

A STUDY ON ATTITUDE AND PERCEPTION OF CUSTOMERS TOWARDS SHOPPING MALLS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CHENNAI CITY

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Abstract

As traders moved into more spacious shops in the early 19th century, high streets developed, but wealthier people (who could afford to travel to city centers for pleasure) went in search of shelters from rain, so shopping arcades were developed. With the introduction of facilities like escalators in shopping arcades, the stress of human kind has reduced and with the rise of automobiles these shopping arcades evolved into shopping malls. The aim of the study is to find out the attitude and perception of customers towards shopping malls. The sample consists of people living in Chennai city. The data has been collected through structured questionnaire and were subjected to descriptive analysis. From the study it is clear that most of the customers are stratified with the shopping from malls. The result shows that the price, quality, availability and durability of the products play an important role in the purchasing behavior.

Key Words: *Attitude and perception, Customers Shopping, Chennai city.*

Introduction

United States was the first nation to introduce Shopping Malls in the suburbs. The people began to move with their cars in United States, this induced the retailers to think on fully enclosed, climate controlled malls in 1956. The climate was controlled using air coolers that time and the open air malls (strip malls) also became popular. Today, the lifestyle of people has been changed a lot. For the present generation of consumers, the meaning of shopping also has changed. They don't like to search for their product throughout the unorganized retail street. A shopping mall is one or more building form a complex of shops instead of merchandisers; with interconnect walkway enabling visitors in the direction of walk from item. Further establishment including movie theaters and restaurants are also repeatedly integrated. In India the term shopping mall generally applies to facilities that by and large has large parking lots of major inter change arterials and have few strider acquaintances to surrounding areas. The shopping malls, which have earlier concentrated their operations only in metropolitan cities, are extending their reach to the semi urban cities. The investment and growth in malls are primarily driven by the changes in the lifestyle of consumers and transition in retailing from unorganized to organized formats.

Review of Literature

(Bawa et al., 2019) - As mentioned previously, for most customers, malls take part in a major role in their standard of living. The customer's choice of retailing formats is primarily governed by the variety and services offered.

Dholakia (2011) views the rationale for shopping is making physical visits to a shopping site and is considered as a household task as well as a form of recreation, relaxation and entertainment.

According to Punnathara. C. J (2011) Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the Indian retail sector has changed the shopping experience of consumers. The trend in increasing numbers of Shopping Malls in India results in setting up of extravagant retail outlets and international brands to flatter local customers. The author suggests that going for Shopping Malls these days are more like family outings where we can purchase all needs of the entire family.

According to Sannith (2012) The mall developers have invested in Tamil Nadu in cities like Coimbatore, Madurai and Trichy with very few options for entertainment to the customers. The author states that in the coming years these cities could be competing with Chennai in its mall culture. The above statement is from his article “It’s a mall world” which has studied the recent rise in the number of Shopping Malls and organised retail establishments in tier – two cities like Coimbatore, Madurai and Trichy in the state of Tamil Nadu. The malls thus have opened a new division in the growth of trade in these cities.

Sannith (2010) in his article on growing shopping malls and behavior of urban shoppers examines the impact of growing congestion of shopping in malls in city areas. The study analyses the psychosomatic attribute of the patrons towards pleasant appearance of shopping malls and concentration of shopping. The study reveals that the atmosphere of shopping malls, assortment of stores, ads, recreation and comparative economic gains within the malls attract higher client traffic to the shopping malls.

Chennai is the trade hub of Tamil Nadu. The city has a strong mercantile aspect. Persians and the Europeans in ancient times have created trade connections with Chennai. As time progressed, the city developed a lot and now it is one of the fastest growing cities in Tamil Nadu. These aspects made me to select Chennai city for the study. The study entitled attitude and perception of customers towards shopping malls with special reference to Chennai city mainly focus on selected people from the Chennai city to understand the attitude and perception of customers towards shopping malls.

Objectives of the study

1. To know the attitude and perception of customers towards the shopping malls in Chennai city.
2. To understand the factor influencing the mall shopper’s buying behavior.
3. To understand the level of customer satisfaction towards shopping malls.

