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CLUSTERING SHOPPERS BY MALL EXPERIENCE FOR EMERGING INDIAN CITY

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ABSTRACT

India is undergoing drastic transformation in its organised retail sector. Followed by Tier 1 cities, Tier 2 cities are also witnessing an upsurge in retail malls, owing to the burgeoning middle class, growing income levels and a more accommodative attitude towards modern shopping formats. However, due to increased competition and relatively lower population in these cities, the malls are ending up eating each other's footfalls. Therefore, it is highly imperative for mall managers to ascertain features that would differentiate them from their competitors. The objective of this study is to segment and profile shoppers based on their orientation towards different factors associated with an organised retail using hierarchical and non-hierarchical clustering techniques. Two segments were identified through the analysis. Each segment was profiled in terms of mall attractiveness characteristics, demographics and behavioural factors. Results of both hierarchical and k-means cluster analysis suggests two prominent groups among shoppers, namely relatively higher aged service class people and young students. Constituents of these segments also reveal distinct patterns. The younger segment pays more importance to variables like mall events and promotional schemes being organised by malls and/ or retailers. There is less impact of these variables on aged service class segment. This study is a useful contribution to the existing body of knowledge on management of shopping malls in India and is unique in terms of its focus on consumers' in tier two Indian cities like Raipur. This enables retail managers to prepare suitable retailing policies and strategies to cater to each segment.

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Findings of this research may be used, as guidelines for the development of strategic framework by retail mall managers in catering to their target segments.

Keywords: shopping malls, market segmentation, retail stores, shopping experience, mall management, shoppers' behaviour.

INTRODUCTION

India has been undergoing a drastic transformation in its organised retailing sector. Retail stores have not only changed the shopping patterns, but also have become an inseparable part of the urban Indian society. The growth in the sector is manifested through the rise in the number of organised retail stores and chains throughout the country. With practically no organized retail store in 1997, India had nearly 570 retail malls offering 180 million square feet of retail space in 2013 (Sharma & Dhamija, 2013). Even when entire world, including India, suffered with the US' sub-prime crisis in 2008, there had been a constant growth in the number of retail stores being opened across India. This reflected the increased attraction for the retail stores among Indian shoppers.

In its introductory phase, India witnessed the concentration of organised retail industry in Tier 1 cities. Delhi NCR, Mumbai, Pune, Hyderabad, Chennai and Kolkata occupied the retail space. However, high competition, rising infrastructure costs and decrease in consumer footfalls made these cities became less attractive. This led mall developers to focus on next set of towns, state capitals like Chandigarh, Jaipur, Raipur, Lucknow etc. where price of real estate and cost of developing infrastructure were relatively low. These Tier 2 cities had ever-expanding middle class, growing income levels and a more accommodative attitude towards modern shopping formats. The present study focuses on Raipur, the capital city of central Indian state of Chhattisgarh. Founded in 2000, the state government endowed heavy investment in developing infrastructure in the city and encouraged private entrepreneurs across different sectors. In 2008, the city had its first mall. In next seven years, the city has seven new malls.

Many Indian studies have reported that most of the malls in India are indistinguishable from each other in terms of retail space, size, aesthetics, amenities, services and shopper-mix (Roy & Masih, 2007; Singh & Bose, 2008). This leads to shoppers' boredom and eventually out-shopping. The location of malls in Raipur was pretty uneven. Located exactly opposite to each other, within the distance of hundred meters, two malls are eating into the footfalls of each other. The newer malls are

much bigger in size than the older ones. With a population of just over one million to cater to, Raipur is bound to experience an overflow of mall space, leading to scattering of shoppers across the different malls and eating into each other's share of footfalls.

In the present state of affairs, it is highly imperative for mall managers to ascertain features other than the availability of products/ brands and pricing, that would differentiate them from their competitors. Researchers across the world have opined that mall managers must address this issue, by focusing on catering to the softer aspects like providing distinct experience to the shoppers that would be unique and can differentiate their malls from the plethora of other shopping malls.

