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A STUDY ON SHOPPER'S EXPERIENCE IN SHOPPING MALL BASED ON THE SERVICE QUALITY FACTORS

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ABSTRACT

In the modern world, shopping has become an essential routine for the people living in our country. Shopping mall is viewed not only as a purchasing centre but also as an area for the people to get together, socialize as well as for finding entertainment. Since, a transition can be noticed from the traditional shopping centre to an area of community engagement, the proposed study focuses on understanding various service quality factors offered by the shopping mall and also its implications. The paper also investigates the demographic nature of the respondents where the significance between each group is taken into consideration. The structural equation modelling analysis provides important insights to understand the impacts of different quality components on shopping experiences across. Based on the test performed, it is found out that all the three independent variables are having a positive impact on the shopper's response and also the demographic study states that there is a significant difference in the shopper's response across the different age groups.

Keywords: Shopping mall, Shopper's Experience, Service Quality, Physical Aspects, Personal Attention



INTRODUCTION

In today's VUCA world, the habit of customers visiting a shopping mall has changed a lot. It is evident that the shoppers actually view the visit to a shopping mall as a consumer lifestyle, where in they not only spend time for purchasing goods, but also to take part in various other activities such as watching exhibits, socializing with friends as well as family, participating in various events and promotions, and also spending time for browsing. Since, now a days, shopping malls have changed from a commercial centre to an area of community engagement and entertainment, there is a huge scope for the marketers to use that particular medium for targeted advertising. In this study, the customer experience is actually measured by focusing on all the inclusive things happening during a customer's shopping trip to the shopping mall, and also understands various service quality factors which makes the customers attracted towards the functioning of a shopping mall. This study aimed to understand the customer experience, service experience, as well as the retailer-specific experience of a customer, and also the determinants which create those positive experiences while visiting a shopping mall where the chances of customer experience can change based on the business setting. Also, the transformation of the shopping mall into an area of entertainment as well as a marketing medium will give us a scope in

knowing the effect of customer experience based on the mall – guaranteed behaviours.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Shopping is a "consumption-oriented movement in a space where one has the possibility of making purchases" (Lehtonen and Maenpaa, 1997). Authors have conducted research on consumption and retail experiences that when a customer visits a mall for shopping purpose, he/she is actually making interactions not only with the products/services, but also with the brands displayed there, sales people, as well as various elements found at the shopping mall. All these factors actually conceptualize or visualize the entire shopping experience of the people. (Diallo, Diop-Sall, Djelass, & Godefroit-Winkel, 2018)

Shopping can be "the sum total of cognitive, emotional, sensorial, and behavioural responses produced during the entire buying process, involving an integrated series of interaction with people, objects, process and environment in retailing" (Shilpa and Rajnish, 2013). The survey was actually taken on the Indian context.

Oliver (1997) has mentioned in his article that Customer satisfaction is a function of disconfirmation, which reflects both performance as well as expectations. He also mentions about the overall customer satisfactions as the result of many purchasing experiences which is then made



into a cumulative one. Chebat, El Hedhli, and Sirgy (2009) have mentioned in their research work, “shopper’s attitudinal predisposition consists of intentions to continually patronize the mall in terms of repeated shopping at the mall and willingness to recommend the mall.” Customer loyalty towards a shopping mall is considered to be their interest in revisiting it, spreading positive word of mouth about it, and being willing to do more purchases from the same mall.

Rabbanee, K., F., Ramasehan, B., Chen, W., & Vinden, A (2012) and Zeithaml (1988) have reported that the overall evaluation of a particular brand or product is a comparison made between the benefits expected or generated by the brand and sacrifices made by the customers to attain the same. The right balance between these two factors can help the mall authorities to increase the customer loyalty and to retain their potential customer base.

