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Consumer behaviour and preferences in shopping malls: A case study of Ernakulum district

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Abstract
Shopping malls in India have increased in recent years due to the growth of the organized retail sector. Consumer perceptions of shopping centres have a significant impact on purchasing behaviour. The shopping mall offers the convenience of "everything in her one place". As customers age, their tastes, preferences, requirements and desires continue to change. Children may want to hang out with their friends, while teens may want to go to the mall for entertainment. Just as married couples prioritize movies and dining out, smaller families choose to shop together at the mall. In addition to age, demographics such as income, marital status, education level, and occupation also have a significant impact on mall shopper behaviour. Here we sort out the shopping mall culture with special reference to Ernakulum district.

Keywords: Shopping mall, consumer, preference, Ernakulum

Introduction

Customers' purchasing habits in India have altered significantly as a result of the recent expansion of the Indian marketing environment. The definition of "shopping" has expanded in recent years. It is an experience in and of itself and does not end with the simple purchase of a product. One of the Indian economy's sectors with the highest growth over the past several years is the retail industry. Up until the early 1990s, the retail industry was controlled by the unorganised sector. With the advent of corporate groupings in the shape of department shops, branded stores, convenience stores, and shopping malls, the organised retail sector eventually took over. The expansion of these stores in India happened in the blink of an eye. The selling structure that attracts the most customers while also ensuring their satisfaction is the best.

Shopping malls garnered a significant portion of customers' attention within the organised retail sector, not just in large cities but also in smaller towns. Shopping centres offer the convenience of having "everything under one roof." Shopping, movie viewing, recreational activities, and dining out are all available to people under one roof. Shopping malls were once solely found in cities like Singapore and Dubai, but today both urban and rural shoppers may access them. Today, retail centres are being built in several Indian states, and Kerala is no exception.

The understanding, awareness, attitudes, and opinions that consumers have about shopping malls and the amenities they offer, as well as the ones that will open in the future, are referred to as their perception of shopping malls. Advertising, user reviews, social media, or personal experiences may all have a significant impact on how consumers perceive products or services. It has to do with how people build views about shopping centres and choose what to buy. As a result, perception has a significant influence on consumers' purchasing decisions. The consumer's impression has a significant impact on his purchasing behaviour. As it aids them in creating the strategies for marketing and advertising necessary to keep current consumers and draw in new ones, businesses use consumer perception theory to ascertain how their customers see them.

Customers enter shopping malls for a variety of reasons, including spending time with their loved ones, going out to eat, watching movies, or shopping. Only if the customer's demand for visiting that mall is fully satisfied will they return to the same location time and time again. As a result, the mall's developers should pay attention to why visitors are there. Their shopping mall activity pattern makes this quite plain to see.

Consumer behaviour patterns include the reason for a customer's visit to the mall, the individuals they bring with them, the amount of time and money they spend there, as well as any other activities the consumer engages in there.
The human life cycle is important. A key factor in determining consumer behaviour patterns is the human life cycle. With age, a customer's tastes, preferences, requirements, and wants will continue to change. A little child might want to hang out with his buddies, but a teenager would prefer to attend a shopping mall to enjoy the entertainment activities there. Similar to how a married couple may prioritise going to the movies or eating out, a small family would choose to purchase in bulk at the mall. In addition to age, demographic characteristics like income, family status, educational attainment, occupation, etc. also have a significant impact on how shoppers behave in malls.

Statement of Problem

As a result of driven by technological innovation, market conditions have changed dramatically, making it challenging for firms to keep up with these developments and customers' heightened expectations. As a result of the country's expanding urbanisation, Indian consumers' priorities have shifted from price concerns to design and product quality. As a consequence of the expansion of the big, middle, and upper middle classes, as well as a major increase in their discretionary money, shopping in India has shifted from being need-based to becoming lifestyle-focused.
Mall developers must learn how Kerala's consumers feel about the rapid proliferation of shopping malls, whatever they demand from such malls, and how they feel about more malls on the horizon. This research will help mall owners discover customer requirements, desires, and driving forces behind buying, as well as other important factors.