According to Wakefield and Baker (1998), very few studies have been carried out on segmenting shoppers based on their orientation towards shopping mall attractiveness factors. Also, previous studies focused more on single brand retail stores format rather than taking the holistic view of attractiveness of the mall. So there is a fervent need for studying the precursors, which define attractiveness of organised retail malls and their impact on shopper behaviour. An important issue that arises here is to understand and determine ways in which shoppers can be segmented and profiled. Earlier studies, carried out in the first half of 20th century, focused more on segmentation techniques using demographic variables (Smith, 1956). But according to Harrison (1995), these demographic characteristics may not be the essential determining factor of consumer buying behaviour. Lee, Ibrahim and Hsueh-Shan (2005) have studied the influence of shopping center factors on shopping gratification of male consumers. Their study reported that factors like shopping-center features, ancillary facilities, value-added features and special events have significant impact on male shoppers' satisfaction with the retail malls. Many similar studies have reported on the types of consumers who are buying, but were unable to explain why a consumer shops at a particular retail store (Smith, 1999).

This research is an attempt to fill the knowledge gap by studying the preferences of Indian shoppers for a particular mall, besides understanding their orientation towards the factors defining attractiveness of a mall. Therefore, the objective of this study is to identify antecedent actors/variables defining shopping attractiveness in malls from existing literature and then segment and profile shoppers, based on their behavioural and attitudinal orientation towards these attractiveness factors. The paper also endeavours to establish whether the segments are notably different in their socio-demographic characteristics.

The next section of the paper discusses the literature associated with factors defining shopping experience. The following section details research methodology and the data collection process. Later, data analysis, interpretation and conclusions have been presented.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Apart from purchasing goods and services, the act of shopping is undertaken for both experiential and emotional reasons (Jones, 1999). The study by Bellenger and Korgaonkar (1980) empirically established that a large proportion of retail shoppers visit the mall just for recreation. It is therefore imperative for the retailers and mall managers to make shopping an entertaining experience. While differentiating their outlets from those of their competitors, this would lead to increase in footfalls at their malls (Kim, Jikeyong and Minsung, 2005; Talmadge, 1995).

According to Babin, Darden and Griffin (1994), it is important to enhance the experiential perspectives of shopping for a buyer, as it can lead to store liking, which would in turn lead to more time being spent in the mall and increased likelihood of unplanned/impulse purchases. Various researchers have looked at the composition of experiential shopping from different perspectives. Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) argued that just information processing is not sufficient; they proposed a model accommodating different experiential variables that focuses on the symbolic, hedonic, and aesthetic nature of consumption. Kim et al (2005) classified experiential shopping constituting of utilitarian and hedonic factors.

Shopping Experience: Antecedent Factors

Shoppers want entertainment and hence retailers must extend this by offering entertainment services. To increase shopping experience, malls must engage customers in an enjoyable manner while they acquire products. For this to happen, it becomes pertinent for mall managers to identify the factors that make shopping experience appealing.

Kerin, Jain and Howard (1992) found that the overall experience that consumers get from their shopping trip is comparatively given more importance in determining their value perceptions, than the price or quality associated with goods/services. In an experimental study conducted to understand the importance of various factors associated with consumers' attitude towards a retail mall, Swinyard (1993) revealed that apart from attitude and level of involvement, experience during shopping was considered as an important aspect of consumers' intention to shop at a particular retail mall. In their recent study, Kwon, Ha and Im (2016) observed significant

correlation between customers' satisfaction and overall shopping experience in a mall.

Different studies have suggested different sets of attributes as constituents of shopping experience. These studies confirmed that mall shopping is a relative choice phenomenon (LeHew and Fairhurst, 2000; Stoltman, Gentry & Anglin, 1991). While exploring shopper's excitement and desire to stay at a mall, Wakefield and Baker (1998) identified four factors namely ambient factors, design factors, layout and variety. Each factor was composed of multiple attributes, some of which include architecture and overall design, temperature control, lighting, music, variety of stores and ease in locating stores. In their experimentation research, Matilla and Wirtz (2001) established that background music and aroma in the mall were correlated factors in attractive shoppers towards a particular store.

Confirming that shoppers' behaviour can be further enhanced towards malls, Ong, Gan, Juniaty, Wong, and Ling (2015) suggested that there are significant positive relationships between interior setting, music, and employee engagement with consumer behaviour. Accordingly, retailers must strive to identify the preferences of buyers and accommodate the same in mall environment to enhance psychological perception.

