"Customer Shopping Experience with Indian Shopping Malls: With Special Reference to Ahmedabad City of Gujarat State"

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ABSTRACT

The word 'retail' is derived from the French word 'retailer', meaning to 'cut a piece off' or 'to break bulk'. In simple terms it implies a first-hand transaction with the customer. Retailing involves direct interface with the customer and the co-ordination of business activities from end to end. Historical Indian retail market consisted of weekly markets, village fairs and meals and the 19th century gave birth to the retail outlets which took the form of convenience stores, Mom and Pop stores/ kirana stores. The scope of the present study is to keep within the limit of organized retail sectors and especially to malls. The present study is undertaken to understand the behavior of consumers visiting the new generation retail outlets. The current study has been done to understand the overall shopping experience of the customers in Ahmedabad city. The research was carried out within the Ahmedabad city of Gujarat state and respondents were selected through convenient sampling techniques. The overall purpose of this study is to know the shopping experience with different identified factors. This study will be helpful to future research scholars as well as academicians.

Keywords: *Indian Retail Sector, Shopping experience, Factors of Shopping and Current Scenario.*

INTRODUCTION

The word 'retail' is derived from the French word 'retailer', meaning to 'cut a piece off' or 'to break bulk'. In simple terms it implies a first-hand transaction with the customer. Retailing involves direct interface with the customer and the co ordination of business activities from end to end. Historical Indian retail market consisted of weekly markets, village fairs and meals and the 19th century gave birth to the retail outlets which took the form of convenience stores, Mom and Pop stores/ kirana stores.

This helped the consumers on to stick to a particular store for their day to day requirements and also avail the credit purchasing facility. And in the 1980's people have seen the new formats like supermarket, departmental stores and discount stores entering into the Indian retail space. In less than a decade hypermarkets have gained all the applause of the retail market and stood above all the other formats by bringing in the concept of "one stop shopping." This stood as an opening door for the new generation of the retail industry. And very soon the malls became the trend setters in the new millennium. This has coined the term of 'shop entrainment' (shopping and entertainment) which can be attributed to the changing life styles of the people.

Indian grocers were perhaps among the first in the world to acquire professional retailing skills. There is the old story of a good retail grocer and the bad retail grocer in India.Once

upon a time there were two grocers. One was perceived to be good and the other was considered bad. The good one always used to weigh his cereals, pulses, grams, etc. in such a way that if had to weight a kilogram he would initially place in the weighing balance produce less than a kilogram and then keep adding to it until it reached the required weighed. The bad retailer, on the other hand, always rather unconsciously placed much more and then kept removing stuff from the scales until it weighed a kilogram.

The current study has been done to understand the overall shopping experience of the customers in Ahmedabad city. The research was carried out within the ahmedabad city of Gujarat state and respondents were selected through convenient sampling techniques. The overall purpose of this study is to know the shopping experience with different identified factors. This study will be helpful to future research scholars as well as academicians.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Walsh and Henning-Thurau (2001) observed that there is a lack of previous relevant consumer research in Germany, together with the need to test the generalizability of consumer decision making style in different countries and with non-student samples, prompted and investigation of German shoppers. The original U.S eight factors model could not be confirmed completely, but support was found for six factors. Brand Consciousness, perfectionism, and Novelty/Hedonism, and Confused by over choice. Impulsiveness, and Novelty –Fashion Consciousness. Variety seeking was novel to Germany and replaced brand loyalty and price- value consciousness factors found in previous countries.

Traill (2006) analysed the rapid spread of supermarkets in developing and middle-income countries and forecasted its continuations. In this article, the level of supermarket penetration is model quantitatively on a cross section of 42 countries for which data could be obtained, representing all stages of developments. This study has founded that: GDP, per capital incomes distributions, urbanizations, female labour participations and openness to inward foreign investments are all significant explicators.

Bhat and Bownder (2001) analysed the experience of interweaving brand reputation, organisational and technological innovations. The authors observed that the effective management of innovation involves creatively managing the process of creative destructions. For a product like a watch, capturing market share requires the careful enmeshing of brand reputations and innovations. Positioning itself uniquely through a comprehensive visioning exercise. Titan became a market leader. Titan industries became the most admired brand in selling watches in forty countries.

