Chapter I

Introduction
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

“A good shopping mall is the one that offers entertainment, excitement and enlightenment”

– Gershman

1.1 Background

India’s ascendance as an economic power to reckon with, has forced the world to unravel the mystery called India. An intriguing element of this mystery is India’s consumer market; characterized by diverse languages, regions, religions, economic and social status, this market has always been a tricky proposition to understand (Jain, 2013). The KS Oils Limited (2008) report stated that as the consumer market has undergone a paradigm shift due to India’s rapid economic growth and favourable demographics, it has also become a market impossible to dismiss. The growth in India’s consumer market will be primarily driven by a favourable population composition and rising disposable incomes.

The Indian retailer seems to be enjoying this phenomenon and does not want to leave any stone unturned when it comes to satisfying the consumer’s needs and wants. ‘Consumer is king’ seems to be the mantra in every retailer’s agenda.

1.2 Indian retail scenario

India, by its land mass is the world’s largest country and population wise it is the second largest. According to the India Retail Report (2013), India with a population of over 1.2 billion and an average household size of more than 4 people, the Indian retail market is amongst the largest and fastest growing in the world. Add this to the fact that it also has the largest pool of young population amongst all countries in the world and it will be nearly impossible to overlook the potential attractiveness of the Indian retail market.

The Malls of India (2014) report states that growing at a healthy rate of 15% to 19%, Indian retail is expected to generate sales worth over ₹ 56.8 trillion by 2016, and hence it is rightly called the ‘Sunrise Industry’ of India.
1.2.1 Organised retail in India

Organized retail business in India is developing at an enormous pace than never before, but it is largely unorganized. A study by Images Research (2014)\(^6\) revealed that organised (or) modern retail in India is expected to cross ₹ 6.3 trillion and thereby account to a significant 25% of the Indian retail industry by 2016.

Transformation is one word which can best describe the state of the Indian retail industry. Retailing in India by its very nature, is a dynamic industry (Pradhan, 2012)\(^7\). According to Kondap, N. M. (2009)\(^8\), the total concept and idea of shopping has undergone an attention drawing change in terms of format and consumer buying behaviour. Innovative retail entrepreneurs are taking advantage of the new opportunities to become the next generation of industry players. From the conventional kirana shops, bazaars, mandis, the Indian retail market has moved towards new retail formats such as department stores, shopping malls, hyper markets and franchise retail chains. Traditional retailers need to understand the change and adapt themselves or may have to shut shop.

With many states in India favouring the Government of India’s move to allow 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in single brand retailing and 51% FDI in multi brand retailing, the phenomenon will have a multiplier effect on the country’s retail scene.

1.3 Concept of shopping and shopping malls

At this point it becomes significant to understand the concept and definition of shopping and shopping malls.

While the Barter system is considered to be the oldest form of retail trade, over the years the concept of retailing and shopping has undergone a sea change from the perspective of the seller and the buyer. Begginton, N.C. (1982)\(^9\) defined ‘shopping’, as “an activity for almost every individual in a civilized society for a selection of goods and services, in an exciting ambience with the right products and services to initiate interest in customers”.

Retail anthropologist Underhill (2010)\(^10\), in his book “Why we buy: The science of shopping”, defines shopping as “retail therapy” because people shop for both necessity and recreation.
Furthermore with the growth of new age retail formats the most revolutionary one seems to be a shopping mall. The concept of a shopping mall was originally conceived as a community centre where people would converge for shopping, cultural activities and social interaction. Dawson, J.A., & Lord, J.D. (1985)\textsuperscript{11} defined a ‘shopping centre’ as “a group of establishments which is ‘designed, planned, developed, owned, marketed and managed as a unit’”.

Traditional developers attracted consumers to malls through the promise of making available a wide assortment of stores and merchandise at a single location (Singh & Srinivasan, 2012)\textsuperscript{12}. Chyuan (2009)\textsuperscript{13} rightly stated that a ‘shopping mall’, is a modern adaptation of the historical marketplace. The mall is a collection of independent retail stores, services, and a parking area, which is conceived, constructed, and maintained by a separate management firm as a unit. He further states in his thesis that in the modern era shopping malls have emerged as places for social gatherings, weekend family outings and more.

1.3.1 Evolution of shopping malls in India

The growth of modern retail has paved way for the escalating development of shopping malls in India. With just 3 shopping malls in the 1990’s – Spencer Plaza (Chennai), Crossroads (Mumbai) and Ansal Plaza (New Delhi), the country at present boosts of 470 operational malls and is estimated to have 720 operational shopping malls by the year 2016 (Malls of India, 2014)\textsuperscript{14}.

Going by the figures it becomes essential to understand India’s position in the shopping mall life cycle curve. Like all products and services, shopping malls also have a ‘life cycle’.

