



A Sociological Study on the Perception of Consumers Towards Mall Culture In Tricity

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Abstract

This paper summarizes the key findings of an extensive research study recently completed in the Tricity. The study focuses on the perception of consumers towards the mall culture in Tricity. A sample of three-hundred respondents, 24-65 years of males and females visiting three malls in Tricity was taken. Results have underlined that the overall ambience of the shopping malls attracts a large number of visitors, who stay longer hours in the shopping malls and take part in compulsive buying. In addition, competitive sales promotions of retail stores in the shopping malls bring variety-seeking behaviour as well as form store loyalty among the buyers. Besides, the mall culture promise to provide comfort, style, coolness and convenience under one roof, all these advantages somehow force the consumers to link up their lives with this incredible and dazzling 'mall culture'.

Keywords: Ambience, Consumers, Mall Culture, Perception, Shopping, Stores, Tricity

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I. INTRODUCTION

In this fast forward world where India has been passing through the phase of metamorphosis from unexciting shopping activities to make shopping an enjoyable and lavish experience, we all are witnessing the different colours of mall culture. This new way of life is a new phenomenon that has brought a kind of revolution in the scenario of Indian market. Furthermore, this new-fangled culture has grown at an implausible rate all across India, particularly in the metropolitan cities.

The growing trends of westernization in addition to the surfacing of multi-nationals have somewhere brought the effect of consumerism in the whole country. The uncomfortable process of shopping particularly at different shops under the scorching summer sun or with humid weather has now been put at ease due to the emergence of mall culture where everything is available under one roof. The words that catch our attention when we hear the word "mall" are shopping, fun, food, movies and in fact hanging out with family or friends on a weekend or holiday. In the present times, not only youngsters but aged people also prefer to visit the mall as the place helps them to get a free-entry to the air-conditioner interior during the summer heat, to pass out their free time, to change their mood and to relish the delicious cuisines accessible in these multiplexes. On the other hand, to catch the attention of the customers, various schemes and eye-catching prizes are used by various companies these days. This is the sure success formulae that actually work to hook up the consumers to make them visit the malls. In this age, advertisements are again an important source to attract the customers all the way through the channels of mass media. Every day we receive plenty of information related to shopping, fun, food, movies along with various deals that are available in the big malls through e- papers, e-mail, What's app, Facebook, Tweeter, Radio FM, etc. Thus, the mall culture has totally changed the concept of shopping and entertainment, thereby attracting the customers towards various deals and offers which are usually offered by them time and again.

Rathod, Raj Kumar (2017) mall culture is the culture of learned and shared shopping experiences in malls. They suggested the best way to understand mall culture is by understanding the mall culture of Delhi, Gurugram, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore, etc. Raj Kumar considers that the mall culture is engaged where the population density is high, people have a high income, and are brand conscious, specifically he focused on the unmarried youth, who have high income and fewer expenses, these people are more shopaholics. He studied 250 mall visitors to find that whether the mall visitors have a significant attitude towards malls or not. He found that the people or the respondents have an optimistic view of the mall culture in India and want the malls to be proliferated in the country, where they could enjoy with their families, friends. They want malls

to be the place to hang out not only for shopping, but to have the kid's zone, dining, fun activities and many more. But another fact is that mall culture has already developed and had much more to offer just than shopping.

Nisha (2018) the study focuses on the mall culture, that how the traditional retail scenario has changed to the organized retail business in India. The study focuses on the emergence of shopping mall culture in Chennai. It examines the consumer's decision-making style and how the consumers get attached to the shopping malls. The study was conducted in 17 shopping malls of Chennai. It was found that the number of female consumers is more than the male, who frequently visit malls. 48 percent of the respondents belonging to the age group of 18-25 visit malls once in a week or twice. The frequent visitors of malls have the monthly family income between 70,000 to 1, 30,000. The consumer visit shopping malls not just for the purpose of shopping, also for the other facilities that these malls provide under single roof of gaming, movie theatre, kid's zones, etc.

II. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

After the emergence of mall culture in Tricity, sectors famous for shopping in city beautiful 'Chandigarh' have experienced many setbacks. As a result, the craze of shopping has moved from Sector 17, Sector 19 and Sector 22 to the big and selected malls of Tricity, thereby changing the perception of people towards shopping and spending time. As the shopping malls have brought much more like attractive window displays, customer greetings, and special mall sales that plays an important part in luring customers into spending money, so it becomes more essential to be acquainted with their perceptions on the way to the mall culture.

HYPOTHESIS

It was decided to test the following hypothesis in the present study:

1. Consumers visit shopping malls to relax in response to entertainment avenues available in the malls of Tricity.
2. Consumers visit shopping malls to shop in response to sales promotions employed by different stores in the malls of Tricity.
3. The overall ambience of the shopping malls attracts a large number of visitors, who stay longer hours in the shopping malls and take part in compulsive buying.
4. Competitive sales promotions of retail stores in the shopping malls bring variety-seeking behaviour as well as form store loyalty among the buyers.
5. The relationship between the consumer's satisfaction of the shopping experience and the likelihood of his or her returning to the shopping mall in future will be more for women as compared to men.

III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

For the present study, the customers visiting the malls namely Elante mall, VR Punjab and NH22 in Tricity have been covered. From each mall, first-hand information was collected from hundred respondents. Fifty males and fifty females were covered from each mall in order to study their perception towards the emerging mall culture. The sample group includes youth, housewives, working men and women along with retired persons. From among those who took more interest in the present study, approximately ten informants from each mall were selected as case studies. In this way, a sample of three-hundred respondents (in-between 24-65 years of age) was taken in the study. Convenience sampling method has been used for selecting the sample.

Both primary and secondary data have been used in the present study. For primary data, a well structured interview schedule was developed and administered to the customers visiting the selected malls in Tricity. Both open-ended and close-ended questions were used in the interview schedule to collect the data from the respondents. For secondary data, existing literature in the form of books, journals, magazines, papers and web sources were also consulted.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. PERCEPTION TOWARDS BUYING BEHAVIOR AND SHOPPING MALLS

In the present study, many questions were asked to assess the consumer's perceptions towards buying behaviour and shopping malls. For instance, respondents participating in the study were asked whether their visits to the shopping malls are connected with spending free time there. Only few respondents got the wrong impression when introduced the notion of "free time". In such cases, it was then explained to them that how much free time the consumers actually have and, consequently, how they want to spend it in the shopping malls that they visit, so they could have the feeling that they have spent it effectively. The main objective was to make out the perception of consumers doing shopping or using other services which are generally offered by the shopping malls (for-example, restaurants, cinema, health and beauty facilities, sports facilities, etc.) as a form of spending free time.

Table 1.1: Table Showing Perception of Respondents regarding the Statement that ‘Visit to Shopping Mall is associated with Spending Free Time’

Perception of Respondents regarding the Statement that ‘Visit to Shopping Mall is associated with Spending Free Time’	Elante	VR Punjab	NH 22	Total
Yes	54 (54)	49 (49)	62 (62)	165 (55)
No	29 (29)	17 (17)	15 (15)	61 (20.33)
To Some Extent	17 (17)	34 (34)	23 (23)	74 (24.66)
Total	100 (100)	100(100)	100(100)	300(100)

Figures in parentheses column wise percentages

The respondents were asked about their visit to the malls, that is, do they visit malls to spend free time in the malls. Majority of the respondents (fifty-five percent) said yes in the study. It shows that a large number of respondents visit shopping mall for spending free time. Near about 20.33 percent straight away said no when asked that their visit to shopping mall is associated with spending free time. On the other hand, 24.66 percent were found in a flux but to an extent they believe that they do. It was found that respondents who feel bored and those who are dealing with some kind of loneliness find malls to be the prior solution to their boredom. Spending time in mall helps them to cope up their boredom and also boost them with the enthusiasm in dealing with their emotions.