Methodology

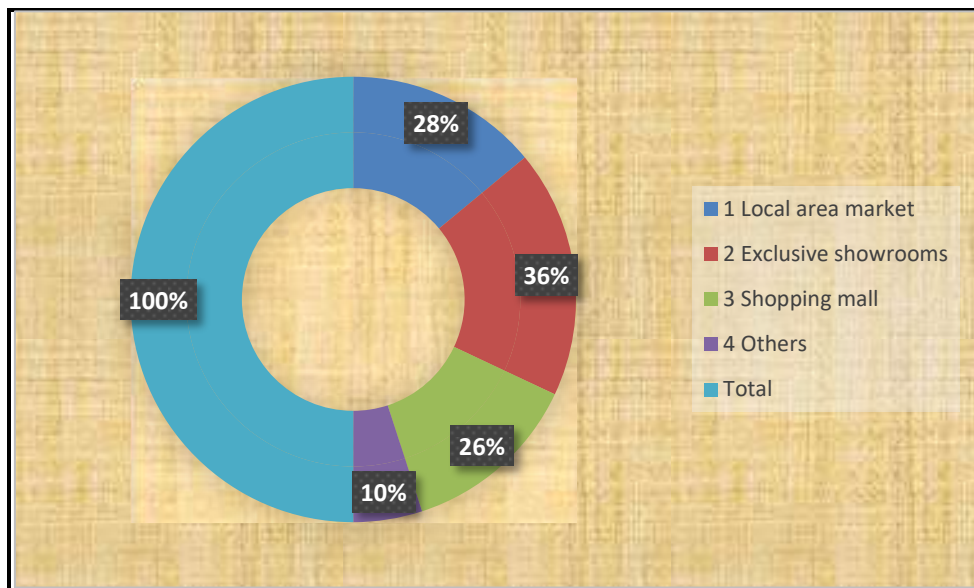
Research methodology is a systematic way to solve the problem. Convenient sampling method is used for this study. Descriptive research is followed. Descriptive research is a fact in finding investigation. The study is conducted by taking 50 people. Mainly primary data is used for the study. For this well- structured questionnaire is used. Analysis of data is made using various tools like Charts, Column chart, Pie diagram, Line diagram etc.

Results and discussion

Table-1. Place of purchase of respondents

Sl. No.	Place of Purchase	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Local area market	14	28
2	Exclusive showrooms	18	36
3	Shopping mall	13	26
4	Others	5	10
Total		50	100

Fig. 1 Place of purchase of respondents



The place of purchase of respondents is given in Table 1 & Fig 1. From the results it is clear that, 36% of the respondents do shopping of clothes and household items from exclusive showrooms. 28% of the respondents do shopping from local area markets and 26% of them do shopping from shopping malls.

Table-2. Frequency of purchase from shopping malls

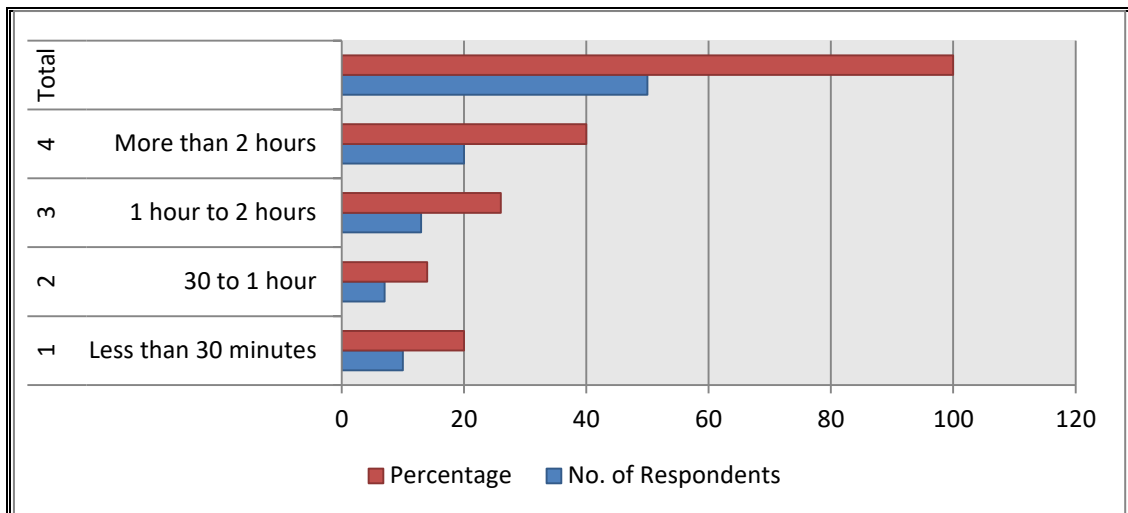
	Purchase Frequency	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Once in a week	1	2
2	Once in every 2 weeks	5	10
3	Once in a month	10	20
4	Rarely	34	68
Total		50	100

The frequency of purchase from shopping malls is given in Table-2. The results indicate that out of 50 respondents, majority of them ie.68% purchase rarely from the shopping malls, 20% of them purchase once in a month and 10% of them purchase once in every 2 weeks and only 2% of them make their purchases once in a week.

Table-3. Time spend by the respondents in shopping malls

Sl. No.	Time Spending	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Less than 30 minutes	10	20
2	30 minutes to 1 hour	7	14
3	1 hour to 2 hours	13	26
4	More than 2 hours	20	40
Total		50	100

Fig.2 Percentage of time spend by the respondents in shopping malls



The time spend by the respondents in shopping malls is given in Table-3 and Fig 2. The results show that majority of the respondents i.e. 40% spends more than 2 hours in shopping malls, 26% spends 1-2 hours in the shopping malls, 14% spends 30 minutes to 1 hour in shopping malls and 20% spends less than 30 minutes in shopping malls.