In their famous retail gravity model, Huff and Rust (1984) predicted mall patronage based on the principle of cost (accessibility) versus utility (size). They suggested retail patronage to be a function of store size and distance from the consumer. Oppewal and Timmermans (1999), studied space related features such as indoor shopping area, area for foot-travelers and the compactness of the area (both indoor and outdoor). Later, Reimers and Clulow (2009) confirmed the importance of convenience, irrespective of the format of the retail outlet. Here, convenience as a factor was studied in terms of spatial convenience, temporal convenience, parking convenience, hedonic attributes and shopping services. Earlier, convenience for consumers was just understood with respect to the distance they have to travel to visit a particular mall and the travel time associated with it. In another study on spatial convenience, Reimers and Clulow (2014) noted that mall developers must accord utmost importance to the physical demands emanating out retail centres on the shoppers.

On the basis of an extensive study conducted across various shopping malls in Hong Kong, Elizabeth, Chan, Yip and Chan (2014) noted that mall developers and planners must facilitate 'shopping productivity' by reducing the shopping costs. This is needed as convenience in shopping leads to positive hedonic as well as utilitarian values.

Many researchers have established the fact that retail consumers prefer to visit malls having rich, varied and dissimilar shopper mix. Wakefield and Baker (1998) in their study researched on the variety of tenant-mix. Kirkup and Rafiq (1994) undertook a more detailed and dedicated study in the UK to decipher the role of tenant-mix and its relationship with excitement. They concluded that strong, distinctive and consistent tenant-mix is crucial for success of a shopping centre. A diverse tenant-mix also infuses a sense of excitement in a mall. Brito (2009) supported these results and found that store selection and tenant-mix are the key attributes that shape image of a mall and influence patronage decisions.

From the buyer's perspective, Kim et al, (2005), did a comprehensive study and identified 38 variables related to retail malls that affected shoppers' overall experience. These were divided into nine factors - layout and arrangement, design and architecture, additional facilities, mood, courtesy, getting out, exhibition, music and hanging around. Similarly, a research study conducted in Dubai identified comfort, entertainment, diversity, mall essence, convenience and luxury as factors instilling attractiveness for any store (El-Adly, 2007). Some researches focused on various traits of shopping malls like restrooms (utilities), aroma, parking space, security and size of a store. Security and safety issues were also considered quite important by shoppers who decide to frequent a retail mall (Frasquet, Gil & Molla, 2001; Overstreet & Clodfelter, 1995).

Though India has been witnessing constant growth and development of organized retail sector, not many studies have been conducted in this domain. The studies that have conducted so far are highly generic in scope and nature. A study in the city of Mumbai, India, by Venkateswarulu and Uniyal (2007), found out that attractiveness of a shopping mall depends on appeal and convenience, amenities and atmospherics, ambience, personnel and parking and seating. Also included were attributes like restrooms (utilities), smell (odour), parking, security and size of store. These were not considered in any of the past studies. A study by Kuruvilla and Ganguli (2008), merely focused on synopsis of mall growth and development and mall operations in India. Singh and Bose (2008) did a comparative analysis of malls in India and the USA. Nevertheless, no significant research had been conducted on the topic/issue studying the overall experience among consumers during the act of shopping, in towns and cities of India.

A study by Bloch, Ridgway and Dawson (1994) opined that behaviour of the shoppers in a shopping mall differs with the apparent benefits that bring them to the shopping mall. They documented four clusters of shoppers who visit malls, namely; mall enthusiasts, traditionalists, grazers and minimalists. Each cluster has different way to interact with or consumed the mall environment. On the basis

of the activities that shoppers perform in the mall, Ruiz, Chebat and Hansen (2004) classified them into four segments - recreational shoppers, full experience shoppers, traditional shoppers and mission shoppers.

The present literature explains about various factors that attract shoppers towards a particular shopping mall. It is pertinent to understand which of these factors really attract them as a group towards a retail mall and to develop related strategies associated with the identified groups.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is based on descriptive research design; primary data was collected from shoppers in the city of Raipur. A validated research instrument for this study was borrowed from a similar study conducted in Delhi NCR, India (Singh & Sahay, 2012). Besides questions seeking key demographic attributes of respondents, the instrument comprised of 22 statements relating to different aspects of mall management. The sampling stage involved data collection through administering of research instrument among a part of the population referred to as sample. The main objective of this study was to identify exclusive segments that were influenced by the different attributes of mall attractiveness, and so the sampling unit for this research comprised of four shopping malls in Raipur, from where all the responses were collected. These malls were City Mall 36, City Centre, Magneto Mall and Ambuja Reality. The brief about these malls is available in Exhibit 1.

