	**5090**	**40**	**0.0079**
Surat	**3961**	**04**	**0.0010**
Thiruvananthapuram	**1172**	**03**	**0.0026**
Vadodara	**1833**	**07**	**0.0038**
Vijaywada	**1360**	**02**	**0.0015**
Vishakapatnam	**1665**	**01**	**0.0006**

Source: The Market Skyline of India 2008, Indicus Analytics

4. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The lifestyle of the Indian consumer pervades various aspects of his/her life and varies according to the sociologically relevant variables. Family incomes are seeing a jump in recent times resulting in the consumer spending more and a change in the lifestyle of the Indian consumer is of great interest to society at large, manufacturing and consumer companies, advertisers, super - mall owners, economists, census, researchers and so on. This study could also be used in the context of positioning new products, repositioning an old/existing product, developing new product concepts and creating promotional strategies. The objective of this research is to study the metamorphosis in the life of the Indian consumer after the advent of malls in the country and how the shift in his/her buying behavior has affected sales of consumer products. It will help to analyze the consumer's attitude towards super - malls, attitudes towards various product classes sold in malls, products and services consumed, activities, interests and opinions of different consumers, value systems and personality traits as an increasing number of urban consumers are beginning to see themselves in a more modern context.

5. THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.To know the attitude of customers towards shopping malls; 2. To understand the customer purchase pattern; 3. To identify the level of satisfaction among customers; 4. To determine how customers rate product quality; 5. To know the value for money that customers gain by shopping in shopping malls; and 6. To know the future expectation of customers.

6. TESTING OF HYPOTHESES

The study is based on the formulation of the following null hypotheses.

H_{01}: The socio - economic profiles of the customers do influence their satisfaction with respect to shopping in the shopping malls in Mumbai.

H_{02}: There is a significant difference in the acceptance levels by the customers with respect to the income category to which they belong to and propensity to shop in shopping malls in Mumbai.

H_{03}: There is a significant relationship with respect to the comfort level of the respondents towards shopping in the shopping malls in Mumbai.

H_{04}: The response of customers with regard to the availability and quality of products and services offered at shopping malls does influence the customer's acceptance level towards shopping in the shopping malls in Mumbai.

H_{05}: The attitude of customers towards shopping malls and overall customer satisfaction is positive.

7. Scope Of The Study

The scope of the study is to assess the overall customer satisfaction, response of customers with regard to the availability and quality of products and services offered at shopping malls and the comfort level of the respondents towards shopping in the shopping malls in Mumbai.

This study is restricted to 5 shopping malls in Mumbai. Factors influencing the customer to shop in the shopping malls of Mumbai such as socio - economic profiles, income, frequency of visit, period of relationship between the respondents and shopping malls, purpose of visit, occasion to visit shopping malls are some of the aspects studied in the present study.

8. Sampling Design

This study is confined to the customers visiting the select shopping malls in Mumbai. There are 77 shopping malls in Mumbai[10] and these shopping malls are considered the universe of the study. In the present study, the sampling involves two stages. In the first stage, out of 77 shopping malls, 5 shopping malls are selected by using simple random sampling technique. In the second stage, by adopting quota sampling, a total of 100 respondents visiting each of the 5 shopping malls were selected outside the shopping malls. The sampling details are given in the following table.

Table-2: Sampling Distribution

Name of the Shopping Malls	No. of Samples
Big Bazar	100
D Mart	100
Hypercity	100
Reliance	100
Star Bazar	100
Total	500

9. Tools For Data Collection

This study is empirical in nature based on survey method. Research involves getting primary and secondary data. As an essential part of the study, the primary data (first-hand information for this study) were collected from 500 customers with the help of a questionnaire from the respondents belonging to different age groups enabling know their purchase behavior in shopping malls. A pilot study was conducted with 25 customers. In the light of the experience gained from the pilot study, few changes were incorporated in the revised questionnaire. The sample group includes children, youth, housewives, financially independent ladies, working men and retired persons. The contact method was personal interview.

Secondary data was collected from journals, reports, books, records, magazines and internet.

10. Framework Of Analysis

In order to study the overall customer satisfaction, (response of customers with regard to the availability and quality of products and services offered at shopping malls in Mumbai, the comfort level of the respondents towards shopping in the shopping malls in Mumbai and factors influencing the customer to shop in the shopping malls of Mumbai such as socio - economic profiles, income, frequency of visit, period of relationship between the respondents and shopping malls, purpose of visit, occasion to visit shopping malls and so on); statistical tools and percentage analysis are employed.

11. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study has the following limitations:

The study of customer attitude towards shopping malls in Mumbai is a very vast subject consisting of a number of dimensions. Only a few dimensions / aspects were studied in this study.

Only 500 customers visiting the 5 shopping malls in Mumbai have been selected and studied. Hence, the conclusion drawn is specific and cannot be generalized.

12. FINDINGS

In order to collect information about "customer attitude towards shopping malls in Mumbai" 500 questionnaires were distributed to consumers. The responses are tabulated, analyzed and explained below:

12.1. Frequency of Visit

Particulars	**Number of Respondents**	**Percentage %**
ALWAYS	250	50
OFTEN	150	30
SOMETIMES	100	20
NEVER	0	0
TOTAL	500	100

The table above indicates the significance of shopping malls in a city like Mumbai by a majority of the sample favoring 'always' and none for 'never'. 50% of the sample surveyed frequently visit shopping malls.

12.2 Monthly Income

Particulars	Number of Respondents	Percentage %
BELOW RS 20,000	70	14
RS 20,000 – RS 30,000	100	20
RS 30,000 – RS 40,000	180	36
RS 40,000 AND ABOVE	150	30
TOTAL	500	100

The above mentioned data helps us identify the income category (per month) to which the respondents belong. While the majority of the respondents belongs to the higher income group of Rs 30,000 – Rs 40, 000 (36%) and Rs 40,000 AND ABOVE (30%) per month the respondents belonging to lower income group is as low as 14%. This clearly shows that the propensity to visit a shopping mall is higher in cases of the higher income group.

12. 3. Quality of products offered at shopping malls:

Particulars	Number of Respondents	Percentage %
EXCELLENT	250	50
GOOD	100	20

SATISFACTORY	100	20
NOT SATISFACTORY	50	10
TOTAL	500	100

The respondents were asked to rate the quality of products available at shopping malls. As per the responses obtained, the products sold at shopping malls seem to have an edge over 'kirana' shops and other local pop and mom stores / vendors with regard to quality. While 50% of the respondents stated that the quality of products offered at shopping malls is excellent, only as low as 10% of respondents have reported a 'not satisfactory' response towards shopping malls.

12.4. Services offered:

Particulars	Number of Respondents	Percentage %
EXCELLENT	200	40
GOOD	100	20
SATISFACTORY	150	30
NOT SATISFACTORY	50	10
TOTAL	500	100

Respondents have shown a positive response with regard to the quality of services offered at shopping malls. As high as 40% of the respondents feel that the services of shopping malls are "excellent" while 10% of the respondents rate the services as "good" , 15% respondents rate as "satisfactory" and only 10% tag the services as "non satisfactory".

12.5. Parking facility:

Particulars	Number of Respondents	Percentage %
EXCELLENT	300	60
GOOD	100	20
SATISFACTORY	50	10
POOR	50	10
TOTAL	500	100

Shopping malls are considered to be vehicle friendly as they provide excellent parking facilities. Therefore, a majority (60%) of the sample have a positive response about the parking facilities offered at shopping malls. Only as low as 5% find the parking facility to be "poor" at shopping malls.

12.6. Association Shopping Malls:

Particulars	Number of Respondents	Percentage %
0 – 1 YEAR	50	10
1 – 3 YEARS	200	40
3 – 5 YEARS	150	30
MORE THAN 5 YEARS	100	20
TOTAL	500	100

The above table shows the period of the relationship between the respondents and shopping malls. While 10% of respondents are associated with shopping malls since the past one year, 40% of the respondents are associated from last 1 – 3 years, 30% of the respondents are associated since past 3 – 5 years and 20% of the respondents are associated with shopping malls for more than 5 years. The majority of the respondent's association with shopping malls is below 5 years because a majority of the shopping malls and thus mall culture came to existence in Mumbai only in the past five years.

12.7. Availability of Products:

Particulars	Number of Respondents	Percentage %
YES	450	90
NO	50	10
TOTAL	500	100

When asked about the availability of products in shopping malls, 90% of the respondents are satisfied and remaining 10% of the respondents are dissatisfied. Thus, the availability of a wide range and a variety of products is a major attraction of shopping malls.