Table 1.2: Table Showing Perception of Respondents regarding the Statement that ‘Free Time Spent in the Shopping Mall is usually Spend Effectively’

Perception of Respondents regarding the Statement that ‘Free Time Spent in the Shopping Mall is usually Spend Effectively’	Elante	VR Punjab	NH 22	Total
Yes	21 (21)	17 (17)	34 (34)	72 (24)
No	37 (37)	29 (29)	22 (22)	88 (29.33)
To Some Extent	42 (42)	54 (54)	44 (44)	140 (46.66)
Total	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)	300 (100)

Figures in parentheses column wise percentages

Table 1.2 shows the perception the respondents relate to their time spending being effective or not. The respondents were asked that while they make a visit to the mall, do they feel that whatever free time they have spent in the mall is spend effectively or not. It was found that the majority (46.66 percent) of the respondents feels to some extent that their visit to the shopping malls is usually spend effectively, while approximately 29.33 percent of the respondents do not feel that their free time spend in the mall is usually spend effectively. Around 24 percent of the respondent feels that their free time in the shopping mall is usually spend effectively. It was found in the study that most of the respondents believe that they have spent their time effectively in the shopping mall. It is because of the quality time that they spend with their family and friends in the shopping mall that makes them feel that they have fetched something from their visit.

Table 1.3: Table Showing Perception of Respondents regarding the Statement that ‘The Decision to Choose the Shopping mall depends upon the Distance to the Mall’

Perception of Respondents regarding the Statement that ‘The Decision to Choose the Shopping mall depends upon the Distance to the Mall’	Elante	VR Punjab	NH 22	Total
Yes	41 (41)	49 (49)	37 (37)	127 (42.33)
No	36 (36)	34 (34)	55 (55)	125 (42.66)
To Some Extent	23 (23)	17 (17)	8 (8)	48 (16)
Total	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)	300 (100)

Figures in parentheses column wise percentages

Table 1.3 shows that the decision of the consumers to choose the shopping mall depends upon the distance to the mall. The study shows that there was a near about mixed responses with almost equal number of respondents in favour and against the statement. Around 42.66 percent of the respondents do not prefer to choose the mall depending on the distance. On the other hand, approximately 42.33 percent of the respondents were found preferring the mall depending on the distance of the shopping mall from their home. In the present

study, it was found that convenience is an important criterion for shopper when choosing the shopping mall for shopping and entertainment. Nowadays customers are very busy and they do not have enough time. Therefore, the shopping malls that are located in a convenient place become the first choice of the target customers. Similarly, study specifies that the decision of the consumers regarding the place they frequently select for shopping and spending depends basically on the distance to the shopping mall. The satisfaction of shoppers plays at least correspondingly significant role in metropolitan areas where commercial zones are ample enough to lead consumers to select their choices. Consequently, diverse behavioural features counting discernment of shopping potentials, anticipated pricing practices as well as over-all global environment of each shopping mall affect the approval or disapproval of consumers (Leo and Philippe, 2002).

Table 1.4: Table Showing Perception of Respondents regarding the Statement that ‘Convenient Parking Facility attracts a Large Number of Visitors, who Stay Longer Hours in the Shopping Malls’

Perception of Respondents regarding the Statement that ‘Convenient Parking Facility attracts a Large Number of Visitors, who Stay Longer Hours in the Shopping Malls’	Elante	VR Punjab	NH 22	Total
Yes	57 (57)	62 (62)	71 (71)	190 (63.33)
No	9 (9)	11 (11)	5 (5)	25 (8.33)
To Some Extent	34 (34)	27 (27)	24 (24)	85 (28.33)
Total	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)	300 (100)

Figures in parentheses column wise percentages

Table 1.4 shows the perception of respondents regarding the ‘Convenient Parking Facility attracts a Large Number of Visitors, who Stay Longer Hours in the Shopping Malls’. Majority of the respondents when asked about their perception about it said, ‘Yes’ (63.33 percent) that is, the convenient parking facility attracts them to the malls. In addition, it also makes them stay longer hours in the shopping malls. Near about 28.33 percent of the respondent said convenient parking matters them to some extent while making decisions to visit the mall and the number of hours that they spent inside the mall. It was found that convenience is the priority. People while making visit not just visit a place that is liked by many but they like to visit a place that is convenient to them in terms of the safety and shelter of their luxury cars. Likewise, many studies reveal the same kind of facts. One of the shared opinions regarding the shopping malls is their similitude. In spite of such homogeneity, shopping malls are progressively using place branding as the source for advertising activities, collection of shops and client services at all stages of mall. The efficacy of malls is improved by gauging consumer traffic along with the sales of trade tenants (Parsons and Ballantine, 2004). The utmost common formation of shopping centres is linear. Moreover, the car parks and civic amenities are offered in the mall. Generally, the ambience from one place to another in the shopping malls is dedicated to parking, except a multi-level parking edifice is provided for the usage of customers (Carter and Vendell, 2005).