Objectives of the Study

1. To find out motivational factors of buying behaviour of consumers in shopping malls
2. To examine the preference of shoppers behave in malls
3. To identify the present status of shopping malls in Kerala

Research Methodology

Source of Data

The current study is both analytical and descriptive in nature. For the study, both primary and secondary data were collected. The core data was gathered via a well-structured questionnaire from shoppers in Ernakulam, paying particular attention to Lulu Mall Cochin. Secondary data was gathered from a variety of sources, including websites, academic books, journals, magazines, and theses.

Sample Size

The sample size of 100 People was taken in to study which are from different part of Ernakulam district.

Sampling Technique

For the purpose of selection of sample, Convenient Random Sampling technique was used.

List of Main Shopping Malls in Ernakulam

1. Lulu mall, Cohin

The Lulu Mall is a shopping mall in Kochi, Kerala, India. It was dedicated in March 2013. Lulu Mall is one of India's largest shopping malls, with over 2 million square feet of store space. The mall offers a wide variety of shopping, dining, and entertainment opportunities, including a cinema, food court, and children's play area. A huge supermarket, fashion and lifestyle retailers, technology, and home goods stores are all available at the mall. Lulu Mall has become a famous shopping, eating, and entertainment destination in Kochi.

2. Centre square mall

Ernakulam, Kerala, India's Centre Square Mall is a retail and leisure complex. It was dedicated in 2010. Centre Square Mall boasts approximately 1.1 million square feet of retail space and offers a variety of shopping, eating, and entertainment opportunities. The mall features a cinema, food court, and children's play area, as well as a huge supermarket, fashion and lifestyle businesses, electronics, and home furnishings stores, among other things. Centre Square Mall has become a renowned shopping, eating, and entertainment destination in Ernakulam.

3. Gold Souk Grande Mall

Gold Souk Grande Mall is a high-end retail centre in Ernakulam, Kerala, India. It was dedicated in 2012. The mall boasts approximately 1 million square feet of retail space and is noted for its upscale shopping experience, with a collection of high-end fashion, jewel, and lifestyle businesses. Among other things, the mall has a cinema, a food court, and a children's play area. Gold Souk Grande Mall has become a prominent luxury shopping destination in Ernakulam.

4. Obron mall

Oberon Mall is a shopping and leisure complex in Ernakulam, Kerala. It was dedicated in 2009. The mall contains about 600,000 square feet of retail space and offers a variety of shopping, eating, and entertainment opportunities. The mall features a cinema, food court, and children's play area, as well as a huge supermarket, clothing and accessories businesses, electronics, and household goods stores, among other things. Oberon Mall has grown into a famous shopping, eating, and entertainment destination in Ernakulam.

5. Abad nucleus mall

The Abad Nucleus Mall is a retail and entertainment complex in Ernakulam, Kerala, India. It was dedicated in 2006. The mall contains approximately 400,000 square feet of retail space and offers a variety of shopping, eating, and entertainment opportunities. The mall features a cinema, food court, and children's play area, as well as a huge supermarket, lifestyle and fashion businesses, gadgets, and home decor stores, among other things. Abad Nucleus Mall has become a renowned shopping, eating, and entertainment centre in Ernakulam.

Result and Discussion
1. Weighted Average Ranking

Table 1: Reason for Visiting Shopping Mall

Ranking								
Activities	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**
Shopping	36	14	6	8	26	2	4	4
Visit an Eatery	2	20	16	10	14	28	4	6
Meet friends	18	8	24	6	2	6	6	30
Seeking status	2	2	2	16	10	12	32	24
Attend parties or Socialization	0	2	0	36	28	14	10	10
Family outing	36	16	6	6	8	20	8	0
Spend leisure time	4	26	10	10	6	6	32	6
Watch movies and Entertainments	2	12	36	8	6	12	4	20

Table 2: Reason for Visiting Shopping Mall (Calculation of Weighted Average Ranking)