The study employed non-probability method for selecting the sample. Respondents were selected through convenience sampling and utmost care was taken to include respondents from across the city. A sample size of 300 was planned for this research. After discounting incomplete questionnaires, the actual sample size turned out to be 263. Mall intercept method was used and persons carrying at least two shopping bags were contacted for responses. The questionnaire was administered personally. Questions were read out and explained so that all the respondents interpreted questions in the same way.

Data Analysis through Cluster Analysis

An exploratory technique, Cluster Analysis is used to identify clusters (groups) of homogeneous observations, which are separated from others. As a technique, it has been used widely by researchers for segmenting the markets (Maier and Saunder, 1990; Wind, 1978). Following the method prescribed by Saunders (1994), a two-stage Cluster Analysis – a Hierarchical, followed by k-means, a Non-hierarchical algorithm, was conducted using SPSS 21.0 (Punj & Stewart, 1983).

A five point Likert Scale was used to collect data, where a score of '5' represented 'strong agreement' with the given statement and '1' reflected 'strong disagreement.' On examining the collected data, it was found that most of the responses for majority of variables fell in the range of 3 to 5. This implied that there can be maximum 3 clusters in the analysis for obtaining any meaningful result. Since, Cluster Analysis is an interdependence technique, further analysis was conducted. Two cases were found with missing responses. As had been suggested by Maier and Saunder (1990), these cases were deleted to remove any bias in the analysis. Thus, the Cluster Analysis was undertaken with 261 responses. Before analysing the data through Non-hierarchical Cluster Analysis, a Hierarchical Clustering technique was applied in order to identify the number of clusters. This technique helps identify the number of clusters in the dataset. A portion of the dendogram is shown in Figure 1.

From Figure 1, it can be inferred that there are three clusters in the dataset. However, while the first cluster consists of 259 responses, the second and third cluster consists of 1 response each (i.e., case numbers 158 and 159 respectively). Still, the analysis was continued using k-means clustering, which is a widely used approach for clustering and segmentation. K-means Clustering technique requires the researcher to specify the number of clusters needed in the solution. As the Hierarchical technique has shown three clusters, clustering was conducted for obtaining three-clustered solution. The solution results showed three clusters, namely, Cluster 1 (Size: 258), Cluster 2 (Size: 1) and Cluster 3 (Size: 2). As was confirmed through Hierarchical Clustering, the cluster sizes for 2nd and 3rd clusters are very low. The ANOVA results showed that A7, A8, A9, A10, A11, A12, A17 and A19 were insignificant in determining clusters. The data was examined to find out the cases in these clusters. These were: Cluster 2 (case number: 158) and Cluster 3 (case numbers: 19, 159). A summary of these cases is shown in Table 1.

Cluster 2: This is the case of a male student who likes background music and internal aesthetics, most probably this respondent is a 'frugal shopper.'

Cluster 3: These are cases of male respondents between 20–35 years and who are attracted to malls because of its Attractive Facade, Climatic Control and Cleanliness. Most likely these respondents visit the mall for exploring it, rather than for shopping.

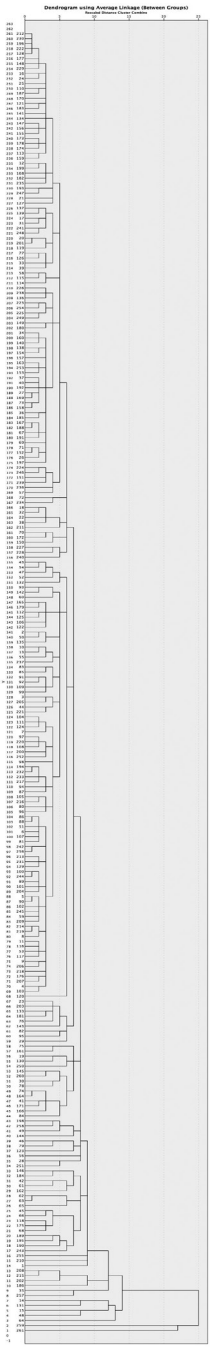

Figure 1. Dendogram from first hierarchical clustering

Notes: The horizontal axis of the dendrogram represents the distance or dissimilarity between clusters