According to Lowry, J.R (1997)\textsuperscript{15}, a shopping mall’s stage in the life cycle curve is determined by a host of factors such as the mall’s age, market factors, shopping mall developer strategies, tenant strategies, competitive forces, changes in shopper behaviour and changes in the market place.

In order to depict a clear picture of India’s position in the mall life cycle stages, figure no. 1.1 illustrates the life cycle stages of shopping malls across the globe:
It is evident from the above figure that shopping malls in India are in the development stage of the shopping mall life cycle curve along with China. China can boast of developing the world’s largest mall – ‘New South China Mall’ that houses more than 2,400 stores, but it is estimated that 99% of the leasable area of the mall is unoccupied and remains vacant. With this situation the mall earned itself the tag ‘ghost town’ and was declared a ‘dead mall’ (Malls of India, 2014)\(^{17}\). The failure of the world’s largest mall can be attributed to sky rocketing tenant rents, inefficient promotion strategy and inadequacy to identify the right consumer group. On the other hand, South East Asia in the maturity stage of the mall life cycle curve has had a phenomenal success with its shopping malls. Malls in Dubai attract shoppers from all over world during the ‘Dubai shopping festival’.

India’s position in the development stage of the mall life cycle curve, gives Indian mall developers and retailers ample scope and opportunity to innovate on the mall offerings. With India still in the development stage of the mall lifecycle, mistakes committed during this phase can be taken as lessons and guiding principles for charting a future course of action, and the future of shopping malls could indeed be bright (Singh, Bose, & Sahay, 2010)\(^{18}\).
Shopping mall developers in India have to learn from their counterparts in the United States and the United Kingdom regarding the plethora of experiences that have to be encountered in the various stages of the mall life cycle, as attracting the consumer footfalls will be the major challenge before every mall developer and retail tenant.

1.3.2. New age shopping experience – Emergence of ‘shopping mall culture’ in Chennai

Shopping malls existed in Chennai even before they became a style statement in the rest of India. Chennai, then Madras, had its first tryst with a fancy shopping area in the up market location of Mount Road with Spencer Plaza launched in 1963. In the past 10 years, shopping malls were seen mushrooming in the city of Chennai at a very rapid speed. And now, at present Chennai has 17 operational malls and 7 upcoming malls will be launched during different time spans in the city (Malls of India, 2014)\(^{19}\).

As shopping malls are being built and created across Chennai, the city has developed its ‘mall culture’ (Doelger, 2002)\(^ {20}\), and this is one culture that the consumers and retailers are happy about – “The Shopping Mall Culture”. Shopping malls in Chennai have turned the city into a shopper’s paradise. Most malls in Chennai are situated at the epicenter of the city and are surrounded by new residential projects, IT parks and five star hotels thus attracting more consumers into their fold (Venkataraman, 2011)\(^ {21}\). Most of the shopping malls have focused on offering a variety of entertainment options for shoppers and every upcoming mall in the city is slated to have has a food court and a multiplex.

With shopping malls being seen across the city and with more malls lined up to adorn the skyline of Chennai, this study comes as a versatile piece of research which would serve as a threshold to understand the dynamism of consumer preferences towards malls, consumer’s decision making style and their adaptation to the mall culture in Chennai.

1.4 Shopping mall preferences of Chennai consumers

Sprawling shopping malls in Chennai that offer shopping, entertainment and food all under one roof have become the most preferred retail format for consumers to visit (Dhanabhakyam, M., & Shanthi, A., 2011)\(^ {22}\). Consumers differ in their
preferences for shopping malls based on their multiple demographic, socio-economic variables, behavioural variables, attitude and shopping orientation (Kuruvilla, & Joshi, 2011). Shopping malls in the city of Chennai have become the base for best selling national and international brands to occupy retail space – this has made the consumers become more sensitive to quality, customer service and status (Tripathi, 2011). As consumers visit shopping malls for a plethora of reasons, understanding the consumer’s preference towards a mall can facilitate mall managers and mall tenants to deliver the exact expected value that the consumer seeks.

### 1.5 Consumer Decision Making Styles

Decision-making is more complex and even more important for consumers today than in the past. Consumers are besieged by social media, advertising, news articles, and direct mailings that provide an abundance of information, much of it with mixed messages, hence identifying basic characteristics of Consumer Decision Making Styles is central to consumer – interest studies (Hanzaee & Lotfizadeh, 2011).

Sproles & Kendall (1986) defined Consumer Decision Making Style (CDMS) as “a mental orientation characterizing a consumer’s approach to making choices”. They believe that consumers engage in shopping with certain fundamental decision – making modes or styles including rational shopping, consciousness regarding brand, price and quality among others. Sproles and Kendall (1986) constructed the Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) to measure consumers’ shopping behaviour using decision making orientation. They made an assumption about Consumers’ Decision Making Styles, that consumers have eight different decision making characteristics that determine the shopping decision they make.

