

## A study on customer's perception and preferences towards shopping malls in Coimbatore city

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### Abstract

Shopping malls are one of those formats which have started coming up in large numbers. Shopping malls offered many advantages over the traditional markets. Pleasant ambience, protection from extreme weather conditions, convenience in terms of escalators and lifts, comfort of shopping, eating and watching movies at the same place, wide choice of shops, range of food options through food courts to name a few. However, the rush to be there in the mall boom has not gone well with all the malls. As the number of malls in the same locality was going up, some of the malls started struggling to survive. The study has identified the factors influencing positioning of malls in Coimbatore. The structural model developed depicts the relationships between mall constructs, shopper satisfactions and patronage behavior, customer's perceptions. A detailed analysis of the data along with recommendations and suggestions has been presented in the report.

**Keywords:** shopping malls, positioning, satisfaction, influencing

### 1. Introduction

The only thing static in human life is "change". Shopping in India has witnessed a revolution with the change in consumer behavior and the whole format of shopping is also altering. The phenomenon called shopping centre or shopping mall is rocking Indian metros and now even the smaller towns are buzzing with the mall mania. Modern retail format i.e. shopping malls are characterized by professionally managed large format stores, providing goods and services that appeal to consumers, in an ambience that is conducive for shopping. The recent surge in the growth of shopping malls is changing the way of peoples' shop.

#### 1.1 Review of Literature

**1. Ailawadi and Keller (2004)** [1] in relation to stores: access, atmosphere, price and promotion, cross category assortment, and within-category assortment. We argue that these store-image dimensions are also applicable to malls and therefore can be used similarly to capture mall image. A mall successful in positioning itself in the minds of target shoppers as favourable in terms of access, atmosphere, price and promotion, cross-category assortment, and within category assortment is one that most likely can contribute to a favourable attitude toward the mall, thus enhancing mall patronage, and increasing positive word-of-mouth communication about the mall.

**2. Ana et al. (2000)** [2] conducted an empirical study to find out the factors that influence people of a specific geographic area to shopping centers. They identified three benefits that shoppers receive by going to a specific shopping center the image of the shopping center, the time it takes the buyer to get to the shopping center, a new factor called 'first visit.

**3. Carpenter and Moore, (2006)** [3] identified that product assortment was the single most influential variable affecting the choice of retail format across discount stores, hypermarkets and conventional supermarkets. The customer's perception on

the quality of products and assortment are positively related to the patronage of a store image.

**4. Eric R. Spangenberg et al., (2004)** [4] the researchers elaborated that in the presence of gender-congruent ambient scent, shoppers spent more time in the store bought more items and spent more money on their purchasing and the shopper had intention to visit the store in the future.

**5. Kang and James, (2004)** [5] found a positive relationship between consumers' perceptions of service quality and their willingness to buy. Service quality perceptions contribute to purchase intentions, also uncovered a significant correlation between service quality and behavioral intentions.

#### 1.2 Objectives of the Study

- To study the level of awareness of customers towards the shopping malls in Coimbatore city.
- To find out the customers preferences towards the various aspects of shopping malls.

#### 1.3 Research Methodology

##### 1. Type of research

The research was Descriptive Research.

##### 2. Data collection methods 1) Primary data

The primary or the first hand data was collected with the help of handing out the questionnaire to the customers.

##### 3. Secondary data

The major source of secondary or supporting data was internet, library and the books and journals, are the source of information.

##### 4. Survey method

The related data or information was obtained by personal administration of questionnaire.

**Sample size:** A sample size of 100

**Sampling method:** The method for survey was, non-probabilistic convenience sampling method Analysis with the Secondary data. With the data collected from the secondary source we can clearly interoperate that the costumer will prefer to visit malls during offer period. In a time frame of two month there were totally three different offers were executed.

**Table 1:** Classification of Sample Respondents Based On Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	45	45.1
Female	55	54.9
Total	100	100.0

Source: Primary Data

Classification of respondents' based on gender. Gender is an important factor to assess the level of consumers shopping awareness, preferences and perceptions. The sample respondents have been classified according to their gender as male and female. It was found that out of the 800 respondents, 45.1 percent of the respondents are male and 54.9 percent are female. This study shows that female customers are visiting shopping malls over than male customers.