Table 1
Cluster solution with k-means clustering

Type of Variable	Variables	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	
Demographic	Case No.	158	19	159
	Age	20–35	20–35	20–35
	Gender	Male	Male	Male
	Marital Status	Unmarried	Married	Unmarried
	Qualification	Graduation	Graduation	Professional
	Occupation	Student	Business	Student
	Monthly Income	<10000	25000–50000	10000–25000
Behavioural	A1: Distance to Mall	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	A2: Attractive Façade	Strongly Disagree	Agree	Agree
	A3: Excellent Climatic Control	Strongly Disagree	Agree	Agree
	A4: Cleanliness and Hygiene	Strongly Disagree	Agree	Agree
	A5: Benches for Resting	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Disagree
	A6: Easy to Navigate Stores	Not Sure	Agree	Not Sure
	A13: Background Music	Agree	Not Sure	Strongly Disagree
	A14: Illumination Within	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Disagree
	A15: Safety and Exit Provision	Disagree	Strongly Agree	Not Sure
	A16: Large Size	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	A18: Chance of Slipping/ falling	Not Sure	Not Sure	Strongly Disagree
	A20: Open Space and Wide Corridors	Strongly Agree	Not Sure	Strongly Disagree
	A21: Internal Aesthetics	Agree	Not Sure	Strongly Disagree
	A22: Security Features	Not Sure	Not Sure	Strongly Disagree

Considering that these cases would have behaved like outliers and biased the solution, these were removed from the data set. The analysis was re-conducted with the data set containing 258 observations. As earlier, to determine the number of clusters, Hierarchical Clustering was performed using both R-software (an open source data mining software) and SPSS. The output obtained from R-software is shown in Figure 2.

The dendogram in Figure 2 clearly shows that there are two clusters in the dataset. The clusters are of sufficient size for meaningful Cluster Analysis. As earlier, k-means Clustering was performed. The clustering solution showed 2 clusters

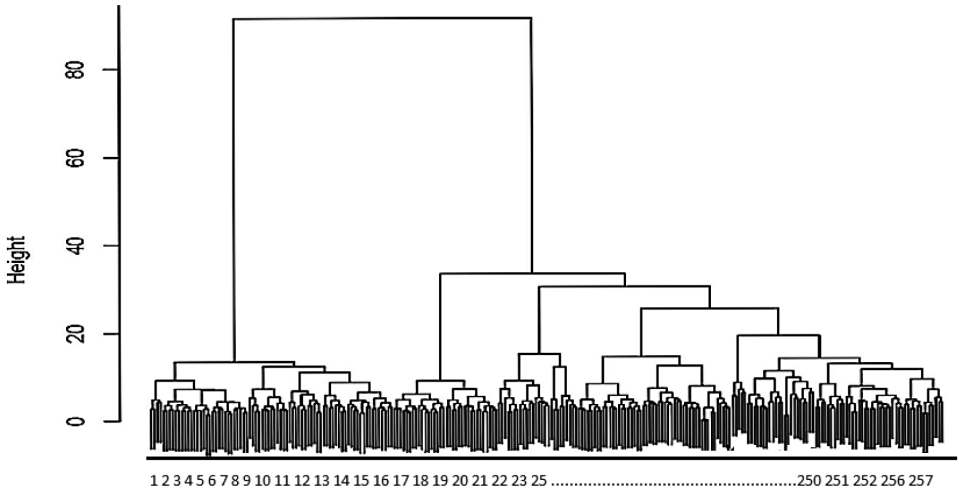

Figure 2. Dendogram obtained from clustering

Notes:The horizontal axis of the dendrogram represents the distance or dissimilarity between clusters.

containing 125 and 133 respondents respectively. Thus, the clusters are of similar sizes and hence interpretable. The demographic characteristics of the clusters are shown in Table 2.

Table 3 displays the behavioural characteristics of the clusters obtained.

DISCUSSIONS

Demographic Profile

For analysis, percentages rather than absolute numbers have been followed, as absolute numbers will be biased by the number of respondents in any particular category. From Table 2, we note that both clusters are of almost equal size. While Cluster 1 is slightly dominated by males (53%), Cluster 2 has slight domination of females (56%). This reflects that that gender does not play important role in interpretation of clusters. In terms of age, it can be noted that respondents of higher age group between 36 and 65 years dominate Cluster 1, whereas Cluster 2 has relatively younger respondents between 13 and 35 years. Clusters 1 and 2 represent almost equal number of married and unmarried respondents. Cluster 1 has mostly post-graduate and professionally qualified respondents whereas Cluster 2 represents respondents who have qualification up to graduation. Occupation-wise, most government service employees fall in Cluster 1 and students dominate

Cluster 2. Other categories of occupation are almost equally distributed between the two clusters. Sixty five percent of the respondents in Cluster 1 have monthly income of more than INR 40,000, while three-fourth of respondents in Cluster 2 had monthly income of less than INR 10,000.