Concentrating on the engagement aspect of the customer experience, a study of Calder, Isaac, and Malthouse (2015) identified five dimensions: interaction (to connect with others), transportation (to escape or become diverted), discovery (to gain insight, knowledge, or skills), identity (to affirm or express one’s identity), and civic orientation (to contribute to society). Viewing the shopping mall as a consumer habitat,

an earlier group of authors identified four distinctive shopper activities: mall consumption (which includes walking, looking at exhibits, talking with other shoppers, and socializing with family and friends), service consumption (which includes attending movie theaters; enjoying the video arcade; and making use of the medical, dental, and vision care facilities or hair salons), passing time (which focuses on browsing or snacking), and purchasing goods sold in the mall shops (Bloch, 1994).

A positive retail experience should increase customers’ repeat patronage, expenditure, and likelihood of positive word of mouth (Grewal, 2009). In the integrative framework of shopping experience (Fiore and Kim, 2007), the behavioural outcomes include measures such as time and money spent, level of unplanned purchases, word of mouth, purchase intention, and complaint behavior. Some studies seek to determine the mall factors that improve purchase behavior and patronage (Hinson, Anning-Dorson, and Kastner, 2012). However, it remains unclear how the characteristics of these malls might affect purchase behavior.

Today’s shopping-mall managers study the traffic patterns in the mall so that they can strategically place print and digital advertisements and offer custom promotions to



attract shoppers' attention (Rodriguez, 2015). Experience may include emotions or feelings (MacLeod, 1964).

Other authors conceptualized mall experience as a holistic phenomenon, encompassing behavioural, cognitive and emotional reactions of customers towards the mall in general and specific stores at the mall (Gilboa and Vilnai-Yavetz, 2013). On the basis of the narratives collected from 119 informants, they developed a typology of mall experiences through narrative analysis: seductive (i.e., an encounter with temptation), interactive museum (i.e., exhibits or merchandise that allow shoppers to learn more), social arena (i.e., mall as a public place for gatherings and social interactions), and functional (i.e., how well a mall facilitates planned purchases). This typology was not further developed into quantifiable measures that could be operationalized and tested empirically.

The unique perspective on the direct and indirect relationships between service quality, its specific dimensions, perceived value, customer satisfaction, and loyalty in the context of shopping malls extends prior research that focuses mainly on the direct effects of overall service quality on loyalty. By investigating how this relationship is mediated by both perceived value (Auka 2012) and customer satisfaction, it is clarified how each dimension of service quality (physical aspects, reliability, personnel attention, and problem solving) indirectly affects customer loyalty to shopping malls.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted among 311 shoppers of different age group. Questionnaire is used for getting the data from the respondents which includes 31 statements for the different variables for obtaining the behaviour pattern of the respondents. Convenience sampling technique was used to identify the respondents in a mall.

Hypotheses

The hypotheses taken for the study are as follows:

H1: Mall service quality factors has a positive impact on Shopper's Response.

H1. a: Mall service quality determined by the physical aspects such as Ambient factors and Layout has a positive impact on Shopper's Response.

H1. b: Mall service quality determined by the Reliability factor has a positive impact on Shopper's Response.

H1 .c: Mall service quality determined by the Personal Attention factor has a positive impact on Shopper's Response.

Variables and their Definitions

Dependent variable used in this study is Shopper's experience. Physical Aspects, reliability and personal attention are selected as the independent variables. Physical Characteristics of a Shopping mall are basically the features such as layout and ambient factors that we notice throughout the purchase. It also describes the pattern in which each and every store, food courts, entertainment areas, rest rooms, etc. are aligned. Reliability of a shopping



mall describes the kind of trust received by the customers from the services offered by the shopping mall. In this study the reliability across the stores of the shopping mall is taken into consideration. Personal Attention tells us about the amount of care given to each and every customer by the shopping mall and how well their interest is taken into consideration by the employees. It is imperative for the shopping mall to create the ability to engage in intelligent conversations with their customers. The products and services provided by the stores in the shopping mall should meet the expectations of the customers in order to get satisfaction which will show a positive impact on the shopper's response. It shows how happy a customer is with the product and service offered by the company.

