

Factors Influencing Customer behaviour and its impact on Loyalty towards Shopping Malls of Bangalore City

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Abstract

Indian retail sector has seen a major transformation in the last decade, where various urban centres became a hub of attraction as a result of the emergence of organized retail formats, which in turn led to the emergence and fast growth of shopping malls. These malls have become one-stop destination for shopping, entertainment and socialization and have thus given a new dimension to the retail industry in India. Bangalore with a large number of malls has become a shoppers' paradise. The purpose of this paper is to study customer behavior towards shopping malls with six important dimensions with special reference to Bangalore city using structural equation modeling. The study also attempts to assist stores owners of malls, mall designers, mall management and other stakeholders with proper data, in terms of customer behaviour, that help the shopping mall to cater in a better way to customers and thereby increase customer satisfaction and improve its business efficiency. The conceptual model developed in the study was found to be fit, from which it can be concluded that the shoppers' shopping behaviour is having a positive impact on shoppers' satisfaction and loyalty. This implies that improving the factors that affect shoppers' shopping behavior, will lead to increase in shoppers' satisfaction and loyalty towards the retail shops in selected shopping malls. Hence from the study, the mall developers and management can understand the reasons that influence shopping behavior, which lead to the success of the mall in an atmosphere of growing organized retail environment in India.

Keywords: Customer shopping behaviour, Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty, Shopping Malls, Bangalore City

Introduction

Retail sector is one of the fast growing industries in today's consumer-driven world which has contributed in a big way to the economic development of India. Consumer's needs and wants are continuously changing according to behavior of the shoppers. This has given rise to the emergence of the concept of organized retailing.

Consumer behaviour refers to the mental and emotional practice and the observable behaviour of consumers during searching, purchasing and post consumption of a product or service. It is learning of how consumers buy, what they buy, when they buy and why they buy. Consumer behavior is a complex subject involving various other disciplines like sociology, socio thinking, anthropology and economics.

Solomon (2006) and Peter et al (2008), in their studies have stated that consumer behaviour is considered as a complex pattern. It is defined as study of actions of people - (a) psychological, (b) social and (c) physical, when people buy the products/ services; use and dispose them. It is important to know what and from where the shoppers shop and what the reasons that influence their shopping behaviour. Over a period of time, the element and structure of consumer shopping behaviour has changed and focus has shifted from convenience and comfort. Understanding the consumers in a better way is very important for retailers so that they can both react to and anticipate their needs proactively. Hence it has become appropriate to know about the behaviour of the shoppers who make visits to the malls in order to articulate approaches to win their confidence and continued loyalty.

Theoretical Framework

The behaviour of the mall customers was assessed using six constructs that includes - reach ability, atmosphere, shopping experience, promotions, property management and entertainment

i) Atmosphere

The pervading tone or mood of a malls, situation, or creative work that forms as a part the atmosphere in the shopping malls. Hence the atmospherics and performance have stressed the importance of ambient conditions and shopping space affecting shopper behaviour. The environment inside the mall and surrounding area of the mall is one of the critical factors in deciding mall patronage. The variables of the construct atmosphere are mall surroundings, relaxing benches, mall interiors and shopping space

ii) Property Management

Property Management is related to the administration and general management of various stores available at the shopping malls. Property management also refers to maintenance of cleaning of stores, cleaning of shopping areas, being able to find what you are looking for, easy access to information about shops and goods they offer, toilets, places to sit down, security standards and information booth are the various features related to property management. The variables explaining the construct property management are mall safety & security, hygiene and cleanliness in mall, restroom cleanliness, and symbols clarity and mall image.

iii) Promotions

Abhik Roy (1994) has identified promotion as a characteristic of shopping malls. Promotional activity was one of the highlighted factors identified as factors responsible for shopper's pleasure by Anselmsson (2006). The various variables used by shopping malls to promote their malls are free gifts/ trail packs, offers and discounts, surprise contest/ lucky draw, demonstrations, celebrity visits and new product launch.

iv) Reachability

Bearden (1977) and Severin et al (2001) have identified location as an important characteristic of shopping malls. Frasquet et al (2001) and Leo and Philippe (2002) have identified accessibility as an important attribute of shopping behaviour at malls. Howell and Rogers (2001) have identified convenience, parking and nearness as important attribute of shopping malls. At a place like Bangalore city, where public transportation is regularly crowded and painful, traffic is high particularly during

weekends and office hours, reachability, is important for a mall shopper. Hence reachability is one of the key factors that represent the shopping behaviour at shopping malls and public transport, proximity to the mall, nearness to other entertainment place's, parking facilities are the other variables that contribute for shoppers behaviour at malls as constructs factor for reachability.