Table 2
Demographic characteristics of the clusters

Demographic Variables Cluster 1		Frequencies		Total	Percentage		Total Percent
		Cluster 1	Cluster 2		Cluster 1	Cluster 2	
Gender	Male	112	98	210	53	47	100
	Female	21	27	48	44	56	100
Age	13–19	4	17	21	19	81	100
	20–35	66	74	140	47	53	100
	36–50	54	30	84	64	36	100
	51–65	9	4	13	69	31	100
Marital Status	Unmarried	50	63	113	44	56	100
	Married	80	61	141	57	43	100
	Widow/Divorced	3	1	4	75	25	100
Qualification	School Level	6	19	25	24	76	100
	Graduation	43	68	111	39	61	100
	Post-Graduation	59	34	93	63	37	100
	Professional	25	4	29	86	14	100
Occupation	Govt. Service	45	19	64	70	30	100
	Private Service	42	40	82	51	49	100
	Self-Employed	12	12	24	50	50	100
	Business	18	26	44	41	59	100
	Student	16	28	44	36	64	100
Monthly Income (INR)	<10000	11	30	41	27	73	100
	10000–25000	42	31	73	58	42	100
	25000–40000	27	35	62	44	56	100
	>40000	53	29	82	65	35	100
Cluster Size		133	125	258	52	48	100

Thus, it can be inferred that Cluster 1 has highly academically qualified respondents of 36 years and above age, most of whom are government officials with high monthly income of INR 40,000. Students up to graduation, with monthly income less than INR 10,000 (if at all any income is there), in the age group between 13 and 35 years comprise Cluster 2.

Table 3
Behavioural characteristics of the clusters

Behavioral Variables	Cluster Centers (Mean)		ANOVA
	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	p-Value
A1: Distance to Mall	4	5	0.000
A2: Attractive Façade	4	5	0.000
A3: Excellent Climatic Control	4	5	0.000
A4: Cleanliness and Hygiene	4	5	0.000
A5: Benches for Resting	4	5	0.000
A6: Easy to Navigate Stores	4	4	0.000
A7: Diverse Tenant Mix	4	4	0.000
A8: Sufficient Parking Space	4	5	0.051
A9: Pleasant Odor	4	4	0.000
A10: Mall Events	3	4	0.000
A11: Availability of Utilities	4	4	0.000
A12: Adequate Security	4	4	0.309
A13: Background Music	4	4	0.000
A14: Illumination Within	4	4	0.000
A15: Safety and Exit Provision	4	4	0.016
A16: Large Size	3	4	0.000k
A17: Promotional Schemes	3	4	0.000
A18: Chance of Slipping/falling	4	4	0.001
A19: Adequate Vertical Circulation	4	4	0.071
A20: Open Space and Wide Corridors	4	4	0.099
A21: Internal Aesthetics	4	4	0.000
A22: Security Features	4	4	0.000

Behavioural Characteristics

From Table 3, we note that behavioural variables—sufficient parking space (A8), adequate security (A12), adequate vertical circulation (A19) and open space with wide corridors (A20) were not significant in determining clusters and hence do not play any role in the interpretation of clusters. On the 5-point Likert Scale used to collect the data, most of the responses in cluster centers range from 'Not Sure' (3) to 'Strongly Agree' (5).

For almost all the questions, respondents in Cluster 1 lay between 'Not Sure' and 'Agree'. They tend to be on the positive side of the scale in terms of distance to mall, internal or external attractiveness of mall, atmospheric factors, climatic control, cleanliness and hygiene, resting benches, diverse tenant-mix, availability

of utilities, and safety and security within malls. These respondents were neutral to the influence of mall events, size of mall and promotional schemes on selection of mall. Respondents in Cluster 2 amassed towards the extreme positive side of the scale and had spread between 'Agree' to 'Strongly Agree.' Their agreement was strong with variables like distance to mall, internal or external attractiveness of mall, excellent climatic control, cleanliness and hygiene, resting benches and sufficient parking space. Marketing activities and events organised by malls, promotional schemes offered by malls/ retailers and size of mall also fascinate this cluster.