Table 1.5: Table Showing Perception of Respondents regarding the Statement that ‘The Overall Ambience of the Mall attracts a Large Number of Visitors, who Stay Longer Hours and take part in Compulsive Buying in the Shopping Malls’

Perception of Respondents regarding the Statement that ‘The Overall Ambience of the Mall attracts a Large Number of Visitors, who Stay Longer Hours and take part in Compulsive Buying in the Shopping Malls’	Elante	VR Punjab	NH 22	Total
Yes	59 (59)	63 (63)	43 (43)	165 (55)
No	26 (26)	16 (16)	23 (23)	65 (21.66)
To Some Extent	15 (15)	21 (21)	34 (34)	70 (23.33)
Total	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)	300 (100)

Figures in parentheses column wise percentages

Table 1.5 shows the perception of respondents regarding ‘The Overall Ambience of the Mall that attracts them and who Stay Longer Hours and take part in Compulsive Buying in the Shopping Malls’. Majority of the respondents (55 percent) said that the ambience of the mall attracts them and they stay longer hours and also engage in compulsive buying in the shopping mall. Those who believe this is not the case with them were found near about 21.66 percent. And nearly 23.33 percent were not found sure to some extent only. It was found that ambience is the prime attraction to the consumers. After gathering information from the informants, it was found that the first impression that the consumers conceive is the ambience and that sounds promising to them irrespective of other facilities and services in the mall. Correspondingly, numerous studies reveal that developing the ambience of shopping malls, both inside and outside in order to boost up the shopping

involvement of people, is a fresh concept in selling. In addition, several pleasing ambient stimuli such as the artefact videos, melody and cologne support consumers to build up their optimistic purchasing choices. Consumers make all-inclusive appraisals of shopping malls in interpretation of the stirring quality of ambient inducements for obtaining goods, and derive gratification from purchasing products as well as services. Consumers with durable shopping motives are found to experience additional anticipation and enthusiasm, and discover the mall ambience to reassure their behaviour of impulse buying (McGoldrick and Pieros, 1998; Mattila and Wirtz, 2004). Motivations for shopping consist of inside and outside ambience of the mall, design and range of participation in the shopping procedure. The ambience of the mall, style of building, functional design, variability and exhilaration persuade the purchaser to stay for longer hours in the mall and also to make frequent visits to the shopping mall (Craig and Turley, 2004).

Table 1.6: Table Showing Perception of Respondents regarding the Statement that ‘The Purchase Decisions of the Consumers are influenced by the Product Appeal and Arousal Generated while Shopping in the Malls’

Perception of Respondents regarding the Statement that ‘The Purchase Decisions of the Consumers are influenced by the Product Appeal and Arousal Generated while Shopping in the Malls’	Elante	VR Punjab	NH 22	Total
Yes	81 (81)	72 (72)	49 (49)	202 (67.33)
No	6 (6)	9 (9)	13 (13)	28 (9.33)
To Some Extent	13 (13)	19 (19)	38 (38)	70 (23.33)
Total	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)	300 (100)