v) Shopping Experience

Shopping Experience is an event or occurrence which leaves an impression on shoppers at the retail shops at the shopping malls. Shopping experience refers to the process of doing and seeing things and of having things happens to you which delight your thoughts in shopping in particular malls. The variables under this construct are product quality, service quality, range and type of shops in the mall, offers and discounts, surprise contests, price, and Sales Executive Interactions etc.

vi) Entertainment

Entertainment is a kwey component of all shopping malls. It is a form of activity that holds the attention and interest of an audience, or gives pleasure and delight which more essential in the highly business and mechanical world to release stress. The variables that influence shoppers to choice a shopping malls for entertainment are children play area, movie theatres/multiplex, indoor sports, food court and video games zone.

Literature Review

Ajaz Ahmed and S Mayya (2015), carried out a study to examine and investigate the buying behavior and the perceptions of the customers of malls in Managalore. The survey findings clearly indicate that consumers have gained lot of benefits from organized retail. These include wider choice of products and well-known brands, one stop shopping, new market arrivals, festive offers, huge discounts, and other benefits. The survey results revealed that almost all income groups get benefited through organized retail purchases. Most of the consumers opined that they tend to gain in terms of low pricing when they shop with corporate organized retailers. Thus from the perspective of the shoppers, expansion of organized retailing is more preferred as different malls and corporate retailers compete with each other, thereby resulting in reduced prices with reasonable quality products.

Adil Ziaand and Odai Falah Mohammad Al Ghaswyneh (2013), in their paper attempted to identify the impact that shopping experience has on consumer loyalty in organized retail setup. Structural Equation Modeling technique was applied by them on a sample of 706 consumers to know the impact of various factors of shopping experience taking place in consumer loyalty. The results indicate that every factor of shopping experience considered for the study has positive impact on consumer loyalty. Execution Related Excellence (which means patiently explanation and advice, checking stock, helping find products, having product knowledge and providing unexpected product quality) has the least impact with CR value of 2.18 whereas Problem Recovery (which means helping to resolve and compensate problems, upgrading quality and ensuring complete shopper satisfaction) has the highest impact on consumer Loyalty with CR value of 3.41.

Satish Kumar Singh et al (2013) in their study analyzed various factors like satisfaction factors, accessibility factors, sales promotional factors, workforce actors, Tangibility factors, assortment factors, trustworthiness factors and Surveying factors. These are the major factors according to them which define consumer buying behaviour.

Zameer Asif (2007) in his paper has discussed Mall Management and has concluded that mall Management has emerged as the single most differentiating factor in today's scenario where the numbers of malls are multiplying. The need of the malls to differentiate themselves is a sure way of emerging winner and this positioning is ensured through Mall Management.

White (2008) in his paper has elaborated that the customer and their lifestyles have changed, and with that, shopping centres are changing to continue to attract consumers. Entertainment centres, entertainment and destination venues, once of little significance to shopping centres and malls, are now growing in importance as an essential part of the mix, in order to attract today's consumer, goods alone don't work. He further states that a survey by the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC, 1997) found that movie theaters drew in potential shoppers who otherwise wouldn't have been exposed to the mall and that 60% of movie patrons shopped in the mall during their movie visit, spending an average of 35% of what all mall shoppers spent.

Suresh Sannapu, and Nripendra Singh (2012) in their study examined the relationships among the constructs of mall positioning, shopper satisfaction and patronage behaviour of mall shoppers. A sample of 1000 shoppers who visited the malls in Delhi NCR region was considered to test the hypothesized relationships. The study showed that the positioning dimensions influence shopper satisfaction. Shopper satisfaction in turn influences patronage behaviour of the shoppers. The study has established causality among the constructs of positioning, shopper satisfaction and patronage behaviour. The study tells Mall developers and mall managers who have not been giving priority to positioning about the importance of mall positioning in determining patronage behaviour of mall shoppers. The study provides a new model of positioning, shopper satisfaction and patronage behaviour. The study posits positioning, customer satisfaction and patronage behaviour in a single model.