number of female respondents is 165. Table 1 indicates that 47% of the respondents were males and 53% of the respondents were females. More than half of the collected questionnaires are from female respondents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

DEMOGRAPHIC STATISTICS

Table 1: Gender distribution

	Frequency	Percent
Male	146	47
Female	165	53
Total	311	100

Source: Primary Data

The study relies on a sample size of 311 in which the number of male respondents is 146 and

TABLE 2: Age group distribution

	Frequency	Percentage
18 to 25 years	130	42
26 to 34 years	61	20
35 to 49 years	58	18
Above 50 years	62	20
Total	311	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 2 gives a clear idea of the distribution of the ages of the respondents. The minimum range of age of the sample chosen was 18 and maximum was above 50 years. Out of which 42 per cent of the respondents are between the ages of 18-25 years, which means that they are students. 20 per cent of the respondents are between the ages 26-34 years, they are working people. The third and fourth age category also shows similar percentages which are 18 and 20 percent of the total sample.

Table 3: ANOVA Analysis of Age Group
Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable	(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Physical Aspects	50	26 - 34	-.300*	.081	.001	-.51	-.09
		35 - 49	-.295*	.082	.002	-.51	-.08
		18 - 25	-.134	.080	.339	-.34	.07
		Above 50	.300*	.081	.001	.09	.51
		18 - 25	.005	.095	1.000	-.24	.25
		35 - 49	.165	.094	.294	-.08	.41
		26 - 34	.295*	.082	.002	.08	.51
		Above	-.005	.095	1.000	-.25	.24
		Tukey	.161	.095	.330	-.08	.41
		HSD	.134	.080	.339	-.07	.34
		18 - 25	-.165	.094	.294	-.41	.08



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Shopper's Response	Tukey HSD	Above 50	35 - 49	.496*	.122	.000	.18	.81
			Above 50					
		18 - 25	18 - 25	-.061	.143	.973	-.43	.31
			35 - 49	-.155	.145	.710	-.53	.22
			Above 50	-.058	.099	.936	-.31	.20
			18 - 25	-.167	.100	.344	-.43	.09
			26 - 34	-.277*	.098	.026	-.53	-.02
			Above 50					
		26 - 34	18 - 25	.058	.099	.936	-.20	.31
			26 - 34	-.109	.117	.786	-.41	.19
			35 - 49	-.219	.115	.227	-.51	.08
			Above 50	.167	.100	.344	-.09	.43
		35 - 49	18 - 25	.109	.117	.786	-.19	.41
			26 - 34	-.110	.116	.781	-.41	.19
			Above 50	.277*	.098	.026	.02	.53
				.219	.115	.227	-.08	.51
		.110	.116	.781	-.19	.41		

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

Source: SPSS Output

The ANOVA Test states for all the independent variables, the age group 18 – 25 is having significant difference with all the other age category and for the dependent variable Shopper's Response 18 – 25 categories are having only difference with the Above 50 category while rest of the categories are not having any significant difference with the age group.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

TABLE 4: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Physical Aspects	311	3	5	4.09	.535
Reliability	311	2	7	5.50	.853
Personal Attention	311	2	7	5.58	.839
Shopper's Response	311	3	6	5.48	.642
Valid N (listwise)	311				

Source: SPSS Output

Most of the respondents under the study have agreed that Physical Aspects has played an important role in determining the shopper's experience. It was also found that the variables Reliability and Personal Attention have a positive influence in determining shopper's experience since their mean values are 5.5 and 5.58 respectively. The Standard Deviation for all the variable are 0.535, 0.853 and 0.839 respectively. The Dependent Variable Shopper's Response is also showing a positive influence towards revisiting the mall since, it is showing a mean value of 5 which is suggesting the same and the standard deviation is showing the value 0.642.

RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

Table 5: Cronbach's Reliability Analysis

Constructs	Cronbach's alpha
Physical Aspects	0.732
Reliability	0.772
Personal Attention	0.941
Shopper's Response	0.940

Source: SPSS Output



Since, the values are above 0.7, the values can be considered as valid and can be used for further statistical calculations. The variables were already tested and proven to be valid from the previous studies.

The regression analysis suggests that 12.1% influence is made on the dependent variable, Shopper's Response by the Physical Aspects of the shopping mall and the beta value shows that there will be a change of 0.348 unit in the dependent variable when there is a unit change in the independent variable Physical Aspects.

HYPOTHESES TESTING

Variable - Physical Aspects

Table 6: Model summary of physical aspects

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.348 ^a	.121	.118	.603

Predictors: (Constant), Physical Aspects

Source: SPSS Output

Table 7: Regression Analysis of Physical Aspects

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.778	.264		14.320	.000
Physical Aspects	.417	.064	.348	6.516	.000

Dependent Variable: Shopper's Response

Source: SPSS Output

Variable - Reliability

Table 8: Model summary of reliability

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.340 ^a	.116	.113	.604

Predictors: (Constant), Reliability

Source: SPSS Output

Table 9: Regression Analysis of Reliability

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	4.075	.224		18.195	.000
Reliability	.256	.040	.340	6.360	.000

Dependent Variable: Shopper's Response

Source: SPSS Output



Table 8 and 9 states that Shoppers's Response is influenced by 11.6% as it can be seen in the R Square value and the Beta value suggests that 0.340 unit change in the dependent variable is caused when there is a unit change in the independent variable Reliability.

response because of the independent variable Personal Attention and the Beta value states that there will be a change of 0.532 unit in the dependent variable as a result of unit change in the independent variable Personal Attention.

Variable -Personal Attention

Table 10: Model Summary of Personal Attention

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.532 ^a	.283	.280	.544

Predictors: (Constant), Personal Attention

Source: SPSS Output

Table 11: Regression Analysis of Personal Attention

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.214	.208		15.461	.000
1Personal Attention	.407	.037	.532	11.031	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Shopper's Response

Source: SPSS Output

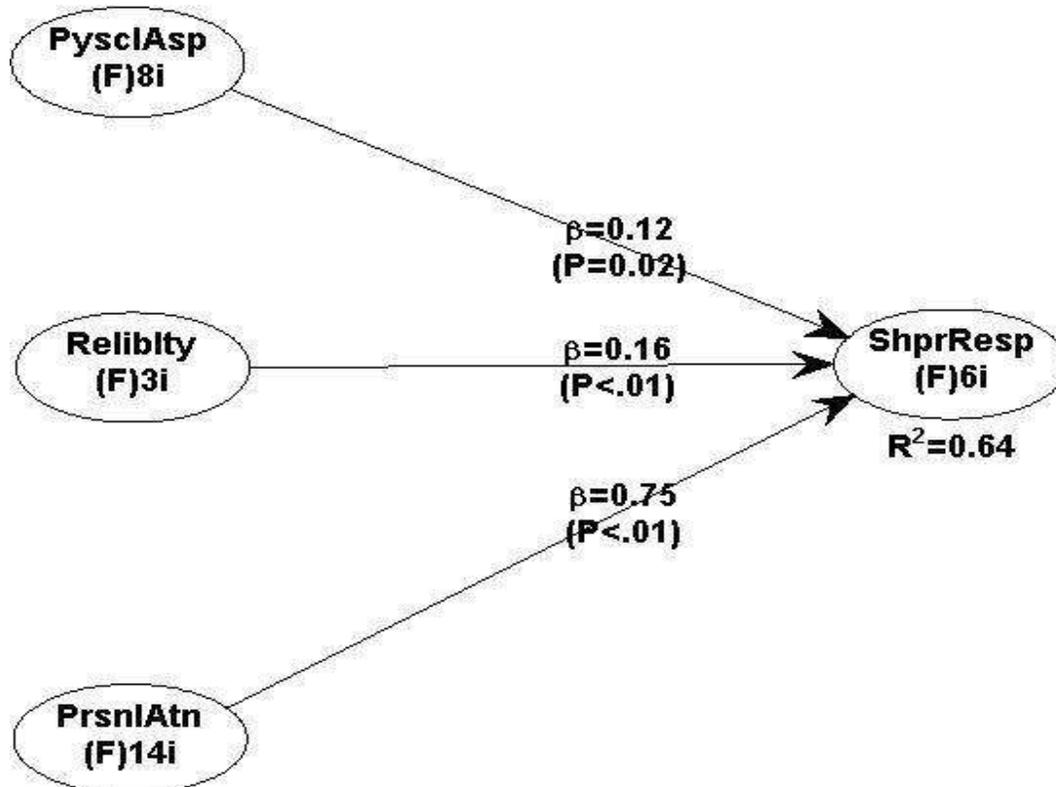
Table 10 and 11 depicts that 28.3% influence is present in the dependent variable shopper's