Sproles & Kendall (1986) identified and validated eight different characteristics from a sample of 482 United States high school students. The eight potential styles of consumers’ decision making were identified from a total of 40 items pertaining to affective and cognitive orientations in decision making are as follows:-
• Perfectionist / high quality – conscious consumer: Decision style of consumers who carefully and systematically search for the best quality products possible. They search for only high quality products.

• Brand conscious / “price equals quality” consumer: Decision style of consumers concerned with getting the most expensive and well-known brands. They have a positive attitude towards popular brands and high priced brands. They also prefer best-selling and advertised brands.

• Novelty and fashion conscious consumer: Decision style of consumers who like new and innovative products and who gain excitement from seeking out new things.

• Recreational, hedonistic and shopping conscious consumer: Decision style of consumers who take pleasure in shopping and who shop just for fun of it.

• Price conscious / “value for the money” consumer: Decision style of consumers who are concerned with getting lower prices. They are likely to be comparison shoppers.

• Impulsiveness / careless consumer: Decision style of consumers who tend to buy spontaneously and who are unconcerned about how much money they spend. They never plan their shopping trips.

• Confused by over choice consumer: Decision style of consumers who feel they have too many brands and stores to choose from and who likely experience information overload in the market and have difficulty making decisions.

• Habitual / brand loyal consumer: Decision style of consumers who shop at the same stores and tend to buy the same brands each time they shop.

Over the years, the Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) has been applied to 16 countries: The United States of America, Korea, New Zealand, China, Germany, India, Hong Kong, Shangai, Singapore, Australia, Turkey, South Africa, Iran, Malaysia, Greece and the United Kingdom.

There is evidence that decision making styles can vary across cultures. Consumers may have more than one style of decision – making and it may change depending on the situation (Azizi & Makkizadeh, 2012). The actual
purchase process is considered as a part of decision – making and is influenced by physiological aspects.

Consumer Decision Making Styles form the crux of this study. Knowledge of CDMS is evidently significant to marketers and mall developers as it is linked to the consumer’s purchase behaviour. Characterizing consumers in this way allows marketers differentiate their offerings both at the store and product level. This concern is particularly relevant to the debate around the standardization of multi – country marketing activities where local market conditions may require tailor made marketing programs.

The present study examines the decision making styles adopted by consumers in Chennai shopping malls.

1.6 Shopping mall footfall drivers

Shopping malls contribute to business more significantly than traditional markets, which are viewed as a simple convergence of supply and demand. Shopping malls provide enough time for shoppers to shop and indulge in recreational activities. However, competition between malls, congestion of markets and traditional shopping stores have led mall developers and mall managers to consider alternative methods to build excitement in customers (Rajagopal, 2009)30. 

A shopping mall is not a just sum of all its stores. Shopping mall operators and retail tenants should constantly work towards creating a shopping environment, which would create a positive influence on the consumers shopping behaviour during his/her, visit to a mall. Mall operators and mall managers should try out innovative ways to keep the footfall rising. Understanding consumer’s preferences and decision making styles while shopping at a mall is vital for mall managers and mall tenants. This would help them in strategizing and implementing the right footfall drivers to attract the consumer footfalls.

The present study tries to consolidate the various footfall drivers in malls that stand as a testimony to attract consumers to a mall.
1.7 Rationale for this study

Chennai is the only city in South Asia and India to figure in the list of “52 places to go around the world” released by The New York Times and is the host to the third largest expatriate population in India after Mumbai and Delhi. Hence, the researcher deemed it appropriate to select the city of Chennai for the purpose of this research.

The Chennai mall industry is in its nascent stage, as it is a little behind than its southern counterparts in terms of mall development; where by the malls are operated by trial and error method. Kuruvilla & Joshi (2011) quoted that the shopping mall operators’ attitude towards shopping malls and consumers is – “Build them and they will come”.

Mitra, M. (2006) stated in her research report that shoppers were spending more time in a mall than money at the malls’ stores, as people visit the food court, cafés, spend the whole day there and pass their time. The malls always seem to be crowded, but most of the mall visitors come for window shopping and not for actual shopping. When the promised footfall and conversions do not materialize, then the relationship between the retailer and the mall management sours (Dhume & Sharma, 2012). This shocking scenario required the researcher to address the dynamics of Consumer Decision Making Styles adopted in malls and consumer preferences towards shopping malls.

Very few researches have been done on the shopping mall culture of Chennai, but this study, does an in – depth analysis on the emergence of shopping mall culture of Chennai. This study is highly significant in the context of geographic market expansion of retail organizations and the development of a global consumer market whereby marketers and retail brand managers are keen to learn and understand the dynamics of buying behaviour patterns of consumers of different cultural backgrounds (Jamal, A., Davies, F., Chudry, F., & Al-Marri, M., 2006).