Ajzen (1989) point out that an evaluative dimension is a common feature of all the definitions of attitude. Shim et al. (2001) indicate that an attitude towards behaviour can be recognized by an individual's positive or negative evaluation of a relevant behaviour, which comprise a person's beliefs regarding the perceived outcomes of performing the behaviour. From this perspectives, knowledge of consumer's attitudes can help explain the reason behind their favourable and unfavourable evaluation of an objects or a behaviour:, for an example, why consumers do or do not buy products of particular brand name or shop at certain types of store formats.

There are various measures of shopping attitudes. For instance, Urbany et al (1996) and Ailawadi et al (2001) have specifically developed a scale for measuring attitude towards grocery shopping. Childers al (2001) developed a scale to measure attitude towards shopping that utilizes a technological device. In this research, we would like to measure the "enjoyment" that Indian consumers get from the shopping process. In the retailing literature this shopping enjoyment is referred to as attitude towards shopping (Donthu and Gilliland, 1996); Donthu and Garcia, 1999; Beatty and Ferrell, 1998; Reynolds and Beatty, 1999; Ellis, 1995. Shopping enjoyment actually pertains to the "affective" aspects of the shopping attitude.

Several Consumer studies have studied that "fun side" of shopping as opposed to "shopping as a work" (Babin et al 2005; Batra and Ahtola, 1991). Most of these studies have described shopping either in terms of its utilitarian aspects or in terms of it hedonic value. The utilitarian consumer behaviour has described as energise, task-related, and rational. Perceived utilitarian shopping value might depend on weather particular consumption need stimulating the shopping trip was accomplished. Often, this means a product is purchased in a deliberant and efficient manner. Utilitarian value, reflecting shopping with a work mentality, may be useful in explaining the "dark side of shopping" alluded to earlier.

According to Hirschman and Holbrook (1982), compared to shopping's utilitarian aspects, its festive Lucid, or epicurean side has been studied less often. Hedonic value is more subjective and personal and its utilitarian counterpart and results more from and playfulness than from task completion Thus, hedonic shopping value reflects shopping's potential entertainment and emotional worth.

In the Indian context, in a study by Sinha (2003) is available on the subjects of shopping styles. In his study involving 300 respondents, Sinha suggests that the average Indian shoppers seek emotional value more than functional value of shopping.

As not much work in Indian has been done in this context, the paper seeks to provide fruitful insights into the motives of Indian youth that can benefit academics as well as marketers. People's motives for shopping are function of numerous variables, many of which are unrelated to the actual buying of products. Shopping experience is a utilitarian effort aimed at obtaining needed goods and services as well as hedonic rewards. Literature in marketing and related behavioural science suggests a breadth of consumer motives for shopping. The idea that consumer are motivated by more than simply the utilitarian motives to obtain desired items has been acknowledged at least as far back as the 1990s by Howard and Sheth (1969). Their consumer behaviour model, in addition to considering traditional explanatory variables such as needs, brand attitudes, and the impact of shopping behaviour on promotion, also examined less explicitly utilitarian consumer motives such as arousal seeking and symbolic communication.

Skinner (1969) identified the basic consumer motives in selecting a supermarket for the retail food industry. His study revealed that six variables: Friendliness, selection, assortment, cleanness, parking, fast checkout services and ease of shopping to increase the probability of the shopping trip being pleasant.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1) To identify the factors that lead to shopping experience in shopping mall
2) To major customer shopping experience while shopping in shopping mall
3) To develop a shopping mall perspectives

Hypotheses of the study: The research hypotheses of the present study are:

H1: There is significance relationship between internal store environment and customer shopping experience in malls.

H2:There is significance relationship between external store environment and customershopping experience in   malls

H3: There is significance relationship between staff issue and customer shopping experience in malls.

H4: There is significance relationship between merchandise and customer shopping experience in malls.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the present study is to keep within the limit of organized retail sectors and especially to malls. The present study is undertake to understand the behavior of consumers visiting the new generation retail outlets like Big Bazar, Adani, and Birla in Ahmedabad City. The study was helpful to find out the customers profiles, preferences and customer shopping experience satisfaction level in the malls. It also helpful to improve deficiency if any in the service provided to the customers. As the demographic and psychographic profile of the shoppers will be different in Ahmedabad city. The respondents were select from Ahmedabad city only. The study is based on preliminary and secondary data. The data will collect from 250 respondents, through convenient sampling method, these shopper' in the mall or walk as a customer's.

Factor analysis has been applied to find out the underlying factor by analyze sizing them. The data will analyzed with the help of statistical package available in the form of software i.e. SPSS package. Finally the study was revealing the purchasing as well as great or bad experience of the shoppers.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design serves as a bridge between what has been established (the research objectives) and what is to be done, in the conduct of the study, to realize those objectives. It anticipates what the client will need in terms of result and the analytical work on the gathered data that will convert in to useful finding. A design also is appreciated when analyzing the data and interpreting their meaning. It helps to keep the computations and thinking on the path to solution and recommendations.