Finally, it can be inferred that students, mostly graduates and having month income of less than INR 10,000 and in the age group 13–35 years, do have affinity with antecedent factors like ambience, physical infrastructure, convenience etc. with which malls attempt to lure shoppers. Factors related to marketing focus like events and promotional schemes attract them. On the other hand, government employees of relatively higher age group (35–65 years) possessing post-graduate or professional qualification and with monthly income more than INR 40,000 were also on the positive side of the scale. However, the extent was slightly less as compared to the younger segment on distance to mall, interior and exteriors décor and facilities. In other words, they do have inclination towards the behavioral variables. Marketing efforts of such companies may not discriminately stir this segment.

Further to be noted is the fact that both these segments look forward to having total value proposition (TVP) from the malls with respect to diverse tenant-mix, easy circulation, good atmospherics, safety provisions and good provision of utilities.

Looking at the three cases that were deleted earlier (Table 1), it is noted that these three cases are contra to the respondents as segmented above. These respondents didn't have some inclination for distance to mall and size of malls. But the number of these respondents is very low.

Thus, the results of Cluster Analysis show that the most of the marketing tactics that malls use are must and essential for attracting shoppers. Malls must therefore, continue to invest in external and internal antecedent variables leading to better shopping experience for buyers.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This research paper has classified mall shoppers into two segments in terms of the shopping mall attractiveness factors. Cluster 1 consists of relatively higher aged service class people and Cluster 2 has younger students. The antecedent factors contributing shopping experience influence both the segments. However, the extent of influence differentiates the two segments on some factors. This provides a better understanding of each segment and helps mall managers in identifying the influencers and deciphering the impact of those on each of the segment.

Distance to mall, attractive façade, climatic control, cleanliness and rest-benches influenced all the respondents. But segment comprising of young students has mean score of five as compared to the segment of relatively aged people, which had the score of four. Also, the younger segment pays more importance to variables like mall events and promotional schemes being organised by malls and/ or retailers. We can attribute this affinity for promotional schemes and events among youth to relatively 'high marginal value of their rupee'. Mostly being students, they largely depend on their parents, for money.

Cumulatively, we note that younger populace looks for malls that are nearer to locations and provide better promotional schemes and good bargains for the products/services. Their entertainment motive is satisfied by the events organised by malls. These events provide students with opportunity to showcase their talents. Further, such schemes and events are tools to attract young market that is high on impulse buying. Hence, retailers and mall managers must aggressively organise campaigns for promoting the events and promos, backed with excellent supply channels and point of sale counters, extending extra incentive for impulsive shoppers.

Defining shopping experience needs cumulative manifestation of various antecedent factors. Shoppers across both the segments desired the presence all multiple factors that include ambience, physical infrastructure, convenience and safety.

Many of the studies have already posited that Indian shoppers visiting retail shops and malls are motivated by not only functional benefits. They also attempt to fulfill social and recreational drives. The shoppers view these retail malls as the destination offering fun and entertainment, apart from providing the utilitarian benefits such as assortment of products and good bargains. The Indian consumers view these as the ultimate get-away destination for fun.

Results of this study may be compared with results of other landmark studies conducted in past especially Bloch et al. (1994). Bloch and co-researchers identified four shoppers segments namely Mall enthusiasts, Traditionalists, Grazers, and Minimalists. Each segment was defined in terms of their participation in mall activities with Mall Enthusiasts participating in maximum activities and Minimalists shying away from most activities. The present study asked shoppers opinion on an extended list of mall activities and attributes. Unlike Bloch et al, the mall shoppers of Raipur did not differ significantly in their extent of participation or acceptance of activities and attributes, the only exception being marketing and promotional activities/attributes (A10, A16 and A17). Cluster 1 identified in this research comprise of middle-aged, service class people with relatively higher income. These people use appreciate mall attributes but do not endorse marketing and promotional activities. They can be equated with 'Traditionalist' in the work of Bloch et al. (1994). Cluster 2 identified in the present research is similar to 'Grazers' in their shopping behaviour though they show resemblance to 'Mall Enthusiasts' in their mental orientation. However their lower income means they cannot afford most products and services in a mall and they end up being window shoppers. They are significantly attracted by marketing and promotional activities organised by shopping malls.

Managerial Implications

It is still early days and learning phase for mall developers and managers in India. The present study indicates that customer segments in smaller town like Raipur are different from what we see in developed countries (Bloch et al., 1994) and bigger Indian cities like Delhi and Mumbai (Singh and Sahay, 2012; Singh and Prashar, 2014). Bigger cities have large number of shoppers of younger age, modern orientation and high income. They are more likely to be the 'Mall Enthusiasts' as enunciated by Bloch et al. (1994). In smaller towns large number of customers are middle-aged. They have higher income but do not have matching modern orientations. At best they can be 'Traditionalists'. Shoppers with younger age and modern aspirations unfortunately are financially not independent, compelling them to be mare grazers.