This study is an important step towards profiling consumers, thereby providing more meaningful ways to identify and understand various consumer segments and to target each segment with more focused marketing strategies. This study will be of high relevance to modern retailers as the choice of a shopping mall is in essence a lifestyle decision for many consumers. By understanding why
consumers go shopping, shopping mall operators can design their marketing strategies to improve mall shopping excitement and increase the consumer’s dwell time in shopping malls.

1.8 Objectives of the study

The following are defined as the objectives of this study for conducting the research:

- To study the emergence of shopping mall culture in Chennai.
- To investigate the mall preferences and decision making styles exhibited by consumers in Chennai shopping malls.
- To verify the existence of the relationship among shopping mall culture, shopping mall preference and Consumer Decision Making Styles.
- To examine the influence of shopping mall culture and shopping mall preference on Consumer Decision Making Styles.
- To explore variations in shopping mall culture, shopping mall preference and Consumer Decision Making Styles across consumer demographic variables.
- To identify mall footfall drivers that attract consumers to a shopping mall.
- To identify the gaps between shopping mall footfall drivers and consumer expectations of an ideal shopping mall.
- To formulate a model for the development of an ideal shopping mall.

1.9 Research Methodology

1.9.1 Research design

The present study is based on an innovative and analytical research design. This research adopts quantitative research methods. Quantitative research method involves human observation and responses that were collected in the form of a survey from the respondents that has been organised and presented in a clear and systematic manner to provide accurate conclusions.

A combination of two types of research methodologies have been employed in this study – Exploratory research and Descriptive research. Exploratory research is employed by reviewing existing literature to comprehend and gain insight of
the concept of mall culture, mall preference, Consumer Decision Making Styles and shopping mall footfall drivers. On the other hand Descriptive research is employed by using a research instrument to conduct mall intercept surveys among shoppers and mall tenants.

1.10 Sample Selection

1.10.1 Scope of the study

This study has been undertaken among the consumers and retail tenants of shopping malls in the city of Chennai – the fourth largest metropolitan city in India and the capital of Tamil Nadu. All operational shopping malls in the city of Chennai were considered for this study. At present the city of Chennai encompass 17 operational shopping malls. Table no. 1.1 shows the various operational shopping malls in the city of Chennai.

Table no. 1.1 – Table showing operational shopping malls in the city of Chennai

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Shopping malls in Chennai</th>
<th>Location in Chennai</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Abirami Mega Mall</td>
<td>Kilpauk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Alsa Mall</td>
<td>Egmore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ampa SkyWalk</td>
<td>Aminjikarai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Bergamo</td>
<td>Nungambakkam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Chandra Metro Mall</td>
<td>Virugambakkam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Chennai Citi Centre</td>
<td>R.K.Salai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Coromandel Plaza</td>
<td>Old Mahabalipuram Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Express Avenue</td>
<td>Royapettah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Forum Vijaya Mall</td>
<td>Arcot Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Gold Souk Grande Mall</td>
<td>GST, Vandalur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Grand Mall</td>
<td>Velachery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Ispahani Center</td>
<td>Nungambakkam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Marg Junction</td>
<td>Rajiv Gandhi Salai (OMR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Phoenix Market City</td>
<td>Velachery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Ramee Mall</td>
<td>Teynampet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Spectrum Venus Mall</td>
<td>Perumbur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Spencer Plaza</td>
<td>Anna Salai</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Malls of India – Images Research Report, 2014\(^{36}\)
1.10.2 Sample description

This study has two groups of respondents – consumers visiting shopping malls and retail tenants occupying retail space in shopping malls.

- **Consumers visiting shopping malls**

This study is based on a sample of 500 consumers both male and female. From the pilot survey, in which 100 consumers were interviewed, it was found that in Chennai shopping malls, the average consumer footfalls were around 10,000 daily (Malls of India, 2014)\(^37\). 5% of these footfalls were taken as the sample for the study on consumers. 550 consumers were administered questionnaires both in person (hard copies) and by way of online survey through e-mails (soft copies). Of the 550 questionnaires that were circulated, 524 consumers responded back with completely filled questionnaires. After validating the filled questionnaires and doing a reliability check, 500 consumers’ responses were finalized for the purpose of analysis for the study.

- **Retail tenants in shopping malls**

This study is based on a sample of 150 retail tenants in shopping malls. During the pilot study, it was found that on an average there were 30 stores in a small sized mall and about 200 stores in the large sized malls. Out of the 17 malls, the total average stores came to around 3000 stores (Malls of India, 2014)\(^38\). 5% of the 3000 stores were taken as the sample. 200 retail tenants were administered questionnaires in person, out of which 176 retail tenants responded back with filled questionnaires. After validating the filled questionnaires and doing a reliability check, 150 retail tenants’ responses were finalized for the purpose of analysis for the study.