The Universe of the study was retail customer experience from Ahmedabad city of Gujarat state. The source/ sample frame was prepared from the list customers furnished by different clusters group. Respondents were selected on stratified and convenient random basis. The

size of the sample was determined after considering the nature of universe, level of data to be collected, standard of accuracy and availability of finance. Precision rate and confidence level approach had been employed for determining sample size. For this purpose, the acceptable error was determine as +0.1. The range of value of interval data was 1-50 at 95 percent confidence level.

Thus the sample size: $\quad n2.\sigma 2 \qquad n= (1.96)2. (24.5)2 \quad = 3.8416.600.25 \qquad = \mathbf{235}$
$\qquad\qquad\qquad (0.1)2 \qquad\qquad (0.1)2 \qquad\qquad 0.001$

Here $\sigma= Range \qquad , \sigma= 50-1 \qquad = 49 \qquad = 24.5$
$22 \qquad 2$

To get more accurate results sample size has been enhanced to 250 for the study

Meaning of Research Design

"Marketing research design is the specifications of procedure for collecting and analyzing the data necessary to help identify or react to a problem or opportunity."

Research Methodology

In order to address the above-mentioned objectives a two-step methodology has been taken in this research study. The first stage is exploratory research, which was conducted to gain a better understanding about the research area being studied. The second stage is a descriptive survey, which was gather data for testing the research hypotheses. Each will be overviewed here. Exploratory research will be used initially to gain fundamental information to assist in identifying factors most relevant to the context being studied (Aaker, Kumar & Day, 1999). A variety of productive exploratory approaches (i.e., literature reviews, unstructured interviews, case studies, etc.) was used to seek insights to understand the responses of consumers towards the overall experience, behaviour, and satisfaction level.

I want shoppers to describe their shopping mall visits, to get a deeper understanding of their experiences, likes, dislikes and motivations related with those visit. Therefore I have asked some basic questions like; the reason, frequency, timing and the duration of the visits at the first stage. Moreover there were questions about the companion, mostly preferred shops and their shopping habits in the malls. Finally I have also asked them about their likes and dislikes regarding shopping malls and want them to describe their favourite and ideal shopping mall.

For literature review, secondary data will be collected from following sources:

1. Various books on consumer behaviour and retailing,
2. Journals like Journal of Marketing, Journal of Consumer Research, Journal of Retailing, Journal of Consumer Affairs, Journal of Marketing Research, Journal of Advertising Research, Academy of Marketing Science Review, Journal of Academy of Marketing Science etc.,
3. Internet
4. To collect the secondary data from various libraries of various institutes.

Descriptive research will be used to validate the hypothesis generated from the exploratory research. A structured questionnaire will be developed from the literature and the exploratory research. The respondents will be contacted at the retail stores and questionnaire will be filled up.

1. **The Universe:** the universe of the propose study will consist regular and non regular customers, living in the Ahmedabad citiy.The population comprises of customers as purchased various products in the various retail stores of Ahmedabad city.

2. **Sampling technique:** Stratified and convenient random sampling techniques

3. **Sample size:** 250. The sample will be collected from one city of Gujarat, i.e Ahmedabad, and the distribution of the samples was proportionate with the no of shopping malls in the respective citiy.

4. **Method of data collection:** Primary Data collection is done by structured questionnaire.

5. **Time dimensions of the study:** It was taken one year time duration to complete the study.

6. **Data Analysis:** Data collected then be analyzed using statistical techniques

7. **Software used for data analysis:** Statistical Package for Social Study (SPSS) was used for data preparation and data analysis.

Limitation of the study

    I.   Area Factor
   II.   Time Factor
  III.   Sample Factor

(1) Area Factor

The research study has been conducted at Ahmedabad city of the Gujarat state

(2) Time Factor

The research was done in vary limited time of Six to Seven month

(3) Sample Factor

The sample size prefixed on the basis of research formula for the research study was 250 respondents

Limitation of the study

- The proposed study will covered one citiy of Gujarat state

- Customers generally defer in their opinion about malls and products which they are regularly purchased from different retail outlets, which may be sometimes very high

- Marketing management is very wide subject. Hence the researcher will select only two cities and organised retail sectors as one of the prime and emerging areas for marketing management now a days.

