# Variables affecting customer behaviour and its effect on commitment towards shopping hubs of Gurgoan city

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**Keywords**

Customer shopping behaviour, Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty, Shopping Malls, Gurgoan City.

**Abstract**

  *The last decade was a major year for all the retail sectors as the transformation which happened in the various urban centers lead to the birth of organized retail formats with the emergence of mega shopping malls. These changes has given the people of Gurgaon a one stop destination to fulfil their daily needs and wants like socialization, shopping & entertainment, due to which the growth and dimension of retail sector has changed drastically in India. With a large number of malls emerging in Gurgaon city it has become a shopping destination for most of the people. The basic aim of this paper is that, by using the structural equation modeling to study the consumer behavior of people who gets attracted to these shopping malls based on 6 important dimensions. This would also help the shopkeepers and the mall management to get a clear view about the customer through a proper data related to the behavior of the customer which would in turn help the mall management to provide better services as well as increase their business efficiency. This study was found to be fit as the outcome suggested that the shopping behavior of the shoppers tell a lot about their shopping satisfaction and loyalty. This proves that to maintain the loyalty of the shoppers it is important to improve the factors which affect the shopping behavior of the customer hence they stay loyal towards a particular retail outlet and the shopping mall. In the environment where the retail outlets are growing day by day would help the management to understand and influence the shopping behavior of the shoppers which would in turn proves to be successful for the mall management to fight the growing competition in the retail sector in India.*

## Introduction

  In today's consumer driven world retail sector has played a major role in contributing towards the economic development in India. The choice of the consumers are changing rapidly due to the behavior of the shoppers, hence the concept of organized retailing emerged. The mental and emotional practice and the thoughts which roam in the mind of the customer during shopping purchasing and post consumption of the product which generally influences the behavior of the customer towards a particular situation is called consumer behavior. It gives a clear idea about the customers' mindset while they a particular product in there mind. Consumer Behavior can be termed as a subject which involves a lot of things within itself like sociology, socio thinking, anthropology and economics.

  There has been a lot of research which involved deep study. Two renowned people Solomon (2006) and Peter et al (2008) considered consumer behavior as a complex pattern. The study defines the behavior pattern of the people namely psychological, social and physical behavior of the people when they buy a particular product or a service and dispose them. To know the reason behind why the behavior patterns of the people change it is very important to know the shopping needs and from where they buy the product. With the passage of time the shopping behavior of the consumer has also changed with the focus shifting towards comfort and convenience. Thus to tackle this problem it has become important for the retailers to proactively find out the needs and requirement of the customer and understand them in a better way. Knowing and understanding the behavior of the customer has become the priority for many retailers and this lets the customer become loyal towards a particular brand and also win their confidence and trust.

**Theoretical Framework**

There were 6 constraints that were used to understand the behavior of the customer they are reach ability, atmosphere, shopping experience, promotions, property management and entertainment.

**Atmosphere**

The atmosphere in a shopping mall can be sensed by the pervading mood of the customers in the mall or a situation that could occur or any other creative activity forms the overall atmosphere of the mall. This has lead to a shift in the focus towards beautification the malls rather than fulfilling then consumer needs and wants and hence it has lead to a change in the behavior pattern of the customer. The identity of the mall nowadays is defined by some of the critical factors like the surroundings of the mall and the environment which prevails inside the mall.  Mall surroundings, relaxing benches, mall interiors and shopping spaces are some of the examples of the construct atmosphere that is present in today's malls.

**Property management**

The management and administration of the shops in the malls is termed as property management. Some important factors which also come under property management are maintenance and cleaning of stores, cleaning of shopping areas, being able to find what you are looking for, easy access to information about shops and goods they offer, toilets, places to sit down, security standards and information booths. There are various factors from which the property management can be tested namely mall safety & security, hygiene and cleanliness in mall, restroom cleanliness, and symbols clarity and mall image.

**Promotions**

A promotion of the shopping malls is defined as a character of that mall by Abhik Roy (1994). Anselmsson (2006) defined promotions as a mode to please the customers. To promote themselves malls use various kinds of promotional activity like free gifts/ trail packs, offers and discounts, surprise contest/ lucky draw, demonstrations, celebrity visits and new product launch.

