

Determinants of Shopping Mall Attractiveness

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Abstract:

Shopping malls have become important sites of both goods and services consumption. There has been a rapid increase in the number of malls coming up in Indian cities over the last few years and huge investments are being made in new shopping malls which will become operational in the coming years. The choice of shopping malls has increased for the consumer and it becomes imperative for the mall management to continuously improve on all determinants of shopping mall attractiveness to stay in business as well as for growth. This paper seeks to identify the determinants of shopping mall attractiveness and to rank them in order of importance using Henry Garrett Ranking Technique. Product Variety was identified as the most important determinant of attractiveness of shopping malls.

Key Words: Shopping Mall Attractiveness, Henry Garrett ranking Technique

1. Introduction

There has been a spiral growth in the number of shopping malls in India from none in 2000 to nearly 450 in 2010. The number of malls in India is expected to reach 750 malls by the end of 2018. As many as 26 malls are expected to become operational in 2018 adding around 16 million square feet of shopping space.

Shopping malls represent a significant habitat, which have become sites for an increasingly wide assortment of consumption activity. Traditionally malls offered the promise of a wide assortment of stores and merchandise but today this one stop convenience has expanded to provide service outlets and entertainment options; with the mall itself offering experiences that are consumable. (Bloch et al 1994)

Shopping malls offer world class ambience and services, multitude of brand options, periodic discounts and promotional offers. The superior ease of shopping in air conditioned comfort as well as a variety of food and entertainment options offered are appealing. Many special events like art exhibits, auto expos, health screening, live music etc are also conducted in Shopping malls. The rising income of the middle class and changing lifestyles bring the consumers to the Shopping Mall. The rising number of malls also results in cut throat competition among the various shopping malls. Thus it is very imperative that mall managers are aware of the determinant factors which attract consumers to malls and make continuous improvements with respect to such factors, to survive in the competitive environment. In this context, this paper seeks to understand the factors which make shopping malls attractive to the consumers and to rank the determinants in order of importance to the consumer, in Kochi city which boasts of the largest mall in India, Lulu Mall.

2. Review of Literature

Mittal et al (2016) identified 16 salient features under four dimensions-Merchandising, Variety and Selection, Milieu and Facilities and Convenience as determinants of Shopping mall attractiveness. Ahmad (2012) studied the effect of Mall attractiveness factors-Aesthetics, Convenience and Accessibility, Product Variety, Entertainment and Service quality on customer satisfaction, Loyalty and Word of Mouth. Anuradha et al (2011) studied the role of internal and external variables influencing the choice of mall and shopping behaviors. Rousseau et al (2014) studied the relationship of Mall environment factors-Safety or security, Location and Design; and Mall situational factors –Quality and price of goods, variety of assortment and parking facility on shopping mall experiences among mature consumers in

South Africa. The results suggested that mature consumers value location, design and safety or security as major factors in their choice of shopping malls.

Rajagopal (2009) examined the impact of growing congestion of shopping mall on shopping convenience and behavior and analyzed the cognitive attributes of the shoppers towards attractiveness of shopping malls and intensity of shopping. Ali (2013) conducted a study to identify the factors of mall attractiveness that influences consumer decision making as well as to investigate the most influential factors that will attract consumers to the shopping mall. The findings indicated that tenant diversity of a shopping mall and its physical environment have a significant impact on consumer decision making in choosing a shopping mall. Aliagha et al (2015) developed three models to assess the strength of the relationship between customer loyalty and shopping mall attractiveness in their study. The physical element (cleanliness), quality of building facilities (ATMs/banks, washroom, car park) and accessibility (roads, bus/taxi stations) contributed significantly in explaining customer loyalty. Juwaheer et al (2013) identified entertainment facilities and events; value-added restaurant facilities; shopping facilities and event; recreation, sports and games facilities and provision of childcare facilities as dimensions of shopping experiences affecting the willingness of customers to visit shopping malls of Mauritius.

3. Research Objectives

- a) To identify the determinant factors which attract consumers to the Shopping mall
- b) To rank the determinant factors of attractiveness of Shopping malls in order of importance to the consumer using Henry Garrett Ranking Technique.

