Determinants of shopping Experience: An empirical investigation of Durban shopping malls

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Abstract

The development of shopping malls is a major social and global phenomenon that has unearthed a novel facet for customer satisfaction and their consequent or relative buying behavior. Malls (shopping centres) have become some of the most popular places for leisure activity, enhancing the consumption levels and the lifestyle of their attending populations. With the advent of malls, the South African market has rigorously developed and has witnessed an encouraging growth over the last ten years. With their multiple consumer satisfaction influencing factors, the shopping malls have developed at a rapid rate especially across the metropolitan area of Durban and this growth has initiated a “shopping mall” culture. In congruence with this development, the current research intended to highlight the factors that influence the consumer buying behavior in seven selected malls situated in Durban. The findings from the research indicate that there is a significant influence of various factors such as services, accessibility, and sales dynamics on consumer buying behavior. Additionally, the results posit that the demographic profile of the consumers, such as age, gender and income significantly influence consumers’ buying behavior. The findings of the research will help in the formulation of new strategies aimed at the retention and expansion of the consumer base and also at the enhancement of the service quality provision of the retailers in the selected and other malls.

Keywords: shopping malls, consumer’s buying behavior, shopping experience, Durban.

Introduction

Consumer behavior is defined as the activities undertaken by consumers during the attainment, consumption and disposition of a products or services (Blackwell, Miniard, & Engel, 2001). The realm of consumer behavior is not just inculcated with reasons or factors for buying, but also for the consumption process involved. The consumers are driven by various influencers such as motivation, income, emotions, perceptions, lifestyle, culture, personality and other factors (Srivastava, 2013: 785-792).

Consumer behavior analyzes the individuals and groups when they are involved in the process of buying or disbursing either services, products, ideas or experiences. There are various consumers, between the age ranges of a fifteen years to those falling within the age of 56 and above, from teenagers to an international executives. Any consumers of a given age, gender, occupation, income-level or social status look out for items to fulfil their basic needs and desires. The study of consumer behavior is not merely restricted to the process of consumption and purchase, it also intends to analyze the decision-making process that impacts their buying power and facilitates or refutes it (Ratnakumari & Kumar, 2017). Thus, the marketing team of a mall need to explore and analyze various factors that are in play and which can influence the buying power of the consumer in a positive sense. Sekhar, Srinivas, and Prasad (2016) noted that consumers can be divided into two categories, individual and
organizational consumers. Individual consumers are those who intend to satisfy their personal needs and wants by either purchasing items, products or services for themselves or satisfy the need of others for buying them the needful; such individual consumers come from varied backgrounds, age and life stages that further impacts the decision for the purchase of products manipulating their buying power. It has been posited and explored that the buying power of a consumer is influenced by various psychological, social and cultural factors (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010). Consumer behavior can be explained as the decision process and physical activity individuals engage in when evaluating, acquiring, using, or disposing of goods and services (Kumar, 2014).

In the current time and age, shopping malls have generally grown significantly in scope and in market share due to the growth of the towns and cities, signifying important economic development. They have attained the marketing capacity that is capable of attracting hundreds of consumers, intending to provide them with their wants, and needs in a positive environment experience. New strategies are developed by the concerned authorities within the domain of shopping malls and efforts are made to develop a mature shopping mall experience aiming for enhanced levels of customer satisfaction. Various add-ons are added to the geographical realm of a shopping mall, such as, restaurants and cinemas, water-fountains, and sitting areas that encourage the consumers to be comfortable and more relaxed while shopping (Muruganantham, & Bhakat, 2013). Thus, there are various environmental factors that facilitate the shopping experience of the consumer and these also boost their buying power.