Figures in parentheses column wise percentages

Table 1.6 shows the perception of respondents regarding the statement that ‘The Purchase Decisions of the Consumers are influenced by the Product Appeal and Arousal Generated while Shopping in the Malls’. Majority of the respondents (67.33 percent) said they do get influenced by the product appeal and arousal. The respondents who believed that to some extent they get attracted to the products appeal and arousal were found to be 23.33 percent. However, the respondents who do not believe this to be the case were found to be 9.33 percent respondents. It was found in the study that presentation plays a key role in attracting consumers. Moreover, the appearance of the products and the first look of the products has been presented and served to the customers in such a way that they can’t resist. Therefore, the ambience of shopping malls, whether pleasant or unpleasant, moderates the arousal effect on satisfaction and in-store buying behaviours. Similarly, studies reveal that the approval in pleasing retail ambience where music, practical involvement services, playing zones and rejuvenation are combined together, determines the consumer arousal in maximum amount. It has been detected that young consumers observe an optimistic outcome of in-store behaviours if shopping arousal is high. Therefore, sellers need to pay due consideration not only to the appeal of the store atmosphere, but also to arousal-level prospects of buyers as well (Wirtz et al, 2007). The influence of inside-mall ambience can be evaluated by the range of motivation and preference experienced by the customers. The interactive tools on merchandise learning provided in the retail stores pointedly affect the level of excitement and choice that contribute towards experience and in that way affect the behaviour of buying. As higher stimulus or collaborative learning provided by the sellers put emphasis on gaining preliminary knowledge on product usage, consumers tend to involve in actions that are more highly exciting by gaining the merchandise (Menon and Kahn, 2002). Nevertheless, malls at times flop to identify that what effects the gratification of buyers is not the same as what stimulates the loyalty of stores (of tenants), and subsequently do not effectually progress the shopping ambience to arouse the decisions of purchasing. Henceforth, they need to attentively accomplish the quality of arousal by developing suitable customer participation in the purchasing process of retail shoppers (Miranda et al, 2005).

Table 1.7: Table Showing Perception of Respondents regarding the Statement that ‘Competitive Sales Promotions of Retail Stores in the Shopping Malls bring Variety-seeking Behaviour as well as form Loyalty towards Store among the Buyers’

Perception of Respondents regarding the Statement that ‘Competitive Sales Promotions of Retail Stores in the Shopping Malls bring Variety-seeking Behaviour as well as form Loyalty towards Store among the Buyers’	Elante	VR Punjab	NH 22	Total
Yes	66 (66)	73 (73)	71 (71)	210 (70)
No	4 (4)	9 (9)	6 (6)	19 (6.33)
To Some Extent	30 (30)	18 (18)	23 (23)	71 (23.66)
Total	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)	300 (100)

Figures in parentheses column wise percentages

Table 1.7 shows the perception of respondents regarding the statement that ‘Competitive Sales Promotions of Retail Stores in the Shopping Malls bring Variety-seeking Behaviour as well as form Loyalty towards Store among the Buyers’. The respondents were asked their view-point about the above-mentioned statement. Majority of the respondents i.e., 70 percent said that they do believe that competitive sales promotion increases their demand for variety of the products and they do form loyalty towards the store. Nearly, 23.66 percent of the respondent agreed this to some extent only whereas about 6.33 percent of the respondent straight away said no, thereby denying the statement. It was found that things have been changing in the retail sector. Nowadays, many new players have made their place and they have been constantly working hard to satisfy the consumer demand by placing themselves in better located stores especially in attractive shopping malls. The main motive is to make the consumers indulge in variety-seeking shopping, thereby making them loyal towards a specific brand as well as store. Similarly, research has also revealed that the strategies of retailers are often determined by the competitive stimulus as consumer demands and requirements shift with new-fangled offerings, and prevailing firms dissolve when they cannot adjust to the modification. Retailers try to find out to lead a diverse classification of merchandise and take away the competition. In addition, the retailers in the shopping malls engross commissioned sales assistant in order to sponsor their particular brand or creation and thereby expects more new customers at their side. The bargaining power of companies rises with these commissioned shop assistants who arouse the call for more goods as well as make their sincere contributions to increase higher sales at their retail outlets. It has been detected that pull effect for the brands reinforced by the sales sponsors increases at the retail stores as clients gather the pre-buying facts from sales sponsors (Gomez et al, 2007). It is also perceived that retailers in shopping malls make an attempt to grow competition over commercial hours and price. Such type of strategies affects the shopping interest of customers and their passion of shopping, as often variation in business hours may also results in store-switching behaviour among consumers. Though, such competition cannot be overextended by the retailers beyond the societal optimal (Shy and Stenbacka, 2008). It has been also observed in one other study that retailers contest for market share by making use of price as well as variety. Retailers demonstrate wide-ranging product lines and a new-fangled collection of products in their stores and sustain differential prices, as retail competition recommends that product conglomeration is dangerous to retail price in acquisition of competitive gains over others. But, retailers in big shopping malls have a tendency to trail ascetically cooperative tactics. And accordingly competition between malls and smaller forms of shopping centres has directed mall developers and organization to reflect alternate approaches to form enthusiasm with clients (Timothy and Stephen, 2006).