Feinberg, Sheffler, Meoli and Rummel (1989) considered the social stimulation provided by malls, finding that the mall served as an outlet for social behavior. Further examination of this issue was made by Lotz, Eastlick and Shim (2000), who studied the similarities and differences between mall entertainment seekers and mall shoppers. Their results supported hypotheses that there are different motivations for individuals who visit a mall for entertainment activities versus those who visit for shopping purposes.

Lorch and Smith (1993) concluded that customers coming from a parking lot walk straight forward to the nearest shopping mall entrance and only those shops which are immediately adjacent to this entrance benefit from it. Marjanen (1997) found that visitors of supermarkets and department stores consider parking as one of the most important store-choice variables. Van der Waerden and Borgers (1994) found empirical evidence of a strong relation between the location of the chosen parking lot and the location of visited stores. The probability for customers to visit stores in the

surrounding of the chosen parking is higher than visiting stores located at some distance.

Ramakrishna Prasad (2012), in their study identified the purchasing drivers of apparel consumer in apparel product categories, in the context of the evolving organized retail industry in India. The paper correlated the distinct store features as perceived by respondents with the true motivations of various consumers in purchasing and patronizing of organized outlets. The study based on primary data, a total of 178 apparel retail customer from leading outlets in Hyderabad and Secunderabad surveyed by using structured questionnaire with mall intercept method. Based on the results, the authors conclude that that the apparel consumers' buying behaviour is mostly influenced by attributes like style > value > diversity > demand > credibility > concern > referral groups. This study contributes information to both academic and retail managers for their theoretical and practical purposes.

Parsons (2003) in his paper analyzed common promotional activities employed by shopping mall marketers, which were ranked by a sample of customers on their likelihood of encouraging increases in the two key performance indicators used by shopping malls – sales and visits. Whilst mall – wide sales are the preferred promotion, a combination of general entertainment and price-based promotions were found to be a strong alternative way to encourage visits and spending.

Ailawadi and Keller (2004) proposed that the conceptualization and measurement of store image can be improved by capturing five key dimensions: access, atmosphere, price and promotion, cross-category assortment and within-category assortment. Access refers to the location of the store and the distance that shoppers must travel to shop there. Stores that are easily accessible to shoppers are perceived more favourably and are likely to be patronized more than stores that are less accessible. Atmosphere refers to the aesthetics and ambience of the store. Elements of the in-store environment such as colour, music and crowding reflect the store atmosphere. Ideally, stores should be perceived to be pleasant and moderately arousing. Stores with pleasant and moderately arousing atmospheres are likely to contribute to the overall favorableness of the store, which in turn should increase store patronage.

Zameer (2006) in his study defined effective mall management as differentiating a mall from the rest, getting maximum footfalls, converting footfalls to purchase and keeping the tenants and the customers happy and satisfied. According to him mall management entails retail – mix planning and tenant selection, lease management, facilities management, utilities management, parking and organizing events and collaborative promotions, which according to him are critical factors for the success of any shopping mall.

Khalaf Ahmad (2012) carried out a study in Saudi Arabia shopping malls to understand the impact of attractiveness factors on shopper satisfaction with the outcomes of shopper loyalty and positive word of mouth. The research concluded that the attractiveness factors that influenced shopper satisfaction were aesthetics, convenience and accessibility, product variety, entertainment and service quality.

Sangvikar and Hemant Katole (2012), focused on behaviour of consumer mainly on purchasing pattern in various store formats and store preference on the basis of product availability, spending pattern, consumers preferred store, sales man services, and store layout. They observed that the customers prefer retail outlets because of price discount, followed by variety of products in the store and convenience to the

customer. They also observed that departmental stores are most popular amongst consumers. Customers purchase behaviour varies with price and availability of products and customers. Spending patterns on consumers shrink due to poor quality of products.

Research Methodology

Descriptive research is followed in this research. The primary objective of the study is to develop and test the model which integrates the factors of shoppers' shopping behaviour and expose its association with shoppers' satisfaction and loyalty. Survey method of data collection was adopted for data collection. The primary data was collected using structured questionnaire. The sampling unit of this research is Orion Mall, Phoenix City, Mantri Square Malls, Collection UB City Mall, Inorbit Mall which was ranked as top five best and largest shopping malls in Bangalore as per foraywhile.com; hence the structured questionnaires was circulated among the shoppers who have done the shopping in the above mentioned shopping malls. The convenience sampling technique has been used to select the shoppers from the sampling units.