The purchasing or the buying power within the realm of a retail market is enhanced when the consumers are able to recognize some unsatisfied need or want. The environment of the store has an impact on the emotions of the consumers, enticing their decision to visit a store or a mall and the time they will spend in there, and especially their decision to buy or to not buy (Bohl, 2012). Thus, a given mall designs their environment in congruence with the factors that attract the consumers, motivating their unplanned purchase and offering a gratifying shopping experience (Gilboa, & Vlinal-Yavetz, 2013). Shopping malls have been established at a rapid pace in Durban-South Africa with the intention and notion of catering for the needs and wants of the consumers in a developing economy (Mohan, Sivakumaran, & Sharma, 2013). The shopping malls have greatly filled the gap between entertainment, shopping and food consumption in the comfortable refinements of an expansive area of needed services and related facilities. In this article, the researcher has concentrated on the determinants which influence the shopping or buying behaviour of the consumers visiting and purchasing from malls. In this context, special reference has been given to seven shopping malls in Durban, a city of South Africa. Previous studies have been conducted on this theme, however, little evidence was presented on the basis of the business strategies which are followed by the shopping malls to motivate or enthuise the consumers in order to purchase their products or services. There are various non-economic factors that have been decisive in affecting the purchasing behaviour of the customers who frequently visit the malls. The researcher has sought to fill these gaps so as to provide a new insight in this field of research.

**Significance of the study**

Malls are now widespread in both the semi-urban and urban areas of the country. Durban, is not an exception, and has a fair number of malls. Malls provide a single platform to buy the necessary products or services and thus reduce consumers’ search costs in terms of purchasing products or enhancing effectiveness in the transactions. Shopping in malls facilitates consumers in buying the products they need at the same time and from one place. The malls also tend to develop a type of impulsive purchasing behavior which results in an emotional ruling on consumer rationality. The shopping malls have succeeded in developing this type of emotion among their consumers who often indulge in excessive purchasing. This affects mainly the younger consumers who are emotional rather than being rational and thus, they are the majority of people who tend to visit the malls when compared to other people.
Apart from what was stated previously, there are other factors like the offers provided by the shops, entertainment for the kids and discounts etc. from which the malls are successful in attracting the customers. Considering these aspects, the researcher has emphasized the factors which affect the purchasing behavior of the customers at shopping malls which have affected the purchasing behavior of the customers and thus enhanced their sales through word of mouth or other promoting strategies such as inter alia, advertising and marketing.

**Literature Review**

Various researches have posited that there is strong influence on the attributes of the mall on the shopping behavior of the consumer (Khare, 2012). The retailers can generate favourable customer responses with the appropriate interplay of retail format and store ambience. According to Turley and Milliman (2000) the varied retail format can generate different shopping behaviors of the consumer; this aspect of the impact of atmospheric facilities provided or present in the mall impacting shopping behavior have been studied over many years (Lunardo, 2015; Bohl, 2012; Mohan et al., 2013; Sadeghi and Bijandi, 2011).

In 2007, (Aldy 2007) analyzed six malls within the geographical realm of UAE, six mall attractiveness factors were found to be relevant to the consumers, namely, entertainment, diversity, convenience, luxury, comfort and mall essence. It has also been suggested that the environmental cues such as music, colour, texture, and lighting can have a significant impact on the consumer buying behavior (Kumar et al., 2010). The pleasant atmosphere within the realm of the mall can lead to positive shopping experiences, whereas, a poor atmosphere can lead to disinterest. The mall environment can also evoke emotional responses (Walsh et al., 2011). Thus, the social and physical stimuli present in the mall can enhance the shopping experience of the consumer and significantly impact their buying behavior (Srivastava and Kaul, 2014).

Moreover, the arrangement of stores and merchandises can play a crucial role in the formulation of perception of the consumers and correspondingly impact their buying behavior. It can generate perceptions about the price, the intention to stay in the mall and generate positive ideas about the merchandises and its quality and the overall positive image of the concerned mall (Khare, 2012). According to a study conducted by Srivastava and Kaul (2014), perception of service quality by the consumers, social interaction which enhanced customer experience, retail experience in the form of merchandising and evoking emotional responses, significantly play a crucial role in the determination of consumers buying behavior, wherein all the mentioned variables significantly influence it.

In conclusion, the customer experience in the context of atmospheric variables and mall attributes can be defined as, “holistic in nature and involve[ing] the customer’s cognitive, affective, emotional, social and physical responses to the retailer. This experience is created not only by those factors that the retailer can control (e.g., service interface, retail atmosphere, assortment, price), but also by factors outside of the retailer’s control (e.g., influence of others, purpose of shopping)” (Ahmad, 2012).