1.10.3 Sampling technique

In this study convenience sampling technique has been employed to select the sample. This technique is used to select the most convenient element of the population (shoppers at the shopping malls and retail tenants of shopping malls) as the sample.

The distribution of the sample is depicted in table1.2
Table no 1.2 – Table showing distribution of respondents within the sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Shopping malls in Chennai</th>
<th>Consumers</th>
<th>Mall tenants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Abirami Mega Mall</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Alsa Mall</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ampa SkyWalk</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Bergamo</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Chandra Metro Mall</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Chennai Citi Centre</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Coromandel Plaza</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Express Avenue</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Forum Vijaya Mall</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Gold Souk Grande Mall</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Grand mall</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Ispahani Center</td>
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Marg Junction</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Phoenix Market City</td>
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<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Ramee Mall</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Spectrum Venus Mall</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Spencer Plaza</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total sample size</strong></td>
<td><strong>500</strong></td>
<td><strong>150</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Primary data

1.11 Modus Operandi of data collection

1.11.1 Nature of data used

In the present study, both primary and secondary sources of data have been utilized.

- **Primary sources**

Structured questionnaires were used to collect the primary data. The respondents were contacted in person and by sending the soft copy of the questionnaires by way of e–mail. All the respondents were briefed on the particulars to fill the questionnaires, prior to their filling the questionnaires. Incomplete questionnaires were disregarded.
• **Secondary sources**

Published data were collected from the following libraries:

- American Consulate Library – Chennai
- British Council – Chennai
- Institute for Financial Management & Research – Chennai
- Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore – Bengaluru
- Indian Institute of Technology, Madras – Chennai
- Indian School of Business – Hyderabad
- M.O.P.Vaishnav College for Women – Chennai
- University of Madras – Chennai

**1.12 Research instrument development process**

The research instruments are derived from well established journals and previous literatures. The research has been conducted using structured questionnaires. The research instrument development process is outlined as follows:

**1.12.1 Questionnaires for consumers visiting shopping malls**

The questionnaire consisted of 5 major sections which total to 101 items of questions.

**Section I – Shopping mall culture in Chennai**

This section of the questionnaire consisted of 4 multiple choice enabled questions and 22 statements pertaining to the retail growth and shopping mall culture in the city of Chennai. Respondents had to assess their adaptation to the mall culture in Chennai in relation to the statements. The four multiple choice enabled questions put forth to the respondent included:

- Frequency of mall visit
- Purpose of mall visit
- Preferred day for mall visit
- Preferred time for mall visit
These questions were designed in a multiple choice and close ended format. The respondents had to tick the relevant answer.

The 22 statements pertaining to mall culture comprised of the following components:

- Growth of the retail sector in Chennai
- Shopping mall development in Chennai
- Tenant mix in the mall
- Wholesome shopping experience offered by malls with entertainment options

The respondents were asked to measure their adaptation to shopping mall culture on a five point Likert scale ("strongly agree", "agree", "neutral", "disagree" and "strongly disagree").

**Section II – Shopping mall preference of consumers**

This section of the questionnaire consisted of 23 statements that pertained to the consumer’s preferences towards shopping malls in Chennai. After a methodical analysis of literature pertaining to consumer preferences towards malls, a comprehensive set of statements were presented to the respondents encompassing the following components:

- Mall environment
- Economic parameters
- Hedonistic attributes
- Social experiential characteristics

The respondents were asked to measure their mall preferences on a five point Likert scale ("strongly agree", "agree", "neutral", "disagree" and "strongly disagree").

**Section III – Consumer Decision Making Styles adopted in malls**

This section comprised of 42 statements adapted from the Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) employed by Sproles and Kendall (1986) to profile consumers based on their Consumer Decision Making Styles. The respondents had to assess
their decision making style while shopping in a mall based on the statements. After extensive review of literature based on Consumer Decision Making Styles across cultures and the utilization of the Consumer Style Inventory, the following comprehensive set of decision styles were put forth to the respondents in this section; they are as follows:

- Perfectionism
- Brand consciousness
- Novelty / fashion consciousness
- Recreational
- Price consciousness
- Impulsiveness
- Confused by over choice
- Brand loyal
- Shopping avoidance
- Variety seeking
- Irrational
- Undemanding
- Lethargic
- Attitudinal perfectionist
- Time energy conserving

The respondents were asked to measure their decision making style on a five point Likert scale (“strongly agree”, “agree”, “neutral”, “disagree” and “strongly disagree”).