- **Reachability**
  Locations play a very vital role for the success of a shopping mall which was defined by Bearden (1977) and Severin et al (2001). It has also been said that accessibility is also an important factor in the mall, this statement was given by Frasquet et al (2001) and Leo and Philippe (2002). Other two people namely Howell and Rogers (2001) has identified that parking convenience, and the distance of the mall are the important attributes of the shopping mall.
  It becomes important to make sure that the mall is reachable by the shoppers as in a place like Gurgoan where the public transport is always crowded and the roads are pilled up with traffic jams it becomes irritating for a shopper to go to a mall which is distanced far away. Thus it is very important to keep in mind the reachability of the mall, the ample parking space given for the public, nearness to other places of entertainment also influences the behavior of the customer in choosing the particular mall.

**Shopping Experience- Any** event or occurrence which leaves a positive impact on the mind of the customer while shopping is termed as shopping experience.

The things which delight you, makes your mind happy during shopping can also be termed as shopping experience. Some examples of shopping experience are- product quality, service quality, range and type of shops in the mall, offers and discounts, surprise contests, price, and Sales Executive Interactions etc.

**Entertainment**- The most important component in all shopping mall is Entertainment.  It is very important because it hold the interest of all audiences by pleasing them which reduces stress caused due to this vast web of mechanical world. Some key areas of entertainment in shopping malls can be children play area, movie theatres/multiplex, indoor sports, food court and video games zone.

## Literature Review

A study was carried out in Mangalore by Ajaz Ahmed and S Mayya (2015) to understand and know the buying behaviour of the customer in malls. The study revealed that due to the organized retail in malls, the customers have gained a lot of benefits from it. They obtained huge benefits namely getting variety of products, well-known brands, one stop shop, festive offers and huge discounts. The study showed that due to these organized retail outlets almost all the income groups were benefited from it. When shopping with organized retailers some customers revealed that get low pricing on products. This prospective of the customer showed that the organized retail is more preferred in malls due to their low pricing with reasonable quality products.

There were two people namely Adil Ziaand and Odai Falah Mohammad Al Ghaswyneh (2013) who tried to identify the impact that shopping experience has on customer loyalty in these retail outlets. A study was done on 706 customers based on Structural equation modeling technique to understand the various factors related to shopping experience has on customer loyalty. Customer loyalty was effected from various factors of shopping experiences which was revealed by the study. Customer loyalty impact can be studied by taking two things Execution related excellence (which means patiently explanation and advice, checking stock, helping find products, having product knowledge and providing unexpected product quality) it has the lest CR value of 2.18 whereas Problem Recovery (which means helping to resolve and compensate problems, upgrading quality and ensuring complete shopper satisfaction) has the highest impact on consumer Loyalty with CR value of 3.41.

The Factors which influence consumer buying behaviour was researched by Satish Kumar Singh et al (2013) which revealed that various factors are there which influence the buying behaviour like satisfaction factors, accessibility factors, sales promotional factors, workforce factors, Tangibility factors, assortment factors, trustworthiness factors and Surveying factors.

Another researcher in his studies on Mall management said that as in today's scenario where numbers of malls are multiplying mall management has emerged as single most differentiating factors. Mall management is a technique to ensure the mall differentiates itself from the competitors to emerge as a winner.

The process of continuing to attract customers has also changed due to the change in the lifestyles of the customers which was revealed by White (2008) in his research. He said that goods alone won't attract the customers; the mall should set up Entertainment centres, entertainment and destination venues, as an essential part of the mix to attract more and more customers. White further said that movie theatres play an essential role in attracting the customers as without multiplexes in malls maximum number of people won't have been there. The study showed that 60% of movie watchers also shopped in the mall after the movie and spending an average of 35% of what all shoppers spend.