4. Research Methodology

A sample of 118 respondents in Kochi were given a list of the determinant factors which attract consumers to shopping malls, identified from the extant literature and asked to rank them in order of importance. Convenience sampling was used. The ranks given by the respondents were then tabulated based on Garrett's Ranking Technique.

5. Determinant Factors Attracting Consumers to Shopping Malls

From the extant literature the following factors were identified which attract consumers to Shopping Mall.

5.1 Services cape: Services cape elements –design, space, ambience, hygiene and equipment was found to have a positive influence on service quality and behavioral intentions. (Hooper et al 2013.) The ambience of shopping malls attracts higher traffic to malls and satisfaction with ambience integrated with music, play and recreation results in consumer arousal. (Rajagopal 2009). Design, Mall essence, Entertainment and Variety are the most influential factors in consumer decision making in choosing a shopping mall. (Ali 2013)

5.2 Parking Facility: With rising income of the consumers, majority of families own their own vehicles. The consumers find it convenient to use their own vehicles for commutation to the shopping malls for easy movement of a variety of products purchased from shopping malls which can range from groceries to home appliances. The availability of Parking space has become a major determinant with regard to choice of 'where' to purchase goods or services. Shopping malls should provide adequate and safe parking facilities for mature consumers. (Rousseau 2014) There exists a significant relationship between repeat shopping oriented customer loyalty and car park. (Aliagha et al 2015). The consumers would only visit such shopping malls which have well monitored, hassle free and adequate parking facility for their vehicles. Many consumers visit famous malls with their immediate and extended family from far off places in their own vehicles or in taxis as shopping malls have now become tourist attractions also. Many authors (Anuradha et al 2011, Mittal et al 2016, Aliagha et al 2015) have identified this factor as a determinant of attractiveness of Shopping malls.

5.3 Location and Accessibility: Ahmed (2012) studied the effect of convenience and accessibility on customer satisfaction and found a positive relationship. Consumers will be attracted to a shopping mall only if it is easily accessible from their residence or work of place. The road conditions around the shopping mall also should be conducive for easy movement. The shopping centre management should look into store location and the design of the transportation facilities as transport mode/travel factors are significant in affecting the entertaining shopping experience. (Ibrahim et al 2002) Aliagha et al (2015) found a significant positive relation between shopping oriented customer loyalty and location and accessibility from bus/taxi station.

5.4 Entertainment- Play, Adventure and E Gaming : With rise in the number of nuclear families and flats, less time spent by parents with their children; the children are attracted to indoor games and e gaming. The children want new avenues of entertainment in the form of play area, rides, adventure sports and e gaming when they visit shopping malls. Many adults are also fond of e games and rides. Thus it is imperative that shopping malls provide entertainment in the form of play, adventure and e gaming to children and teenagers who form a major part of the shopping mall clientele. The younger generation will visit shopping malls if recreational and games facilities are available and hence it is important to design and introduce games room.(Juwaheer et al 2013) Many authors (Mittal et al 2016, Aliagha et al 2015) have included this factor in their research on attractiveness of Shopping Malls.

5.5 Entertainment -Movie Theatre: With many shopping malls boasting of multiplexes, which provide fast online booking facilities, great ambience, food options and trained staff the consumers are attracted to Shopping malls for viewing movies. Anuradha et al (2011) specifically studied the attractiveness of shopping malls with entertainment theatres in Chennai. Many authors (Mittal et al 2016, Aliagha et al 2015) have also identified this factor as an important determinant of attractiveness of shopping malls.

5.6 Entertainment-Food: The residual income in many families and the introduction of various food options have resulted in the consumers spending more on eating out. Many families have employed females, who would prefer to eat out on certain days as they are very busy or need rest. Many youngsters and adults also meet up with their group of friends over food and want to try new forms of cuisine. The time spent in shopping malls has increased and hence the consumers would definitely want to satiate their hunger pangs in the various food outlets available in the shopping Mall. Mall managers should maximize on appealing cuisine, live animation in food courts, and integration of international fast food outlets and coffee shops in the shopping malls .(Juwaheer et al 2013)

5.7 Brand Variety: The number of brand conscious consumers has increased with changing lifestyles and increased purchasing power .Famous brands also prefer to open shop in shopping malls because of the number of people visiting the shopping malls. The attractiveness of shopping malls lie in the fact that many brands are available under one roof.