Table 1.8: Table Showing Perception of Respondents regarding the Statement that ‘Consumers visit Shopping Malls to Shop in response to Sales Promotions available during Festive Season’

Perception of Respondents regarding the Statement that ‘Consumers visit Shopping Malls to Shop in response to Sales Promotions available during Festive Season’	Elante	VR Punjab	NH 22	Total
Yes	72 (72)	84 (84)	76 (76)	232 (77.33)
No	-	5 (5)	8 (8)	13 (4.33)
To Some Extent	28 (28)	11 (11)	16 (16)	55 (18.337)
Total	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)	300 (100)

Figures in parentheses column wise percentages

Table 1.8 shows the perception of respondents regarding the statement that ‘Consumers visit Shopping Malls to Shop in response to Sales Promotions available during Festive Season’. The respondents were asked, do they visit shopping malls during the sales that are announced especially in the festive season. On this note, majority of the respondents that is, 77.33 percent said they do visit the mall in the festive season when the sales are on. Nearly, 18.337 percent agreed to some extent while 4.33 percent showed their disagreement with the statement asked. It was found that common promotional activities in the form of sales employed by the stores in shopping malls encourage the consumers to make frequent visits to the mall. Likewise, research has revealed that some traditional promotions such as fashion shows and product displays are shown to be poor performer strategies in generating shopper response, while mall-wide sales are the preferred method of promotion. It is argued that an amalgamation of over-all entertainment as well as price-oriented promotions is a durable substitute for inspiring customers to regularly visit and spend in maximum amount (Parsons, 2003).

Table 1.9: Table Showing Perception of Respondents regarding the Statement that ‘Consumers visit Shopping Malls to Relax in response to Entertainment Avenues available in the Malls’

Perception of Respondents regarding the Statement that ‘Consumers visit Shopping Malls to Relax in response to Entertainment Avenues available in the Malls’	Elante	VR Punjab	NH 22	Total
Yes	73 (73)	68 (68)	79 (79)	220 (73.33)
No	3 (3)	5 (5)	2 (2)	10 (3.33)
To Some Extent	24 (24)	27 (27)	19 (19)	70 (23.33)
Total	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)	300 (100)

Figures in parentheses column wise percentages

Table 1.9 shows the perception of respondents regarding the entertainment avenues available in the shopping malls in Tricity. The respondents were asked the question whether they visit the malls for the entertainment facilities provided in them and in response to it, majority of the respondents (73.33 percent) said they do visit malls for the entertainment provided by them. Around 23.33 percent agreed to some extent whereas about 3.33 percent of the respondent said that they do not visit the malls for the entertainment facilities provided. It was found that majority of the respondents visit malls just for the entertainment purposes. Nowadays small or traditional bazzars have been replaced by the shopping malls just for the sake of entertainment avenues available in them. Watching movies, playing games and even the contests arranged by the malls attracts a huge number of footfalls in the malls. In the present study, it was found that entertainment has become an important object for developing positive attitude among the target customers. This is the reason why the big malls in Tricity have been trying hard to add up more parts for cine complex and fun zone as a differentiation strategy. Our study also highlights that customers strongly agree that shopping malls with better leisure facilities and ambience attracts them more and it makes them stay longer in the malls, thereby indulging in compulsive buying. Likewise, research also reveals that the recreational facilities prompt shopping arousal and play a pivotal role in delivering a divulging impact of buying behaviour of young consumers. Shopping supported with leisure attractions may be recognized as one of the key drivers in sponsoring vacation industry by representing superior fashion products and store penchants among holidaymaker shoppers. Stimulation in shopping inspires young consumers to stay for longer hours of time in stores in order to practice the bliss of goods and to make purchasing verdicts. Observations of shopping period, expressive levels and products appraisals are derived from the level of excitement experienced by the patrons in the shopping malls (Rajagopal, 2007).