Though younger customers are considered to be the key target market for malls, they will not benefit the malls in Raipur in the short run. Their constraining factor is income. Mall managers cannot change it. To ensure profitability mall managers need to focus on gaining trust of Cluster 1 (Traditionalists). They have the resources to buy but their conviction towards the mall is not as strong as the younger shoppers. It is possible that they are accustomed to shopping from unorganised retail stores.

Mall managers need to fight a battle of perception, convincing these shoppers that mall is as utilitarian as the neighbourhood shop they patronise. For this to happen, the mall should plan its tenant-mix carefully so that all the products and services available in the shopper's neighbourhood are available in the shopping mall. Some of the prominent local retailers may be encouraged to occupy space in the mall. Another aspect shall be matching the convenience of neighbourhood store. Encouraging retailers to provide services like home delivery and customer take-away may do it. Above all the retailers in a mall should offer superior value for money as the shoppers are expected to benchmark prices with what they pay at the traditional stores. Being middle-aged most of the shoppers in Cluster 1 shall have children. It is important for the malls to have tenants and services that appeal to all the members of the family.

While doing all this, the malls should not lose sight of younger shoppers who would decide fate of the mall in the long run. Malls are expected to organise marketing ad promotional activities that attract younger shoppers with lesser income. The mall may induce them to shop by renting space to retailers that sell low-priced merchandise for youngsters. Some of these products can be sold through kiosks. Once tuned to shopping, young shoppers are expected to upgrade once their income rises.

It is imperative for mall managers and retail marketers to concentrate on refining the retail atmospherics, besides providing with basic conveniences like utilities, parking and safety. They must focus on hosting entertaining and exciting events that add to consumer' overall shopping experiences (Wakefield and Baker 1998). Apart from providing the shoppers' with recreational activities, mall managers should make endeavour to introduce number of loyalty programs that extend economy value and reason to visit malls repeatedly. This in turn would lead to high-value association between the stores and shoppers, besides increasing the drive for store loyalty.

Future Research

This study is based on perception of mall shoppers about activities and attributes of shopping malls. It would be useful to see how opinion on mall attributes translates into behavioural outcomes like satisfaction, repeated visits and purchase (loyalty), and recommending it to others (advocacy). Future research could examine the relationship between shoppers' activities and factors, such as mall loyalty and mall satisfaction. Also, similar studies can be conducted at other Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities across India, which will further validate the results of the present study. This would

provide greater insights to mall managers in developing strategic frameworks for catering to the needs of shoppers from these non-metropolitan cities. Future research can also focus on comparative studies between respondents from Tier 1 cities vs. other emerging cities.

EXHIBIT 1

Shopping Malls in Raipur – Basic Perspectives

1. **City Mall 36:** Established in the year 2008 and promoted by City Mall Developers. Located on GE Road, Raipur, India, it has an area of 350,000 square feet. Prominent outlets located in this mall are Globus, DLF Brands, Lotus Electronics, Fab India, Food Court, Amoeba Gaming Zone and Inox Cinemas.

2. **City Center:** Gupta Infrastructure Developers promoted mall opened in the year 2010. It is situated in the heart of the city at Pandri, Raipur, India. The gross leased area of this mall is around 650,000 square feet. Central, Reliance, Big Bazaar, Food Court, Café Coffee Day, Gaming Zone, Cinemax, etc. are some of the well-known brands situated in this mall.

3. **Magneto Mall:** Opened in 2010, this mall has been owned by Avinash Developers. With gross leased area of 1,035,000 square feet, this mall is located on the GE Road, Raipur, India. It hosts many of the national and international brands like, Easyday (Hyper Market), Westside, Hyatt Hotel, Time Zone (Gaming Zone), Food Court and PVR Cinemas.

4. **Ambuja City Center**: Opened for public in 2013, this has been developed and promoted by Ambuja Neotia Group. Located at Mowa, Raipur, India, this mall has retail mix of international, national and local brands including Shopper's Stop, Pantaloons, Inox, Lifestyle Max, Spencer's, Hangout and Time Zone, Adidas, Nike, Puma, United Colors of Benetton, Blackberry, Fabindia, Reebok, Bata, Woodland, etc.

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