About 500 questionnaires were circulated and received 380 valid questionnaires (i.e. Approximately 76 questionnaires per shopping mall) with a response rate of 76% through the survey. The questionnaire to assess Shoppers' behaviour was framed on the basis of Questionnaire developed by Dr. A. Nirmal Raj (2016) with suitable alterations. The details about the Shoppers' behaviour scale are tabulated in Table 1.

The Customer satisfaction and Loyalty has five variables. The questionnaire meant for the survey was pre-tested with 50 shoppers from the elected shopping malls in Bangalore. After pre-testing, required changes were made in the questionnaire to improve the reliability and validity of the questionnaire. Finally, the questionnaire was checked using the reliability test for the 50 samples. As per the results of the reliability test, it is observed that all the sub-constructs have acceptable level of reliability.

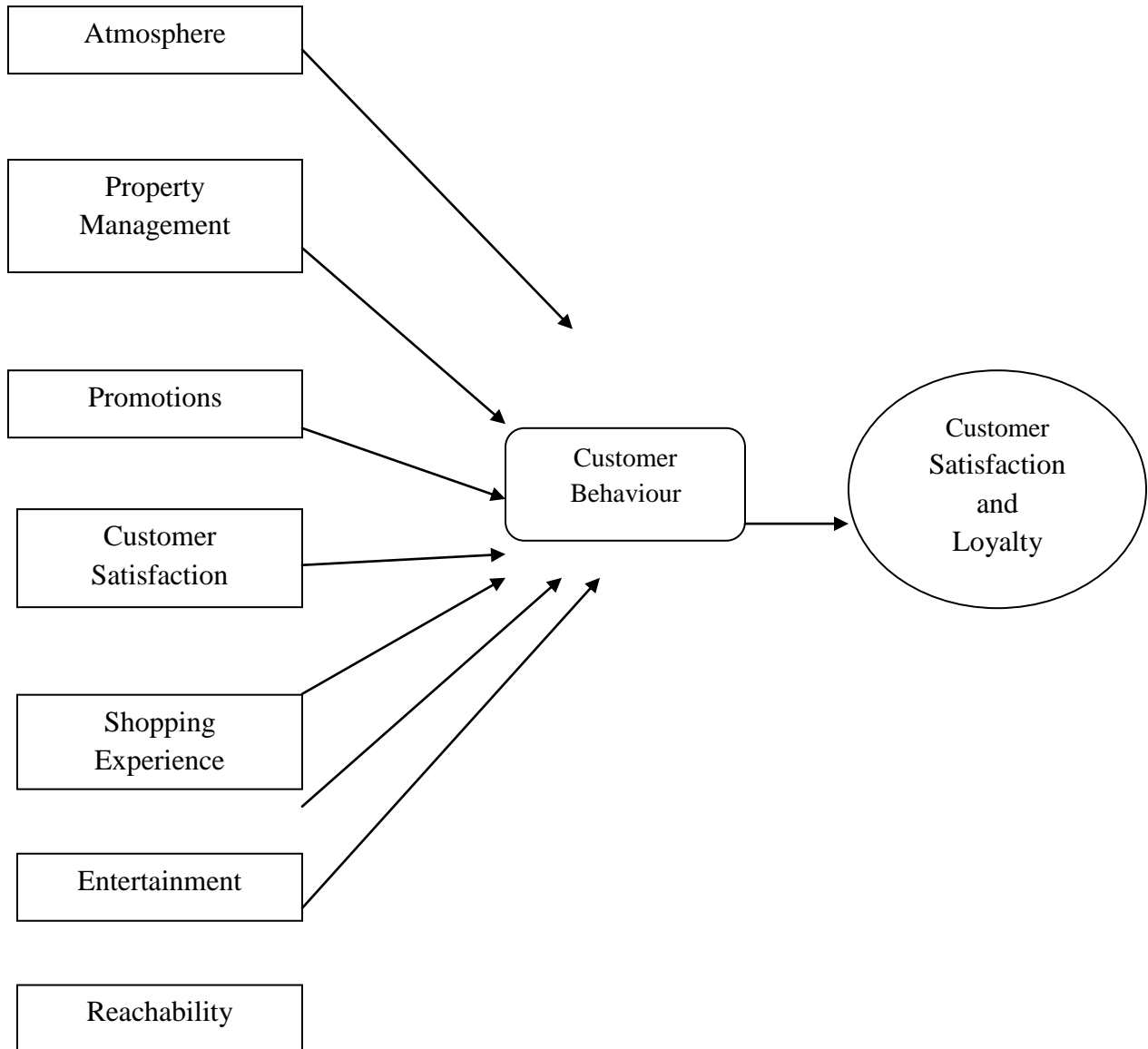
Table1. Scale, Sub-constructs and Reliability