INFERENCE STATISTICS

SEM MODEL

because of a unit change in the Physical Aspects factor. For Reliability, the Beta value explains that for a unit change in the Reliability variable, there will be 0.16 unit



Source: WARP Output

FIGURE 2: SEM Model of the Variables

The p value in the SEM model shows that all the independent variables are having significant influence over the dependent variable Shopper’s Response as all the p values are less than 0.05. Beta value of Physical Aspects (0.12) states that there will be 0.12 unit change in the dependent variable

change in the dependent variable Shopper’s Response. Similarly, for the independent variable Personal Attention, a change of one unit will lead to change of 0.75 unit in the dependent variable Shopper’s Response.

FINDINGS

According to the Simple Regression Analysis and SEM Model, it is found out that:

Mall service quality factors has a positive impact on Shopper’s Response.

Mall service quality factors determined by the



Physical Aspects such as Ambient factors and Layout has a positive impact on Shopper's Response

Mall service quality determined by the Reliability factor has a positive impact on Shopper's Response

Mall service quality determined by the Personal Attention factor has a positive impact on Shopper's Response, hence rejecting the null hypotheses.

The Demographic study conducted by using ANOVA Analysis states that:

For Physical Aspects, the age group 18 – 25 is showing a significant difference only with the 2nd and 3rd age group categories

The age group 26 – 34 and 35 – 49 are showing a significant difference only with the 18 – 25 age categories.

Above 50 age categories are having no significant difference with any of the age groups.

For Reliability factor, the age group 18 – 25 is showing a significant difference with all the age categories

All the other categories (2,3,4) are showing a difference only with the 18 – 25 age group

For the Personal Attention factor, the age group 18 – 25 is showing a significant difference with all the age categories

All the other categories (2,3,4) are showing a difference only with the 18 – 25 age group

For the variable Shopper's Response, 18 – 25 age group is having a significant difference only with the 4th age group (Above 50)

The 2nd and 3rd age category (26 – 34 & 35 – 49) are showing no significant difference with all the other age groups

The Above 50 age category is having a significant difference only with the 18 – 25 age categories

SUGGESTION

The service quality factors of the shopping mall should be in a way that it should give more significance to the factors such as Physical Aspects, Reliability and Personal Attention since, the study proves that all these are having positive impact on the shopper's response. The management should adopt new marketing methods in these areas so that positive impact on shopper's response can be achieved. The management of the shopping mall should also have to prioritize the needs of different age groups coming to the mall as significant difference between the groups are found through the study and it can help the stores in malls to specialize in personalization. Future research can also focus on entertainment facilities and their impact on drawing people to malls.

CONCLUSION

The study actually demonstrates that all the service quality factors offered by the shopping mall are showing a positive impact on the



Shopper's Response based on the Regression Analysis. The results of the study are quite similar to the results of the previous studies conducted in US and Korea.

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