2. PERCEPTION TOWARDS OVERALL SHOPPING EXPERIENCE

In the present study, the respondents were interviewed to explore the overall shopping experience of the visitors in the shopping malls of Tricity. Moreover, an effort was also made to assess whether the consumer’s satisfaction of the shopping experience results in their likelihood of returning to the shopping mall in future.

Table 2.1: Table Showing Perception of Respondents towards the Overall Shopping Experience

Perception of Respondents towards the Overall Shopping Experience	Elante	VR Punjab	NH 22	Total
Satisfied	72 (72)	67 (67)	41 (41)	180 (60)
Not Satisfied	11 (11)	14 (14)	29 (29)	54 (18)
Cannot Say	17 (17)	19 (19)	30 (30)	66 (22)
Total	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)	300 (100)

Figures in parentheses column wise percentages

Table 2.1 shows the perception of respondents towards their overall shopping experience. Shopping mall experience is the response of the consumers towards the marketing activities presented by a shopping complex. In addition, the mall experiences consist of behavioral, emotional, perceptual, as well as sensory experiences. Majority of the respondents (that is, 60 percent) were found to be satisfied with the overall shopping experience in the malls in Tricity. In this context, many women consumers were found satisfied with the ‘One Stop Shop’ experience that the mall provides. They revealed that it is the opportunity to buy required products and brands right from grocery, lifestyle assets, and durable goods to specific services like nail art, hairdo and foot massage under one roof which makes their shopping experience enjoyable. In this way, a large number of women customers were found in the happy state as they get comfort, variety and best services, all at one place.

Near about 18 percent were found not to be satisfied while 22 percent were found in a flux to their satisfaction. It was found in the study that shopping malls located in Tricity helps in providing the best shopping experiences to the consumers in the form of concerts, entertainment, festivals, performances, product launches, promotions and social gatherings. Moreover, the mall culture satisfies all the needs in just one building which makes it the best option among the consumers. A well-dressed girl said very elegantly, “*Elante mall is very famous. It incorporates a collection of national and international lifestyle brands, departmental stores, food court, multiplex, entertainment zone, a hypermarket as well as open spaces to have fun.*” A female respondent age forty-nine held that, “*People prefer to avail the best moments in the malls as they possess multi-storeyed air-conditioned buildings with large number of shops on its different floors.*” A female respondent of age twenty-nine said, “*I was not able to find a single dress for my birthday in this mall. And then I ended up purchasing something which I did not like much.*”

From the above narratives, it could be said that the way people spend their time in a shopping mall, which comprises an amalgamation of shopping and culture, rather than just going to a shopping mall for the sole purpose of buying things, has somehow succeed in bringing a unique lifestyle also.

Table 2.2: Table Showing Perception of Respondents regarding the Statement that ‘Do you think that the Satisfaction of the Shopping Experience increases the Likelihood of returning to the Shopping Mall in Future’

Perception of Respondents regarding the Statement that ‘Do you think that the Satisfaction of the Shopping Experience increases the Likelihood of returning to the Shopping Mall in Future’	Elante	VR Punjab	NH 22	Total
Yes	68 (68)	73 (73)	75 (75)	216 (72)
No	-	3 (3)	5 (5)	8 (2.66)
To Some Extent	32 (32)	24 (24)	20 (20)	76 (25.33)
Total	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)	300 (100)

Figures in parentheses column wise percentages

Table 2.2 shows the perception of respondents regarding the statement that ‘Do you think that the Satisfaction of the Shopping Experience increases the Likelihood of returning to the Shopping Mall in Future’. The respondents were asked, do they feel that they would like to make another visit to the shopping mall in the future? To this majority of the respondents i.e., 72 percent were found in the favour of making another visit to the mall. In this category, more women were found interested in making another visit to the mall than men. Around 25.33 percent were found agreed to some extent to make another visit to the mall in future. Only 2.66 percent of the respondents were found uninterested in making any further visit and most of them were men. A female respondent age twenty-five said, “*I am definitely going to make another visit to V R Punjab. I am a fashion enthusiast. And this mall is my ultimate shopping destination.*” A female respondent age thirty said, “*I love Aldo brand. Today, I bought one heels and two wedges from their store. I know the value of good shoes and for shoes shopping, I just prefer Aldo store in the Elante mall. I am looking forward to buy swankier shoes from Aldo in future.*”

From the above narratives, it could be found that most of the respondents especially females would like to make further visits. We find that the customers evaluate their mall visits according to the entertainment facilities available in the big malls and they plan their next visit by assessing their shopping experiences. Shopping malls have really emerged as a significant ‘meeting places’, particularly for the young generation and they are the ones who persuade others also to visit the big malls time and again.