Section IV – Expectations of an ideal shopping mall

This section pertains to the details regarding a consumer’s expectations of an ideal shopping mall. This section comprised of 3 questions which includes the following:
• Favorite shopping mall in Chennai
• The reason for liking/preference towards that particular mall
• Expectations and services/features to be present in the ideal shopping mall

All the three questions were open ended. Respondents had to elaborate on their answers.

Section V – Demographic profile of respondents

This section pertains to the demographic profile of the respondents. This section comprised of 7 questions which includes the following:

• Age of the respondent
• Gender of the respondent
• Marital status of the respondent
• Level of education of the respondent
• Profession of the respondent
• Monthly family income of the respondent
• Number of dependents for the respondent

These questions were designed in a multiple choice and close ended format. The respondents had to tick the relevant answer. Table no.1.3 summarizes the various sources used to develop the questionnaire.

Table no. 1.3 – Summary of sources used to develop the questionnaire for consumers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Section I</td>
<td>Shopping mall culture in Chennai</td>
<td>Anuradha &amp; Manohar (2011)(^{40}) and Self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section II</td>
<td>Shopping mall preference of consumers</td>
<td>Chyuan (2009)(^{41}) and Virdi (2011)(^{42})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section III</td>
<td>Consumer Decision Making Styles</td>
<td>Sproles &amp; Kendall (1986)(^{43})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Leo, Bennett &amp; Hartel (2005)(^{44})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chyuan (2009)(^{45}) and Mokhlis (2011)(^{46})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section IV</td>
<td>Expectations of an ideal shopping mall</td>
<td>Self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section V</td>
<td>Demographic profile of respondents</td>
<td>Self</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled data
1.12.2 Questionnaires for retail tenants in shopping malls

The questionnaire targeting retail tenants consisted of 5 major sections which total to 66 items of questions.

Section I – Profile of consumers visiting shopping malls

This section of the questionnaire consisted of 4 multiple choice enabled questions pertaining to the personal profile of consumers frequenting shopping malls in Chennai. The questions put forth to the respondents included:

- Age group of consumers frequenting malls
- Background of consumers frequenting malls
- Social class of consumers frequenting malls
- Preference of companion for consumers to frequent malls

These questions were designed in a multiple choice and close ended format. The respondents had to tick the relevant answer.

Section II – Essentials and shopping mall requirements

This section of the questionnaire consisted of 10 multiple choice enabled questions pertaining to the essentials and requirements required for a shopping mall. The questions put forth to the respondents included the following components:

- Requirement for professional mall management
- Ideal operating hours for malls
- Floor requirements in a mall
- Requirements of parking lots in a mall
- Location of the food court in a mall
- Location of the multiplex in a mall
- Combination of escalators in a mall
- Ideal combination of stairs, escalators and elevators
- Requirement for anchor tenants
- Requirement for theme malls

These questions were designed in a multiple choice and close ended format. The respondents had to tick the relevant answer.

Section III – Factors affecting the popularity and likingness of a mall

This section comprised of 3 questions pertaining to the factors that would affect the popularity and likingness of a shopping mall by consumers. A comprehensive set of statements pertaining to the factors affecting the popularity and likingness of a mall in terms of the following components:

- Location and tenant mix
- Infrastructure
- Essential services provided to consumers

These questions were designed in a multiple choice and close ended format and the respondents had the option to tick more than one relevant answer.

Section IV – Mall footfall drivers responsible for attracting consumers to a mall

This section comprised of 46 statements pertaining to the overall opinion of mall tenants about shopping mall footfall drivers that are instrumental in attracting consumers to a shopping mall. After a methodical analysis of literature pertaining to mall footfall drivers, a comprehensive set of statements were presented to the respondents encompassing the following components:

- Mall environment and atmosphere
- Location
- Safety
- Entertainment quotient
- Tenant mix
- Mall marketing and positioning strategies
- Mall image
- Customer retention
• Service encounters and efficiency of mall assistants
• Parking facilities and traffic management
• Local competition

The respondents were asked to measure the mall footfall drivers on a five point Likert scale ("strongly agree", "agree", "neutral", "disagree" and "strongly disagree").

Section V – Details of mall tenants

This section pertains to the details regarding the shopping mall tenants. This section comprised of 3 questions which includes the following:

• Name of the retail outlet / shopping mall
• Year of establishment of shopping mall
• Opinion regarding competition from standalone stores

All the three questions were open ended. Respondents had to elaborate on their answers. The question regarding the name of the retail outlet / shopping mall was optional.

Table no.1.4 summarizes the sources used to develop the questionnaire.