Patronage Behaviour of mall shoppers, the relationship among the constructs of mall positioning and shoppers satisfaction were the factors which were studied by Suresh Sannapu, and Nripendra Singh (2012). The hypothesised relation was studied by sampling 1000 visitors who visit the malls of Delhi NCR. The study revealed that the shoppers Satisfaction is influenced by the positioning dimensions of these malls which in turn influence the patronage behaviour of the customer. The study has also influenced casualty among the constructs of mall positioning, shoppers' satisfaction and patronage behaviour. To determine the patronage behaviour of mall shoppers it is very important to give mall positioning a priority, which was a suggestion given to the mall managers based on this study. This study helped in generating a new model of positioning,

shopper satisfaction and patronage behaviour, the study also posits positioning, customer satisfaction and patronage behaviour in a single model.

Feinberg, Sheffler, Meoli and Rummel (1989) in their finding told that the malls served an outlet for social behaviour by considering the social stipulation provided by malls. The difference between mall entertainments seekers and mall shoppers was studied by Eastlick and Shim (2000). Their study showed that the purpose of visiting the malls can be different based on the motivation among individuals which classify them as mall entertainment seekers and mall shoppers.

There is a study done by Eastlick and Shim (2000) which showed that the shops which are there just at the entrance of the mall are the most benefited from the lot as the customer which comes from the parking lot first enters these shops. The most important store choice variable in super markets and departmental stores is considered as parking which was found out by a study done by Marjanen (1997). Empirical evidence was found in relation to the location of the chosen parking lot and location of visited stores by Waerden and Borgers (1994).  The probability for customers to visit stores in the surrounding of the chosen parking is higher than visiting stores located at some distance.

Ramakrishna Prasad (2012) in their study found out the purchasing factors of the consumer in the apparel sector in the context of organized retail industry in India. The distinct store features as perceived by the respondent with the true motivation of the customer in purchasing and patronizing of organized retail outlets.  The study based on primary data which was taken from Hyderabad and Secundrabad was based on 178 apparel retail customers by using structured questionnaire and mall intercept methods.  The study revealed that the buying behaviour of the customer in apparel sector is mostly influenced by style, value, diversity, demand, creditability, concern and referral groups. This study can help both retail managers and academics for their theatrical and practical purposes.

The common promotional activity used by shopping malls was analysed by Parsons (2003). These promotional activities were ranked based on the likelihood of the consumers based on two performance indicators used by shopping malls namely sales and visit. To encourage the visits and spending a combination of general entertainment and price based promotions were the most useful tools.

The store image and conceptualization can be improved by capturing these five factors namely- access, atmosphere, price and promotion, cross–category assortment and within–category assortment which was suggested by Ailawadi and Keller (2004). The location of the store and the distance travelled by the customer to reach the store is called Access. The stores which are easily accessible by the customers is the most preferred then the stores which are less accessible. The ambience including lighting, colour schemes and architecture in the store can be termed as the store atmosphere. There are several elements that reflect the store environment namely colour, music and crowding. The store atmosphere should be pleasing and moderately arousing. Stores with a good atmosphere contribute to overall favourable and in turn increase the store patronage.

An effective mall management as defined by Zameer (2006) is differentiating the malls from the rest, getting maximum footfalls, converting the footfalls into purchases and keeping the tenants satisfied. For the success of any shopping malls he told that mall management entails retail – mix planning and tenant selection, lease management, facilities management, utilities management, parking and organizing events and collaborative promotions are the factors behind the success of malls.

To understand the impact of attractiveness factors of the shoppers' satisfaction and the outcomes of shoppers' loyalty was carried out by Khalaf Ahmad (2012) in the Arabian shopping malls. The research found out that attractiveness factors that influenced shopper satisfaction were aesthetics, convenience and accessibility, product variety, entertainment and service quality.

Two researchers namely Sangvikar and Hemant Katole (2012) focused on behaviour of the consumer mainly on purchasing pattern in various store formats and store preference on the basis of

product availability, spending pattern, and consumers preferred store, sales man services, and store layout. The retail outlets are preferred by the customer due to low prices, discounts and variety of products available which was various factors observed while giving preferences to retail outlets. The consumer behaviour patterns changed with the price and availability of the product. The spending patterns can change due to poor quality as well.