Activities	Ranking							
	1 (Rank*8)	**2 (Rank*7)**	**3 (Rank*6)**	**4 (Rank*5)**	**5 (Rank*4)**	**6 (Rank*3)**	**7 (Rank*2)**	**8 (Rank*1)**
Shopping	288	98	36	40	104	6	8	4
Visit an Eatery	16	140	96	50	56	84	8	6
Meet friends	144	56	144	30	8	18	12	30
Seeking status	16	14	12	80	40	36	64	24
Attend parties/Socialization	0	14	0	180	112	42	20	10
Family outing	288	112	36	30	32	60	16	0
Spend leisure time	32	182	60	50	24	18	64	6
Movies and Entertainments	16	84	216	40	24	36	8	20

Table 3: Reason for Visiting Shopping Mall (Result)

Activities	Weighted Score	Mean Score	Rank
Shopping	584	73	**1**
Visit an Eatery	456	57	**3**
Meet friends	442	55.25	**5**
Seeking status	286	35.75	**8**
Attend parties or Socialization	378	47.25	**7**
Family outing	574	71.75	**2**
Spend leisure time	436	54.5	**6**
Movies and Entertainments	444	55.5	**4**

From the above analysis, people mostly visit shopping mall for shopping and secondly for family outing and people not using malls to seeking their status.

2. Chi Square Test

H0: There is no significant relationship between Occupation and Average amount spent per visit.

H1: There is no significant relationship between Occupation and Average amount spent per visit.

Table 4: Occupation and Average Amount Spent per Visit by the Respondents

Occupation	Average Amount Spent per Visit							Total
	Below 500	**500 -1000**	**1000 - 2000**	**2000 - 3000**	**3000 - 4000**	**4000 - 5000**	**Above 5000**	
Business	0	0	2	2	0	2	4	10
House Wife	0	0	0	0	2	6	0	8
Professional	2	0	4	2	2	0	0	10
Salaried	0	2	12	2	2	4	0	22
Self Employed	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	6
Student	2	14	4	8	2	6	8	44
Total	6	20	22	14	8	18	12	100

Table 5: Calculation of Expected Value (Occupation and Average Amount Spent per Visit)

0.6	2	2.2	1.4	0.8	1.8	1.2
0.48	1.6	1.76	1.12	0.64	1.44	0.96
0.6	2	2.2	1.4	0.8	1.8	1.2
1.32	4.4	4.84	3.08	1.76	3.96	2.64
0.36	1.2	1.32	0.84	0.48	1.08	0.72
2.64	8.8	9.68	6.16	3.52	7.92	5.28

Table 6: Calculation of Significant Relationship between Occupation and Average Amount Spent per Visit

O	E	(O-E)	(O-E)2	(O-E)2/E
0	0.6	-0.6	0.36	0.6
0	2	-2	4	2
2	2.2	-0.2	0.04	0.018182
2	1.4	0.6	0.36	0.257143
0	0.8	-0.8	0.64	0.8
2	1.8	0.2	0.04	0.022222
4	1.2	2.8	7.84	6.533333
0	0.48	-0.48	0.2304	0.48
0	1.6	-1.6	2.56	1.6
0	1.76	-1.76	3.0976	1.76
0	1.12	-1.12	1.2544	1.12
2	0.64	1.36	1.8496	2.89
6	1.44	4.56	20.7936	14.44
0	0.96	-0.96	0.9216	0.96
2	0.6	1.4	1.96	3.266667
0	2	-2	4	2
4	2.2	1.8	3.24	1.472727
2	1.4	0.6	0.36	0.257143
2	0.8	1.2	1.44	1.8
0	1.8	-1.8	3.24	1.8
0	1.2	-1.2	1.44	1.2
0	1.32	-1.32	1.7424	1.32
2	4.4	-2.4	5.76	1.309091
12	4.84	7.16	51.2656	10.59207
2	3.08	-1.08	1.1664	0.378701
2	1.76	0.24	0.0576	0.032727
4	3.96	0.04	0.0016	0.000404
0	2.64	-2.64	6.9696	2.64
2	0.36	1.64	2.6896	7.471111
4	1.2	2.8	7.84	6.533333
0	1.32	-1.32	1.7424	1.32
0	0.84	-0.84	0.7056	0.84
0	0.48	-0.48	0.2304	0.48
0	1.08	-1.08	1.1664	1.08
0	0.72	-0.72	0.5184	0.72
2	2.64	-0.64	0.4096	0.155152
14	8.8	5.2	27.04	3.072727
4	9.68	-5.68	32.2624	3.332893
8	6.16	1.84	3.3856	0.54961
2	3.52	-1.52	2.3104	0.656364
6	7.92	-1.92	3.6864	0.465455
8	5.28	2.72	7.3984	1.401212
Calculated Value				**89.62826**