3. PERCEPTION TOWARDS MALL CULTURE

Mall shopping is a buzzword for Indian youth. Mall culture has brought many significant changes in the life style of Indians. In this age, shopping is no longer an activity of buying things but it is viewed as a status symbol and a one-stop retail solution. In the present study, when the respondents were interviewed in connection with their perception towards the mall culture, many respondents were found using the words like brand conscious, brand culture, modernisation, shopping paradise, shopaholic, show off, sophisticated cultural diffusion, snob factor, westernisation and so on. Some of the important narratives and cases that reflect the perception of consumers towards the mall culture are summarised as under:

“Mall culture has carried the ideas of modernisation and westernisation in India especially for the Indian youth. The young generation consider the idea of visiting the malls as a status symbol.”

“Shopping malls have truly hit the usual life of the consumers”

“Snob factor and show off has increased. I saw so many teenagers who come just to show off in the big malls of Tricity.”

“This ongoing craze in the form of mall culture has trained the residents of Tricity about a new way of life.”

“Mall culture has been shaped up so as to increase consumerism among people. I believe that they are successful in catching the interests of masses towards their new built world. I call them shopping paradise.”

“Mall walking is taken as a purposeful activity. It is something which is quite inn in our society these days.”

“This hi-tech fad that spread due to the shopping malls has unquestionably made the residents of Tricity brand-conscious. People prefer to purchase from big boutiques of Elante mall. Ritu Kumar’s store is very famous.”

“This culture is spreading its wings in our whole area. There is no doubt that this culture has been making people addictive to superfluous shopping. The term ‘shopaholic’ often comes in new Punjabi songs.”

“Mall culture has been trying to create some new-fangled comforts among people. In Tricity, people visit shopping malls to satisfy their diverse needs from buying to self-expressing and keeping familiar, romantic and social relationships.”

“Mall culture has brought an exclusive concept, which was totally absent in the past. Nowadays people can easily hang around, spend qualitative time and also do window shopping, at the same time in the big shopping malls.”

“This revolutionary upsurge, that we call merely as, ‘the mall culture’ has in fact twisted our whole Indian culture. In this new culture, everybody is actually spending on useless products without recognizing their needs and worth of available goods.”

“Mall culture has fetched a different kind of rage in the Tricity. Nowadays people have start making use of more international brands. In fact, people consuming big brands have somehow become very high headed. Snob factor has also emerged in the social order. This is the reason why an aged person like me does not admire this new -mall culture.”

“Mall culture has raised our lifestyle. Not only this, but it has added superfluous pressure among the people to sustain the level of status according to the class to which they belong.”

“I think that shopping malls are just a good source of time pass for every stratum at present.”

“This chic culture that we are beholding in our hearts very sincerely is the outcome of shopping malls. It has become the primary need of the consumers.”

“Time flies so fast in the shopping malls. I would love to spend my time in a happy-go-lucky environment that malls provide.”

“Mall culture is what we are crazy for....? Malls provide various opportunities to create a connection with the family and friends by indulging in shopping and entertainment.”

“Shopping malls have become the ‘melting-pot of cultures.’ The young generation perceives the mall culture from a different perspective.”

The above narratives show that shopping malls have become a prominent place in the urban areas, affecting everyday lives, social relationships and mobility of the residents.

V. CONCLUSION

The mall culture has brought the people on a common platform to perceive, talk, socialise and connect together. The food outlets in the malls attract the consumers and also encourage them to dine when they shop. The sales, schemes and attractive prizes are some of the strategies which are used by the malls in order to hook up the consumers to this new kind of culture. One thing is clear that these shopping malls have really changed the concept of shopping completely. As the mall culture promise to provide comfort, style, coolness and convenience under one roof, all these advantages somehow force the consumers to link their lives with this incredible and dazzling ‘mall culture’.

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