**Research Methodology**

This research follows a descriptive research. To develop and test the model the factors that influence the factors of shopping behaviour of the shopper and expose its association with shopper satisfaction and loyalty. The data was collected with the help of the Survey method. A structured questionnaire was made to collect the primary data.  The malls which we involved in this survey are Ambience Mall, MGF Metropolitan Mall, Gurgaon Central Mall, Sahara Mall, DLF Mega Mall and are considered top 5 of the best and largest shopping mall in Gurgoan as said by foraywhilr.com. The questionnaires were distributed between the people who often came shopping in those malls. The sampling technique was used to select shoppers from shopping units. 381 questionnaires out of approx. 500 were collected (i.e. almost 76 questionnaires per shopping mall) with a response rate of 76.2% through survey. DR A. Normal Raj (2016) developed the questionnaire with suitable alterations to access the shoppers' behaviour. Table 1 shows the tabulated version about the details of shoppers behaviour.

There are five variables in customer loyalty and satisfaction. 50 shoppers were elected from various shopping malls in Gurgoan to test the questionnaires made for the survey. Changes in the reliability and validity of the questionnaire were made after pretesting of the questionnaire. After the completion of 50 samples finally the reliability of the questionnaire was checked. The test results based on reliability showed that all self-constructs have accepted levels of reliability.

**Table1. Scale, Sub-constructs and Reliability**

| S.No. | Constructs | No. of Variables | Variables and its code | Cronbach Alpha Coefficient |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Atmosphere | 4 | -Ambience & atmosphere<br>-Air-conditioning<br><br>-Mall Interiors<br>–Space for walking & shopping | 0.79 |
| 2 | Property Management | 5 | 1-Mall Safety & Security<br>2-Hygiene and Cleanliness in Mall<br><br>3-Restroom Cleanliness<br><br>4- Sign Boards<br>5-Mall Image | 0.82 |
| 3 | Promotions | 5 | -Free gifts/ Trail packs<br>2-Offers and Discounts<br>3-Contests/ Lucky draw<br><br>4-Demonstrations<br>5-Celebrity Endorsement & New Product launch | 0.71 |

| 4 | Shopping Experience | 5 | 1-Service Quality  2-Sales Executive interactions  3-Range and type of Shops  4-Product Quality  –Prices | 0.72 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | Entertainment | 5 | 1-Children Play Area  2-Movie Theatres  3-Indoor Sports  4- Restaurants'/Food Courts  5-Video Games Zone | 0.95 |
| 6 | Reachability | 4 | -Public Transport  -Proximity to the mall  -Nearness to other entertainment places  -Parking Facilities | 0.95 |
| 7 | Consumer Satisfaction and Loyalty | 5 | –Over all Shopping experience  –Overall Satisfaction  –Willingness to do future shopping  –Recommending Visit to others  –Frequency of Visit | 0.85 |

### Conceptual Framework

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

**Figure 1. Conceptual Framework**
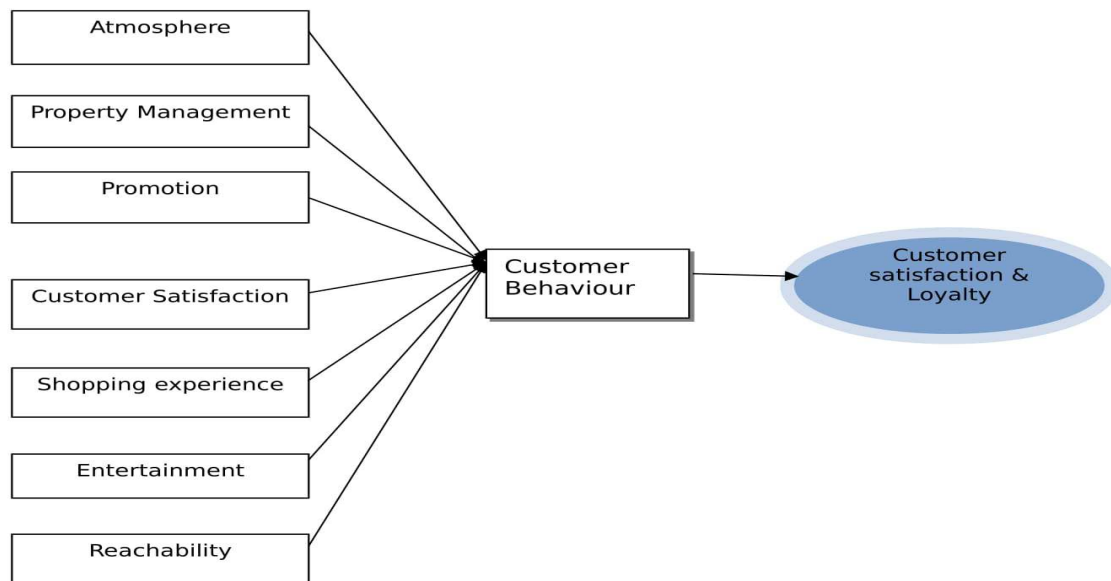
**Analysis and Interpretation**
**Table 2 : Data Analysis using Regression Coefficient**