Table no. 1.4 – Summary of sources used to develop the questionnaire for retail tenants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Section I</td>
<td>Profile of consumers visiting shopping malls</td>
<td>Self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section II</td>
<td>Essentials and shopping mall requirements</td>
<td>Virdi (2011)(^{47}) and Self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section III</td>
<td>Factors influencing the popularity and likingness of a shopping mall</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section IV</td>
<td>Mall foot fall drivers responsible for attracting consumers to a mall</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section V</td>
<td>Particulars related to mall tenants</td>
<td>Self</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled data
1.12.3 Scale development for research instrument

This study employs Likert’s five point scale, invented by Likert (1932)\(^48\). Likert’s scale is a widely used psychometric scale used in research instruments to capture the intensity of a respondent’s feelings for a given statement. In this study the Likert’s five point scale is used to measure the perception of respondents (consumers) regarding shopping mall culture, mall preference and Consumer Decision Making Styles. The scale is also used to measure the perception of the other set of respondents (shopping mall tenants) regarding shopping mall footfall drivers that are instrumental in attracting consumers to a mall.

The categorical variables are measured based on a five point Likert – type scale, ranging from 5 – “strongly agree”, 4 – “agree”, 3 – “neutral”, 2 – “disagree” and 1 – “strongly disagree”. Respondents were asked to express their agreement or disagreement of the statements on the five point scale.

All the statements in both the research instruments were carefully selected from previous established scales in the same context. However the scales have been modified according to the present situation.

1.13 Pilot study and Pre – testing

A preliminary investigation was undertaken by contacting 100 consumers and 30 retail tenants in Chennai shopping malls to identify the important variables regarding the dimensions of sustainability. The purpose of the pilot study was to test the adequacy of the items in the questionnaire and to confirm the feasibility of the study.

The findings of the pilot study questionnaire that was administered on the sample and the feedback from the respondents were incorporated in the final design of the questionnaire.

1.13.1 Reliability and validity of the pilot study

The reliability statistics of the pilot study was verified through Cronbach’s Alpha Co – efficient over 5 point scale statements. Cronbach's Alpha (\(\alpha\)) is a coefficient of internal consistency that is commonly used as an estimate of the reliability of a psychometric test for a sample of examines. Cronbach, L. J., (1951)\(^49\) gives the following consistency values for statistics reliability as shown in Table 1.5:
Table no. 1.5 – Table showing Cronbach's Alpha (α) benchmark values and interpretation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha (α) – Benchmark values</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>α ≥ 0.9</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.7 ≤ α &lt; 0.9</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.6 ≤ α &lt; 0.7</td>
<td>Acceptable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.5 ≤ α &lt; 0.6</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>α &lt; 0.5</td>
<td>Unacceptable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Cronbach, L. J., (1951)

The Cronbach’s Alpha values for the pilot study are as follows:

- **Questionnaires for consumers visiting shopping malls**

  The reliability statistics of the pilot study pertaining to shopping mall culture, shopping mall preference and Consumer Decision Making Styles were revealed through Cronbach’s Alpha Co-efficient over 5 point scale statements.

  - The Cronbach’s Alpha value was 0.762 in the case of the variables pertaining to shopping mall culture. This was considered as a good and feasible benchmark value to be used in the final questionnaire.

  - The Cronbach’s Alpha value was 0.735 for the variables of shopping mall preference, which is a little below the benchmark value of 0.75, so the researcher identified the likelihood statements and removed it subsequently.

  - In the case of Consumer Decision Making Styles the Cronbach’s Alpha value was 0.855, which possessed the variance at 85.5% level. Therefore the same variables were considered good and feasible to be used in the final questionnaire.

- **Questionnaires for retail tenants in shopping malls**

  In the case of the shopping mall tenants’ perception, the reliability analysis of the pilot study was found to be very high and significant. The results showed that Cronbach’s Alpha value for the variables affecting consumer footfalls and responsible for attracting consumers to a shopping mall was 0.913, which is an excellent benchmark value. The results depicted that the retailers’ perception is normally distributed with a wide variance at 91.3% and therefore the study domain was considered fruitful and conducive to conduct the research.
1.14 Tools of analysis

The primary data collected was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The following statistical tools were employed for data analysis:

- **Percentage Analysis** has been applied to describe the demographic profile of consumers and the perception of shopping mall tenants.

- **Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)** has been used to identify the factors responsible for the emergence of shopping mall culture in Chennai, shopping mall preferences of Chennai consumers, Consumer Decision Making Styles and shopping mall footfall drivers.

- **Cluster Analysis** has been applied to know the natural grouping of the respondents based on their perceptual differences regarding the shopping mall culture in Chennai, shopping mall preference and Consumer Decision Making Styles.

- **Chi – Square Analysis and Cross tabulations** have been employed to examine the relationship among shopping mall culture, shopping mall preference and Consumer Decision Making Styles. It is also used to examine the association of the respondent’s demographic profile with shopping mall culture, shopping mall preference and Consumer Decision Making Styles.

- **Multiple Regression Analysis** has been applied to study the collective influence of shopping mall culture and shopping mall preference on a particular Consumer Decision Making Style.