5.8 Product Variety: Shopping malls attractiveness comes from the fact that it is a one stop destination to purchase a variety of products and services. The traffic blocks and lack of time encourage people to shop at a destination where a variety of products is available. The anchor shops, if present itself will have large varieties of products on offer. The variety of products significantly affects the customer satisfaction in Saudi Arabian shopping malls. (Ahmed 2012)

5.9 Milieu and Facilities: The consumers spent a lot of time in shopping malls with their family and hence it becomes imperative that proper and neat restrooms are available. Many malls are very large and hence adequate facilities like lifts, emergency exits, stairs and elevators should be provided. The quality of building facilities (washroom) and physical element (cleanliness) has a significant impact on customer loyalty.

5.10 Service-ATM’s, Parlours and Salons: Famous parlours and salons have opened up in Shopping malls many of whom have a loyal clientele. Service like ATM’s, Parlours and Salons are also attracting customers to Shopping Malls.

Table 1-Ranking of Determinants of Shopping Mall Attractiveness by Consumers

S.No	Determinants of Shopping Mall Attractiveness	Ranks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Sample Size	Total Score	Mean Score	Rank
		Garett Value	82	70	63	58	52	48	42	36	29	18				
1	Servicescape	f	9	10	8	12	13	9	18	16	12	11	118	5624	47.66	6
		score	738	700	504	696	676	432	756	576	348	198				
2	Parking Facility	f	9	7	7	14	15	4	7	15	10	30	118	5117	43.36	8
		score	738	490	441	812	780	192	294	540	290	540				
3	Location and Accessibility	f	12	7	15	11	15	12	12	9	13	12	118	5834	49.44	5
		score	984	490	945	638	780	576	504	324	377	216				
4	Entertainment-Play and Gaming	f	8	10	14	9	9	11	12	19	12	14	118	5544	46.98	7
		score	656	700	882	522	468	528	504	684	348	252				
5	Entertainment-Movie Theatre	f	20	17	14	4	8	12	15	10	12	6	118	6382	54.08	4
		score	1640	1190	882	232	416	576	630	360	348	108				
6	Entertainment-Food	f	17	15	14	15	10	16	12	7	8	4	118	6544	55.46	3
		score	1394	1050	882	870	520	768	504	252	232	72				
7	Brand Variety	f	18	22	19	19	12	6	4	7	6	5	118	7147	60.57	2
		score	1476	1540	1197	1102	624	288	168	252	174	90				
8	Product Variety	f	24	25	13	19	11	9	7	2	4	4	118	7197	60.99	1
		score	1968	1750	819	1102	572	432	294	72	116	72				
9	Milieu and Facilities	f	0	2	6	6	13	18	13	21	27	12	118	4707	39.89	10
		score	0	140	378	348	676	864	546	756	783	216				
10	Service-ATM’s,Parlours,Salons	f	1	3	8	9	12	21	18	12	14	20	118	4904	41.56	9
		score	82	210	504	522	624	1008	756	432	406	360				

6. Result

118 respondents ranked 10 determinants identified from the extant literature. Henry Garrett’s ranking technique was used .Table 1 shows that product variety was identified as the most important determinant which attracted consumers to shopping malls, closely followed by brand variety. Shopping malls have grown to provide service outlets and entertainment, from their traditional role of providing a wide assortment of stores, consumers are attracted to shopping malls for the product and brand variety they offer. Entertainment offered by Food court and Movie theatres is also in great demand. The mall management should judiciously decide on the tenant mix and be able to attract consumers as a one stop destination for all types of goods and services. The food court should provide variety .Malls should try to attract tenants such that brand variey and product variety is increased. Location and accessibility was also ranked high in order of importance. The service offered by parlours, salons, ATM’s is ranked low in order of importance. The service especially parlours and salons are costly and hence their significance is limited to few consumers.

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