Degree of Freedom = (Row - 1)*(Column-1)
= (6-1)*(7-1) = 30

Table value of X2 at 5% level of significance = 43.773
H0 is Rejected since the calculate value X2 (89.62) more than the table value of X2 (43.773), Hence there is a significant relationship between Occupation and Average amount spent per visit.

H0: There is no significant relationship between Monthly family income and Average amount spent per visit.

H1: There is no significant relationship between Monthly family income and Average amount spent per visit.

3. Chi Square Test

Table 7: Monthly Income and Average Amount Spent per Visit by the Respondents

Monthly Family Income	Average Amount Spent per Visit							
	Less than 500	500 - 1000	1000 - 2000	2000 - 3000	3000 - 4000	4000 - 5000	Above 5000	Total
0 - 10000	0	4	0	0	0	0	2	6
10000 - 20000	2	4	6	2	2	0	0	16
20000 - 30000	2	4	4	4	4	2	4	24
30000 - 40000	0	2	2	2	0	2	0	8
40000 - 50000	2	2	6	2	0	8	2	22
Above 50000	0	4	4	4	2	6	4	24
Total	6	20	22	14	8	18	12	100

Table 8: Expected Value (Monthly Income and Average Amount Spent per Visit)

0.36	1.2	1.32	0.84	0.48	1.08	0.72
0.96	3.2	3.52	2.24	1.28	2.88	1.92
1.44	4.8	5.28	3.36	1.92	4.32	2.88
0.48	1.6	1.76	1.12	0.64	1.44	0.96
1.32	4.4	4.84	3.08	1.76	3.96	2.64
1.44	4.8	5.28	3.36	1.92	4.32	2.88

Table 9: Calculation of Significant Relationship between Monthly Income and Average Amount Spent per Visit

O	E	O-E	(O-E)2	(O-E)2/E
0	0.36	-0.36	0.1296	0.36
4	1.2	2.8	7.84	6.533333333
0	1.32	-1.32	1.7424	1.32
0	0.84	-0.84	0.7056	0.84
0	0.48	-0.48	0.2304	0.48
0	1.08	-1.08	1.1664	1.08
2	0.72	1.28	1.6384	2.275555556
2	0.96	1.04	1.0816	1.126666667
4	3.2	0.8	0.64	0.2
6	3.52	2.48	6.1504	1.747272727
2	2.24	-0.24	0.0576	0.025714286
2	1.28	0.72	0.5184	0.405
0	2.88	-2.88	8.2944	2.88
0	1.92	-1.92	3.6864	1.92
2	1.44	0.56	0.3136	0.217777778
4	4.8	-0.8	0.64	0.133333333
4	5.28	-1.28	1.6384	0.31030303
4	3.36	0.64	0.4096	0.121904762
4	1.92	2.08	4.3264	2.253333333
2	4.32	-2.32	5.3824	1.245925926
4	2.88	1.12	1.2544	0.435555556
0	0.48	-0.48	0.2304	0.48
2	1.6	0.4	0.16	0.1
2	1.76	0.24	0.0576	0.032727273
2	1.12	0.88	0.7744	0.691428571
0	0.64	-0.64	0.4096	0.64
2	1.44	0.56	0.3136	0.217777778
0	0.96	-0.96	0.9216	0.96
2	1.32	0.68	0.4624	0.35030303
2	4.4	-2.4	5.76	1.309090909
6	4.84	1.16	1.3456	0.278016529
2	3.08	-1.08	1.1664	0.378701299
0	1.76	-1.76	3.0976	1.76
8	3.96	4.04	16.3216	4.121616162
2	2.64	-0.64	0.4096	0.155151515
0	1.44	-1.44	2.0736	1.44
4	4.8	-0.8	0.64	0.133333333
4	5.28	-1.28	1.6384	0.31030303
4	3.36	0.64	0.4096	0.121904762
2	1.92	0.08	0.0064	0.003333333
6	4.32	1.68	2.8224	0.653333333
4	2.88	1.12	1.2544	0.435555556
Calculated Value				40.4842527