| S.No. | Customer Shopping Behaviour | Standardized Estimates | Std. Error | Unstandardized Estimates | P Value | C.R |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Atmosphere | 1.79 | 0.07 | 1.03 | <0.001 | 11.56 |
| 2 | Property Management | 1.29 | - | 1.01 | - | - |
| 3 | Promotions | 1.39 | 0.07 | 0.93 | <0.001 | 12.36 |
| 4 | Shopping Experience | 1.40 | 0.08 | 0.82 | <0.001 | 12.15 |
| 5 | Entertainment | 1.31 | 0.07 | 0.95 | <0.001 | 10.56 |
| 6 | Reachability | 1.53 | 0.08 | 0.84 | <0.001 | 10.16 |
| 7 | Customer Satisfaction & Loyalty | 1.01 | 0.07 | 1.79 | <0.001 | 13.16 |

Note: P value denotes significant at 1% level

| S. No. | Variables | Measured Variables | Standardized Estimates | Std. Error | Unstandardized Estimates | P value | C.R |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Atmosphere | Ambience & atmosphere | 0.33 | - | 1.00 | - | - |
| | | Air-conditioning | 0.12 | 0.04 | 0.45 | <0.001 | 9.29 |
| | | Mall Interiors | 0.31 | 0.08 | 1.02 | <0.001 | 11.33 |
| | | Space for walking & shopping | 0.23 | 0.09 | 0.94 | <0.001 | 10.66 |
| 2. | Property Management | Mall Safety & Security | 0.38 | - | 1.00 | - | - |
| | | Hygiene and Cleanliness in Mall | 0.32 | 0.07 | 0.76 | <0.001 | 9.13 |
| | | Restroom Cleanliness | 0.43 | 0.09 | 0.97 | <0.001 | 11.12 |
| | | Sign Boards | 0.43 | 0.07 | 0.99 | <0.001 | 10.34 |
| | | Mall Image | 0.33 | 0.09 | 0.71 | <0.001 | 8.59 |
| 3. | Promotions | Free gifts/ Trail packs | 0.41 | - | 1.00 | <0.001 | - |
| | | Offers and Discounts | 0.35 | 0.08 | 0.85 | <0.001 | 11.39 |
| | | Lucky draw | 0.39 | 0.07 | 1.14 | <0.001 | 12.02 |
| | | Demonstrations | 0.34 | 0.08 | 0.60 | <0.001 | 11.22 |
| | | Celebrity Endorsement and New Product launch | 0.29 | 0.07 | 0.67 | <0.001 | 10.35 |
| 8. | Shopping Experience | Service Quality | 0.35 | - | 1.00 | - | - |
| | | Sales Executive interactions | 0.42 | 0.14 | 1.23 | <0.001 | 11.41 |
| | | Range and type of Shops | 0.39 | 0.13 | 1.25 | <0.001 | 11.57 |
| | | Product Quality | 0.34 | 0.06 | 0.73 | <0.001 | 10.78 |
| | | Prices | 0.40 | 0.14 | 1.26 | <0.001 | 11.34 |
| 13. | Entertainment | Children Play Area | 0.49 | - | 1.00 | <0.001 | - |
| | | Movie Theatres | 0.50 | 0.06 | 0.81 | <0.001 | 12.21 |
| | | Indoor Sports | 0.41 | 0.05 | 0.83 | <0.001 | 12.11 |
| | | Restaurants'/ Food Courts | 0.39 | 0.06 | 0.97 | <0.001 | 12.34 |
| | | Video Games Zone | 0.33 | 0.07 | 0.64 | <0.001 | 10.56 |
| 18. | Reachability | Public Transport | 0.31 | - | 1.00 | - | - |
| | | Proximity to the mall | 0.39 | 0.13 | 1.33 | <0.001 | 10.56 |
| | | Accessibility for Entertainment | 0.29 | 0.07 | 0.91 | <0.001 | 9.34 |
| | | Parking Facilities | 0.31 | 0.14 | 1.03 | <0.001 | 9.78 |
| 22. | Customer Satisfaction & Loyalty | Over all Shopping experience | 0.44 | - | 1.00 | - | - |
| | | Overall Satisfaction | 0.43 | 0.06 | 0.64 | <0.003 | 8.67 |
| | | Willingness to do future shopping | 0.56 | 0.07 | 0.71 | <0.001 | 12.31 |
| | | Recommending Visit to others | 0.67 | 0.07 | 0.45 | <0.002 | 5.23 |
| | | Frequency of Visit | 0.41 | 0.09 | 0.91 | <0.003 | 11.67 |