12.8. Comfort:

Particulars	Number of Respondents	Percentage %
YES	400	80
NO	100	20
TOTAL	500	100

As high as 80% of the respondents are comfortable with shopping at the shopping malls as they serve as a one stop shop. The remaining 20% seem tradition bound who prefer shopping at traditional 'kirana' stores.

12.9. Purpose of Visit:

Particulars	Number of Respondents	Percentage %
FOOD AND BEVERAGES	300	60
ENTERTAINMENT	150	30
LIFESTYLE PRODUCTS	40	08
DURABLES	10	02
OTHERS	00	00
TOTAL	500	100

The above data shows that food and beverages (60%) attract consumers the most towards shopping malls, especially women. Entertainment (30%) is next as it is most favored by mostly the youth and children. It is only a very small percentage of consumers who visit shopping malls for the durables (2%), lifestyle products (8%) and other goods.

12.10. Mode of Payment:

Particulars	Number of Respondents	Percentage %
DEBIT / CREDIT CARD	350	70
CASH	150	30
TOTAL	500	100

Debit / Credit cards are customer friendly especially when it comes to shopping. Therefore, 70% of the sample respondents prefer payments by mode of Debit / Credit card rather than cash. Unlike most local vendors, shopping malls offer debit / credit card facilities to the consumer which makes shopping at shopping malls more attractive and convenient to shop.

12.11. Value for Money:

Particulars	Number of Respondents	Percentage %
EXCELLENT	325	65
GOOD	100	20
SATISFACTORY	50	10
POOR	25	05
TOTAL	500	100

Most consumers (65%) are of the opinion that shopping malls give excellent value for money. This is because most products are sold directly by the manufacturers to the ultimate customers through their own retail outlets which thereby reduce the cost incurred on middlemen and / or shopping malls pass a percentage of the profits to customers by way of discounts and schemes to ensure customer loyalty.

12.12. Reason for Buying from Shopping Malls:

Particulars	Number of Respondents	Percentage %
NEARNESS TO HOUSE AND LOCALITY	300	60
GOOD RANGE AVAILABILITY	100	20
FRIENDLY SHOPPING ENVIRONMENT	50	10
GOOD AMBIENCE	50	10
TOTAL	500	100

60% of respondents favor 'near to the house' which makes shopping malls more convenient and attractive for the shoppers. Apart from that, few consumers are also attracted to other features of shopping malls like good range availability (20%), friendly shopping environment (10%) and good ambience (10%).

12.13. Occasion to Visit Shopping Malls:

Particulars	Number of Respondents	Percentage %
FESTIVALS	200	40
WEEKENDS	100	20
OFFER TIME	150	30
NO SPECIFIC REASON	50	10
TOTAL	500	100

It is during the festive season (40%) that the majority of the respondents visit shopping malls to buy clothes, sweets and so on. Apart from that, during offer time to avail of discounts (30%) and weekends (20%) consumers visit shopping malls for purchasing routine items and for socializing. Very small percentages (10%) of the respondents come to the malls to shop with no specific reason.

12.14. Consumer Overall Satisfaction:

Particulars	Number of Respondents	Percentage %
VERY SATISFIED	200	40
SATISFIED	150	30
NEUTRAL	100	20
DISSATISFIED	50	10
TOTAL	500	100

Around 40% of the respondents are overall very satisfied with the shopping malls, 20% indicate ordinary satisfaction towards shopping malls while 20% of the respondents preferred to be neutral – they could not determine whether they were satisfied or not and lastly only 10% were dissatisfied and these 10% are mainly housewives who are tradition bound.

13. CONCLUSION

The purpose of the research is to analyze the "customer attitude towards shopping malls in Mumbai" which is found to be positive.

1) Today multi storey shopping malls are a shopaholic's paradise in Mumbai. These shopping malls accommodate every taste, pocket and style. Also, the city of Mumbai offers ample shopping opportunities to tourists who come here to spend their vacation.
2) From the study it is revealed that a majority of 'Mumbaikars' do prefer to shop at shopping malls as it is a convenient place to buy anything they desire. Most respondents expressed that the shopping malls are just not a place to shop due to its constant availability, but has also created an ideal environment for social interaction for people of all ages.
3) Also shopping malls offer excellent parking facilities, create value for money, credit / debit card facilities, and so on. As a result, higher customer traffic is attracted towards shopping malls. All thanks to shopping malls for bringing about an overall development in Mumbai.

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