- The sample size may be very less in compared to total population of Gujarat state, only for the reason to complete the research work within specific time period and more conveniently

Table: 1 Cross tab

			Internal Store Environment		Total
			Bad Experience	Good Experience	
sex	Male	Count	80	76	156
		% within internal store environment	61.5%	63.3%	62.4%
	Female	Count	50	44	94
		% within internal store environment	38.5%	36.7%	37.6%
Total		Count	130	120	250
		% within internal store environment	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.086[a]	1	.770		
Continuity Correction[b]	.026	1	.871		
Likelihood Ratio	.086	1	.770		
Fisher's Exact Test				.795	.436
Linear-by-Linear Association	.085	1	.770		
N of Valid Cases[b]	250				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 45.12.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

The internal store environment is equal experienced by male and female respondents. The chi-square value is 0.086 with p-value 0.770 which is more than 0.05. There is no significant association between gender of the respondents and internal store environment.

Table: 2 Cross tab

			External Environment		Total
			Bad Experience	Good experience	
Sex	Male	Count	99	57	156
		% within external store environment	61.9%	63.3%	62.4%
	Female	Count	61	33	94
		% within external store environment	38.1%	36.7%	37.6%
Total		Count	160	90	250
		% within external store environment	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.052[a]	1	.819		
Continuity Correction[b]	.009	1	.926		
Likelihood Ratio	.052	1	.819		
Fisher's Exact Test				.892	.464
Linear-by-Linear Association	.052	1	.820		
N of Valid Cases[b]	250				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 33.84.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

The external shopping environment is equal experienced by male and female respondents. The chi-square value is 0.052 with p-value 0.819 which is more than 0.05. There is no significant association between gender of the respondents and external shopping environment.

Table: 3 Cross tab

			Staff Issue		Total
			Bad Experience	Good Experience	
Sex	Male	Count	88	68	156
		% within staff issue	60.7%	64.8%	62.4%
	Female	Count	57	37	94
		% within staff issue	39.3%	35.2%	37.6%
Total		Count	145	105	250
		% within staff issue	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.430[a]	1	.512		
Continuity Correction[b]	.274	1	.600		
Likelihood Ratio	.432	1	.511		
Fisher's Exact Test				.597	.301
Linear-by-Linear Association	.429	1	.513		
N of Valid Cases[b]	250				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 39.48.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

The staff issue is equal experienced by male and female respondents. The chi-square value is 0.430 with p-value 0.512 which is more than 0.05. There is no significant association between gender of the respondents and staff issue.

Table: 4 Cross tab

			Merchandise		Total
			Bad Experience	Good Experience	
Sex	Male	Count	88	68	156
		% within merchandise	59.5%	66.7%	62.4%
	Female	Count	60	34	94
		% within merchandise	40.5%	33.3%	37.6%
Total		Count	148	102	250
		% within merchandise	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.337[a]	1	.248		
Continuity Correction	1.047	1	.306		
Likelihood Ratio	1.345	1	.246		
Fisher's Exact Test				.288	.153
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.332	1	.249		
N of Valid Cases[b]	250				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 38.35.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

The merchandise factor is equal experienced by male and female respondents. The chi-square value is 1.337 with p-value 0.248 which is more than 0.05. There is no significant association between gender of the respondents and merchandise.

CONCLUSION

In India, consuming class is emerging owing to the increasing incomes level and dual career family with high disposable incomes. With the retailers eyeing their presence in the market, it is pertinent for them to identify the target shoppers well as to identify the prime activities while shopping in an organised retail outlet. It has been revealed in the study that each types of promotional activity, internal store environment, external store environment, staff issue, retail practices and accessibility for malls has a significant influence. The main source of promotion for malls are T.V, newspaper, banners, magazines and family/friends.

The study observes that for age wise customers, clothing, textile, fashion accessory, jewellery and watches emerge out to be the most significant activities of malls. Food and grocery, accessories, fashion, eating and entertainment out are the second most important activity at malls. The health and beauty, consumer durables, mobile handsets, book, music and gifts is a last important activity for the visitors or customers.

The study reflects that quality of product, low price, high discounts of stores emerge out to be a most significant attributes of store image. The shoppers organised retail outlets are also conscious of price discounts and the various others schemes should be framed accordingly and communicated to them so that they are liked and accepted by them. On Sunday and evening they have to try attract more customers through apply and generate new concepts. This may lead greater profit and benefit for the marketers as it would benefit by lead to increased satisfaction of the customers.

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