Sl. No	Constructs	No. of Variables	Variables and its code	Cronbach Alpha Coefficient
1	Atmosphere	4	1 -Ambience & atmosphere 2 -Air-conditioning 3 -Mall Interiors 4 -Space for walking & shopping	0.85
2	Property Management	5	1-Mall Safety & Security 2-Hygiene and Cleanliness in Mall 3-Restroom Cleanliness 4- Sign Boards 5-Mall Image	0.85
3	Promotions	5	1 -Free gifts/ Trail packs 2-Offers and Discounts 3-Contests/ Lucky draw 4-Demonstrations 5-Celebrity Endorsement & New Product launch	0.73
4	Shopping Experience	5	1-Service Quality 2-Sales Executive interactions 3-Range and type of Shops 4-Product Quality 5 -Prices	0.76
5	Entertainment	5	1-Children Play Area 2-Movie Theatres 3-Indoor Sports 4- Restaurants'/Food Courts 5-Video Games Zone	0.97
6	Reachability	4	1 -Public Transport 2 -Proximity to the mall 3 -Nearness to other entertainment places 4 -Parking Facilities	0.94
7	Consumer Satisfaction and Loyalty	5	1 -Over all Shopping experience 2 -Overall Satisfaction 3 -Willingness to do future shopping 4 -Recommending Visit to others 5 -Frequency of Visit	0.89

Conceptual Framework

The researcher has developed the conceptual framework to test the impact of shoppers' behaviour on shoppers' satisfaction and Loyalty, which is shown in Figure-1.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework



Analysis and Interpretation

Table 2 : Data Analysis using Regression Coefficient

Sl. No	Customer shopping Behaviour	Standardized Estimates	Std. Error	Unstandardized Estimates	P value	C.R
1	Atmosphere	1.84	0.08	1.01	<0.001	11.66
2	Property Management	1.32	-	1.00	-	-
3	Promotions	1.44	0.08	0.98	<0.001	12.16
4	Shopping Experience	1.43	0.07	0.80	<0.001	11.46
5	Entertainment	1.30	0.08	0.98	<0.001	12.26
6	Reachability	1.51	0.07	0.82	<0.001	10.68
7	Customer Satisfaction & Loyalty	1.05	0.08	1.80	<0.001	13.32

Note: P value denotes significant at 1% level

Table 3 Measuring variables using regression weights

Sl. No	Variables	Measured Variables	Standardized Estimates	Std. Error	Unstandardized Estimates	P value	C.R
1	Atmosphere	Ambience & atmosphere	0.31	-	1.00	-	-
		Air-conditioning	0.18	0.05	0.47	<0.001	9.37
		Mall Interiors	0.33	0.09	1.06	<0.001	11.39
		Space for walking & shopping	0.27	0.08	0.91	<0.001	10.7
2	Property Management	Mall Safety & Security	0.40	-	1.00	-	-
		Hygiene and Cleanliness in Mall	0.35	0.08	0.77	<0.001	9.25
		Restroom Cleanliness	0.48	0.08	0.99	<0.001	11.04
		Sign Boards	0.46	0.09	0.98	<0.001	10.47
		Mall Image	0.37	0.08	0.74	<0.001	8.61
3	Promotions	Free gifts/ Trail packs	0.43	-	1.00	<0.001	-
		Offers and Discounts	0.33	0.07	0.89	<0.001	11.41

		Contests/ Lucky draw	0.43	0.09	1.11	<0.001	12.18
		Demonstrations	0.31	0.06	0.70	<0.001	11.30
		Celebrity Endorsement and New Product launch	0.26	0.06	0.63	<0.001	10.37
4	Shopping Experience	Service Quality	0.39	-	1.00	-	-
		Sales Executive interactions	0.40	0.11	1.20	<0.001	11.44
		Range and type of Shops	0.42	0.11	1.27	<0.001	11.61
		Product Quality	0.32	0.07	0.76	<0.001	10.66
		Prices	0.39	0.11	1.23	<0.001	11.24
5	Entertainment	Children Play Area	0.51	-	1.00	<0.001	-
		Movie Theatres	0.43	0.07	0.85	<0.001	12.00
		Indoor Sports	0.43	0.07	0.88	<0.001	12.00
		Restaurants'/ Food Courts	0.47	0.07	0.96	<0.001	12.42
		Video Games Zone	0.34	0.06	0.67	<0.001	10.58
6	Reachability	Public Transport	0.34	-	1.00	-	-
		Proximity to the mall	0.41	0.12	1.31	<0.001	10.67
		Accessibility for Entertainment	0.33	0.09	0.93	<0.001	9.82
		Parking Facilities	0.33	0.11	1.05	<0.001	9.85
7	Customer Satisfaction & Loyalty	Over all Shopping experience	0.05	-	1.00	-	-
		Overall Satisfaction	0.48	0.07	0.61	<0.003	8.75