**Table 2:** Classification of Sample Respondents Based On Age

Age	Frequency	Percent
Upto 20 years	18	17.9
21-30 years	17	16.9
31-40 years	25	24.9
41-50 years	22	22.5
Above 50 Years	18	17.9
Total	100	100.0

Source: Primary Data

The age factor is a matter of universal concern. In the present study, the age of the respondents has been divided into five categories range from upto 20 years to above 50 years which has been divided into five age groups such as upto 20 years, 21 to 30 years, 31 to 40 years, 41 to 50 years and above 50 years. The above table shows that 24.9 percent of the respondents fall in the age group of 31-40 years old, 22.5 percent of them are 41-50 years, 17.9 percent of respondents are fall in the age groups of up to 20 years and above 50 years and 16.9 percent of the respondents are in the age group of 21-30 years. This study shows that middle age group people are visiting shopping malls frequently.

**Table 3:** Classification of Sample Respondents Based On Education Qualification

Education Qualification	Frequency	Percent
School Level	8	7.6
Graduate	20	20.0
Post Graduate	28	28.2
Professional	37	37.1
Others	7	7.0
Total	100	100.0

Source: Primary Data

Educational qualifications also determine the level of consumers shopping awareness, preferences and perceptions. Education has a positive impact on social life and the quality of life and vice versa with illiteracy. The educational status of

sample respondents has been classified into five categories i.e., School Level, Graduate, Post Graduate, Professional and Others. In the present study, 37.1 percent of the respondents are Professionals. 28.2 percent are Post Graduates and 20.0 percent are Graduates. 7.6 percent of the respondents are studied up to school level and 7.0 percent of the respondents fall in other educational qualification category like diploma etc. This study shows that majority of the respondents are well educated.

**Table 4:** Classification of Sample Respondents Based On Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percent
Married	79	79.0
Single	21	21.0
Total	100	100.0

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that out of the total sample of 100 respondents surveyed, 79.0 percent are married and 21.0 percent are single. Thus majority of the respondents (79.0 percent) are married.

**Table 5:** Classification of Sample Respondents Based On Type of the Family

Type of The Family	Frequency	Percent
Nuclear Family	58	58.0
Joint Family	42	42.0
Total	100	100.0

Source: Primary Data

To mention about the type of the family of the respondents, it may be seen from the table that out of 100 sample respondents, the study highlights that majority of the respondents (59.0 percent) belong to the nuclear family whereas rest of them (42.0 percent) follow the joint family system.

**Table 6:** Ranking of Shopping Malls – Using Kendalls Coefficient of Concordance

Shopping Malls	Mean Rank	Rank
Brookfields Plaza	1.68	2
Fun Republic mall	1.52	1
Unitea Mall	3.07	3
Sri Lakshmi Complex	4.40	4
Cheran towers	4.70	5
Asoka Plaza	6.05	6
Singapore Plaza	6.59	7

Source: Primary Data

Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance

Kendall's W	0.857
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The above table reveals that there exists the high level (0.857) of similarity among the respondents in assessing the ranks of shopping malls. The respondents were asked to assign the ranks by giving rank 1 to most preferred item and rank 2 to the next most preferred item and likewise the least preferred item by giving rank 7.

**1.4 Findings**

There is no significance difference between reasons for purchasing in shopping malls and personal profile of the

Customers (1.Gender 2.Age 3.Education 4.Occupation 5.Monthly Income of the Respondents 6.Number of Members in the Family 7.Earning members in the Family 8.Marital Status and 9.Type of the Family).

There is no significant relationship between Perception towards shopping malls and personal profile of the Customers (1.Gender 2.Age 3.Education 4.Occupation 5.Monthly Income of the Respondents 6.Number of Members in the Family 7.Earning members in the Family 8.Marital Status and 9.Type of the Family).

## 2. Conclusion

Economic development and the change in consumer culture, shopping malls in India have impressive growth and gradually replaced the traditional department stores and retail outlets. The shopping malls become the major avenue for shoppers. It facilitates variety of shops and create pleasant environment for the shoppers, leading the shoppers to visit and stay longer. The main affecting factors towards mall have been identified as availability of parking facility, quality and variety of product, Reasonable prices, Mall ambience, Entertainments and discount offers. Availability of International brands and new product is also influence the customers to visit shopping mall.

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