- **One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)** has been used to study the influence of the demographic profile of respondents on various factors of shopping mall culture, shopping mall preference and Consumer Decision Making Styles.

- **Gap analysis** has been employed to derive the gap between shopping mall footfall drivers and consumers’ expectations of an ideal mall.

- **Structural Equation Model (SEM)** has been employed to develop a model for an ideal shopping mall using **AMOS (Analysis of Moment Structure) software**.

Figure 1.2 displays the various tools of analysis used in this study.
Figure no. 1.2 – Tools of analysis – In a nutshell

MALL CONSUMER → Demographics profile → Percentage analysis

- Shopping mall culture in Chennai
- Shopping mall preference of consumers
- Consumer Decision Making Styles in shopping malls

MALL TENANT

- Shopping mall footfall drivers

Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity & Kaiser – Meyer – Olkin (KMO)

Exploratory Factor Analysis

- Cluster analysis
- Chi – Square Associations
- Multiple Regression analysis
- One way Analysis of Variance

Structural Equation Modeling for the ideal shopping mall using AMOS

Gap analysis

Consumer expectations of an ideal shopping mall

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1.15 Scheme of chapterisation

The chapter wise breakup of the present study is given below:

**Chapter I – “Introduction”** – It comprises of a brief summary of the research background, research objectives, research methodology, data collection techniques, research instrument development process, limitations and the plan of the study.

**Chapter II – “Review of Literature”** – It presents the review of the published literature on the Indian retail scenario, shopping mall culture, shopping mall preference, Consumer Decision Making Styles and shopping mall footfall drivers. The chapter also enumerates the research gaps identified from the review of literature.

**Chapter III – “Conceptual framework of the proposed relationship among mall culture, mall preference and Consumer Decision Making Styles”** – In this chapter the researcher develops a conceptual framework and analyses the proposed relationship among shopping mall culture, shopping mall preference and Consumer Decision Making Styles.

**Chapter IV – “Influence of mall culture and mall preference on Consumer Decision Making Styles”** – This chapter consists of a detailed analysis of the combined influence of shopping mall culture and shopping mall preference on Consumer Decision Making Styles.

**Chapter V – “Variations in mall culture, mall preference and Consumer Decision Making Styles across different demographic variables”** – This chapter analyses the variations in mall culture, mall preference and Consumer Decision Making Styles across consumer demographic variables like age, gender, marital status, education, profession, monthly family income and number of dependents.

**Chapter VI – “The ideal shopping mall”** – This chapter is the crux of the thesis as it enumerates the mall tenant’s perception regarding shopping mall footfall drivers that attract consumers to malls and the consumer’s expectations of an ideal shopping mall. Gap analysis has been employed to identify the gap between shopping mall footfall drivers and consumer’s expectations of an ideal shopping
mall. A Structural Equation Modeling is employed for developing an ideal shopping mall.

Chapter VII – “Summary of findings, suggestions and conclusion” – This chapter contains a detailed discussion of the study. The findings, suggestions for stakeholders and conclusion of the research are put forward. The agenda for further research is also enumerated.

Figure 1.3 displays the scheme of chapterisation of this study in a nutshell.

**Figure no. 1.3 – Scheme of chapterisation – In a nutshell**

1.16 Limitations of the study

Every piece of research has its own set of limitations which can arise during the course of conducting it. Besides the apparent and influencing limitations of time, there were certain other limitations of the current research, which future studies in this area can / should seek to overcome.

This research faced the following limitations –

- The study is limited to shopping malls in the city of Chennai only. The study cannot be generalized to other parts of Tamil Nadu and India.
• Studying consumer behaviour is a very complex process as consumers are influenced by various factors – these factors can differ from one consumer to another consumer and from time to time for the same consumer.

• During the course of data collection few retailers in the shopping malls were reluctant to divulge information about their business activity.

• When the study was commenced in 2010 there were only 8 established malls in Chennai, but during the course of the study several malls cropped up in the city making it difficult to consolidate the data.

1.17 Ethical considerations

This study is based on studying consumer groups, their preferences and decision making styles in shopping malls and the shopping mall tenants’ views on mall footfall drivers. The consumer and the tenants’ right of confidentiality and privacy are important, as will the sensitivity to making demands on their time. The researcher approached these issues through informed consent, through explanations of the research, guarantees of confidentiality and anonymity in the thesis and acceptance of reluctance or refusals in interviews. At this juncture, the researcher deems it is important to recognize the assistance of mall managers and mall assistants.
REFERENCES


and Attribute Importance on Mall Patronage. 3rd IIMA Conference on Marketing Paradigms for Emerging Economies


31. The New York Times (Jan 10th, 2014). Travel Supplementary. p. 1A