	Willingness to do future shopping	0.6	0.06	0.75	<0.001	12.00
	Recommending Visit to others	0.69	0.09	0.48	<0.002	5.18
	Frequency of Visit	0.39	0.08	0.94	<0.003	11.7

Note: P value denotes significant at 1% level

Table 2 summarizes that the standardized and unstandardized weights with the significance level at less than 1%. The unstandardized regression coefficient value for the mall atmosphere is 1.01 which shows the effect over Customers shopping behavior holding the other variables constant. The positive sign of the estimate represents that Customer shopping behavior would increase by 1.01 for every unit increase in the mall atmosphere.

The unstandardized regression coefficient value for the property management is 1.00 which shows the effect over Customers shopping behavior holding the other variables constant. The positive sign of the estimate represents those Customers shopping behavior would increase by 1.00 for every unit increase in the property management.

The Unstandardized regression coefficient value for the promotions is 0.98 which shows the effect over Customers shopping behavior holding the other variables constant. The positive sign of the estimate represents those Customers shopping behavior would increase by 0.98 for every unit increase in the promotions and where the significant level is less than 1%.

The Unstandardized regression coefficient value for the shopping experience is 0.80 which shows the effect over Customers shopping behavior holding the other variables constant. The positive sign of the estimate represents those Customers shopping behavior would increase by 0.80 for every unit increase in the shopping experience and where the significant level is less than 1%.

The Unstandardized regression coefficient value for the entertainment is 0.98 which shows the effect over Customers shopping behavior holding the other variables constant. The positive sign of the estimate represents those Customers shopping behavior would increase by 0.98 for every unit increase in the entertainment and where the significant level is less than 1%.

The Unstandardized regression coefficient value for the reachability is 0.82 which shows the effect over Customers shopping behavior holding the other variables constant. The positive sign of the estimate represents those Customers shopping behavior would increase by 0.82 for every unit increase in the reachability and where the significant level is less than 1%.

The Unstandardized regression coefficient value for the customer satisfaction and loyalty is 1.80 which shows the effect over Customers shopping behavior holding the other variables constant. The positive sign of the estimate represents those Customers shopping behavior would increase by 1.80 for every unit increase in the customer satisfaction and loyalty and where the significant level is less than 1%.

Discussions and Conclusion

Today in Bangalore shopping malls are a place where socializing happens, where customers with high expectations visit the malls for their shopping. The changing trends have led to shopping malls becoming a place where watching movies, hanging out, eating out, meeting people and shopping all happen at one venue. Hence, shopping malls should be energetic having vibrant stores with good-looking product merchandises, scores of entertainment bundled with modern, more sophisticated atmospherics and facilities, necessary to lure the targeted customers, which should be understood by malls managers.

From the research study an important suggestion is drawn for the malls managers, that strong positioning of the mall is important to ensure shoppers satisfaction. From the path analysis, it is found from the result of the hypothesis that all the observed endogenous variables such as reachability, atmosphere, shopping experience, property management, promotions, and entertainment are having positive association with the latent variable service quality, and the latent variable Shoppers' shopping behaviour and Shoppers' satisfaction and loyalty is having positive association with patient satisfaction and Loyalty in the selected malls in Bangalore city. The conceptual model developed was found to be fit, from which it can be concluded that the shoppers' shopping behaviour is having positive impact on shoppers' satisfaction and loyalty. This means that by improving the factors which affect shoppers' shopping behavior, obviously will increase the shoppers' satisfaction and loyalty towards the retail shops in selected shopping malls. Hence from the study the mall developers can understand the reasons that influence shopping behavior, which lead to the success of the mall in an atmosphere of growing organized retail environment in India.

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