Degree of Freedom = (Row - 1)*(Column-1)

= (6-1)*(7-1) = 30

Table value of X2 at 5% level of significance = 43.773
H0 is Accepted since the calculate value X2 (40.48) less than the table value of X2 (43.773), Hence there is no significant relationship between Monthly family income and Average amount spent per visit.

Findings

- Mostly consumers in Ernakulam prefer shopping mall mainly for shopping, then for family outing and eatery
- In the case of Ernakulam district, among the shopping mall visitors, there Significant relationship between Occupation and Average amount spent per visit
- 24% shopping mall consumers in Ernakulam were the income slab of above 50,000 and same percentage with in the slab of 20,000-30000.
- 38% of the respondents from Urban area and 32% from semi urban. Rest of them are from rural area of Ernakulam
- Everything under one roof is the most important motivational factor to choose shopping mall. 62%

respondents recorded highly satisfied with this option and 46% respondents recorded highly satisfied with the discount offers providing by the shopping malls.

- From the respondents, 42% were visit shopping mall once in a month and 26% and 18% respondents visit mall thrice and twice in month respectively.
- 74% consumers prefer to visit shopping mall on evening and 64% respondents visit with their four wheelers for shopping.
- Out of 100, 66% respondents visit shopping mall with their family.

Suggestions

The majority of consumers visit malls with their spouse and kids, thus mall management should ensure that the mall atmosphere is secure and child friendly, as well as providing additional entertainment amenities those families may enjoy.

The majority of people go to shopping malls for leisure rather than shopping. As a result, mall developers should focus on establishing more and more recreational zones in order to enhance traffic and sustain consumer loyalty.

The majority of respondents visit shopping malls on their own four wheeler, hence mall developers should focus on offering effective parking facilities to guests for free or at a nominal rate in order to attract more visitors.

Because a small percentage of respondents believe that the costs in shopping malls are excessively expensive, mall management should ensure that the general public may also make purchases from the malls by giving discounts, seasonal offers, cash back offers, and so on, at least on special occasions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study sheds light on the changing dynamics of consumer behaviour in the context of shopping malls in Ernakulum district, India. Shopping malls have become more than just places to shop; they are now destinations for entertainment, leisure, and family outings. Consumers are drawn to shopping malls for their convenience, variety, and the all-in-one experience they offer.

The findings reveal that consumers in Ernakulum primarily visit shopping malls for shopping, followed closely by family outings and dining experiences. This underscores the importance of offering a diverse range of options within malls to cater to varying consumer preferences. Moreover, the study identifies a significant relationship between occupation and the average amount spent per visit, suggesting that different occupational groups have distinct spending patterns. The research also highlights the changing landscape of Indian consumerism, where lifestyle-focused shopping has become more prevalent due to rising income levels and urbanization. Mall developers and retailers must adapt to these changing consumer preferences by offering not only products but also experiences that meet the evolving demands of their customers. To thrive in this competitive market, shopping mall developers should focus on creating a safe and family-friendly atmosphere, enhancing recreational offerings, and providing convenient parking facilities. Additionally, offering discounts and special promotions can help attract a wider audience, including those who may perceive mall prices as expensive.

In essence, the study provides valuable insights for mall developers, retailers, and marketers looking to understand and cater to the diverse needs and preferences of consumers in Ernakulam district. As consumer behaviour continues to evolve, adapting to these changing trends will be crucial for the sustained success of shopping malls in the region.

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