**Table 3 Measuring variables using Regression Weights**

The standardized and unstandardized weights with a significance level of less then 1% are depicted in Table 2. It came out to be 1.02 the unstandardized coefficient value.  Holding other variables constant it shows the effect over consumer shopping behaviour. The estimate showed positive signs as the customer shopping behaviour would increase by 1.02 for every unit increase in the mall atmosphere. For the property management the unstandardized regression coefficient value is 1.01 which depicts the effects over consumer shopping behaviour holding other variables constant. The positive signs showed that with every increase in property management the estimated consumer shopping behaviour will increase by 1.01.

If we hold other variables constant the unstandardized regression coefficient value of promotion is 0.93 which reflects the effects on consumer shopping behaviour. The positive signs showed that the estimated value represents the growth in consumer shopping behaviour by 0.93 with every unit increase in promotion where the significance level is less than 1%.

Holding the other variables constant the unstandardized regression coefficient value of shopping experience is 0.82 which reflects the effects on consumer shopping behaviour. The positive signs showed that the estimated value represents the growth in shopping experience by 0.82 where the significance level is less then 1%.

Holding the other variables constant the unstandardized regression coefficient value of the entertainment is 0.95 which reflects the effects on consumer shopping behaviour. The positive signs showed that the estimated value represents the growth in consumer shopping behaviour by 0.95 with ever unit increase in entertainment where the significance level is less than 1%.

Holding the other variables constant the unstandardized regression coefficient value of reachability is 0.84 which reflects the effects on consumer shopping behaviour. The positive signs showed that the estimated value represents the growth in consumer shopping behaviour by 0.84 with every unit increase in reachability where the significance level is less than 1%.

Holding the other variables constant the unstandardized regression coefficient value of customer satisfaction and loyalty is 1.79 which reflects the effects on consumer shopping behaviour. The positive signs showed that the estimated value represents the growth in consumer shopping behaviour by 1.79 with every unit increase in customer satisfaction and loyalty where the significance level is less than 1%.

### Discussions and Conclusion

In today's world the shopping nowadays has become a place for socializing, where customers go in with high expectations related to shopping. Nowadays shopping malls have become a one stop destination for all fun activities like watching movies, hanging out, eating out and meeting people. Hence it becomes important for the mall managers to know how to make the environment of the mall more energetic, filled with modern and facilities necessary to attract the customers into the mall.

An important suggestion for the mall managers are drawn from this research is, strong positioning of malls is required to ensure customer satisfaction. The results have revealed that endogenous variables such as reachability, atmosphere, shopping experience, property management, promotions, and entertainment have a positive impact on variable service quality and the latent variable shoppers shopping behaviour  and shoppers' satisfaction and loyalty have a positive impact on patient satisfaction and loyalty in the selected malls in Gurgoan. From the conceptual model developed it was concluded as shoppers shopping behaviour has a positive impact on shoppers satisfaction and loyalty. Thus by increasing the customer satisfaction the loyalty of customers towards different retail shops in shopping malls. Thus from the study the mall developers can now understand the influence of consumer shopping behaviour towards success in growing organized retail environment in India.

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