Table-4. Attitude of respondents towards price of mall product

Sl. No.	Attitude of Price	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	High price	42	84
2	Less price	0	0
3	Average price	8	16
Total		50	100

The attitude of respondents towards price of mall product is shown in Table-4. The results indicate that majority of respondents i.e. 84% opined that price of mall products is very high when compared to the local markets and none of them opined that mall products are less priced.

Table-5. The most influencing factors in shopping malls

Sl. No.	Influencing Factor	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Offer	4	8
2	Quality	16	32
3	Durability	10	20
4	Others	20	40
Total		50	100

The most influencing factors in shopping malls are given in Table-5. From the results it is clear that, out of 50 respondents, 32% of them are influenced by quality of mall products, 20% of them are influenced by durability and only 8% are influenced by the offer elements.

Table-6. Respondent’s opinion about quality of mall products

Sl. No.	Quality of Products	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	35	70
2	Agree	10	20
3	Disagree	5	10
Total		50	100

Respondent’s opinion about quality of mall products is given in Table 6. The result indicates that 70% respondents strongly agree that superior quality products are available in shopping mall, 20% of them agree, but 10% of them disagree with the quality of the products.

Table-7. The level of satisfaction of respondents

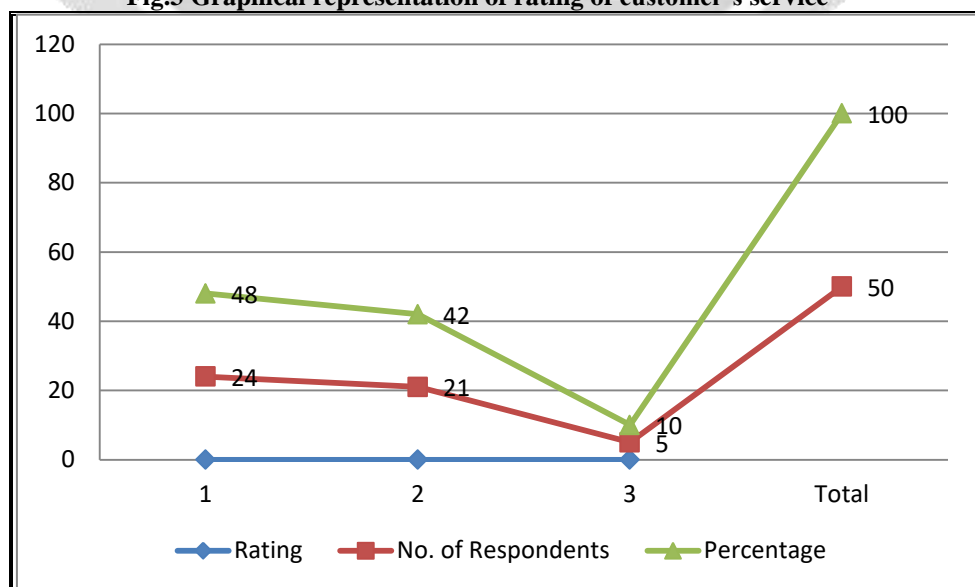
Sl. No.	Satisfaction	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Highly satisfied	31	62
2	Satisfied	10	20
3	Not satisfied	9	18
Total		50	100

The level of satisfaction of respondents is given in Table-7. The result shows that 62% of respondents are highly satisfied about overall experience at shopping malls, 20% of them are satisfied, but 18% respondents are not satisfied.

Table-8. Rating of customer’s service

Sl. No.	Rating	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Low	24	48
2	Average	21	42
3	High	5	10
Total		50	100

Fig.3 Graphical representation of rating of customer’s service



Rating of customer's service is given in Table-8 and Fig 3. It reveals that 48% respondents rated very low to the service from shopping malls, 42% of them rated average to the service from shopping malls and 10% highly rated to the service from shopping malls.

Findings of the study

1. It is found that most of the respondents purchase from exclusive showrooms - only 26% of respondents purchase from shopping malls.
2. Most of the respondents, ie.68% purchase very rarely from shopping malls.
3. 40% of the respondents spend more than 2 hours in a shopping mall.
4. Quality is the most influencing factor, which prompts customers to buy mall products.
5. Most of the respondents, ie.62% are satisfied with purchasing from shopping malls.
6. 48% of the respondents rated very low for service received from shopping malls.

Conclusion

For the study entitled attitude and perception of customers towards shopping mall with special reference to Chennai city, data are collected directly from 50 consumers. Quality is the most influencing factor which prompts maximum customers to purchase from shopping malls. From the study it is clear that most of the customers are satisfied in shopping from malls. The result shows that the price, quality, availability and durability of the products play an important role in the purchasing procedure. The raising of price of mall product is one of the main factors that may pull back an average income group. The research findings presented in this paper can provide in-depth understanding about the variables that affect the consumer's attitude towards shopping mall.

Suggestion for further research

1. While looking Chennai context large number of populations belongs to middle income category, who can't afford the luxurious brands. It should ensure affordability of price.
2. Mall need to provide various offers to attract customers into mall.
3. Mall need to maintain the facilities provided by them; this will encourage the expectation of customers.
4. The malls need to improve customer services in order to attract the customers.

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