Various studies have posited that both males and females exhibit various behavior and attitude in the context of shopping (Tifferet and Herstein, 2012; Jackson et al., 2011; Kumar, 2014; Fischer and Arnold, 1994; Ali, 2013). It has also been postulated that males and females differ in different aspects of product choice, response to advertisement and consumption (Singh, & Prashar, 2014; Pera, 2013). Moreover, females are known to be more integrated with the purchasing sequence and gather information more intensely than men before the purchase of products, they also spend more time in stores than their male counterparts (Jackson et al., 2011). In a study conducted by Tifferet and Herstein (2012), when compared to men, women tend to exhibit enhanced levels of hedonic consumption, impulse buying and brand commitment.
Various studies have demonstrated that age plays a significant role in the shopping behavior (Teller, & Dennis, 2012; Vipul, 2010; Sharma and Antil, 2013). Thus, age has been known to be an important factor influencing the buying power of the consumers. As people grow old, their need alters which furtherly impacts their buying decision-making patterns. Age alters the lifestyle of the people correspondingly impacting their needs and demands (Hernández, Jiménez and José Martín, 2011). Various factors such as clothing, recreation, furniture and taste in food, environment, hobbies, consumer habits and lifestyle influence the buying power (Kotler & Armstrong 2010).

Another factor that impact the shopping behavior is the aspect of income; people with different income level have a need to make different product choices with noticeable distinct buying patterns.

The income level of the consumer validates their affordability and perspective towards money (Solomon, 2004). People belonging to lower income groups are more interested in the purchase of products that are deemed necessary than spending the same money of luxury brands or designer wear (Lautiainen, 2015). Furthermore, the occupation of the consumer influences their purchasing power by manipulating the purchasing decisions and buying behavior (Lautiainen, 2015).

Apart from these aspects, the researcher has highlighted the significant factors which influence the purchasing behaviour of the customers by developing the customer purchasing behaviour model as described below.

Figure 1. Customer purchasing behaviour model
Source: Ratnakumari and Kumar (2017)

The customer buying behaviour at a shopping mall is influenced by certain factors as per figure 1, presented above. These are cultural factors, social factors, personal factors and psychological factors.

Culture is the basic factor which relates to the behaviour and wants of a person. Every person belongs from a different culture and thus the malls need to consider the cultural influence effectively so that the customers are satisfied. For instance, the marketers at the shopping malls need to understand the various cultures and value them through the products and services towards the customers so that they get pleased with them (Ratnakumari, & Kumar, 2017). The cultural factors are further classified as sub-culture and social class as defined in the figure 1 above. There should be an impact of the cultural factors on the clothing, food or leisure activities presented in a mall.
Besides culture, there are other social factors which need to be considered so that a mall makes an impact on customer purchasing behaviour. Reference group is an important factor which the marketers need to attract so that they can market their products. Apart from that, families also play an important role in purchasing products. In many cases, the buyers are motivated by the family decisions before purchasing a product (Narahari, & Kuvad, 2017). Roles and status of people is also an important factor for which the retailers at the malls need to consider the quality and price of the products as per the status of the customers so that they can attract more customers and retain existing ones.

Other than social and cultural factors, personal factors are also important. For instance, customers from various backgrounds and income groups visit the malls. Henceforth, there should be stores of different kinds, some should sell the products that are available at a low cost while others should sell branded and costly ones as preferred by the upper-class consumers. The products and services should be divided socio-economically wise, or age wise, so that the customers are satisfied in buying a product when they visit a mall (Sekhar, Srinivas, & Prasad, 2016). The personal factors should comprise of age and lifestyle of people along with occupation, income status, and personality as mentioned in figure 1 above.

At the end, the researcher needs to consider the psychological factors which influence a customer to buy products. This consists of their perception, motivation, knowledge and attitude. The retailers need to understand the perceptions of the customers to identify their preferences and know their choices or factors which motivate them to visit a mall and buy products. At the same time, they should be gather complete knowledge from the market regarding customer demands, trends or the products that they need in their daily lives (Ahmad, 2012). This is followed by their attitudes which they show to buy a product. Henceforth, the organized retailers of shopping malls need to consider all these factors to understand their influence on consumer purchasing behaviour.

Research Methodology

As stated, shopping malls have been established at a rapid pace in Durban with the intention and notion to cater for the needs and wants of the consumers in an aggravating and developing economy (Cloete, 2003). The shopping malls have greatly filled the gap between entertainment, shopping and restaurants in the comfortable refinements of an expanse of services and facilities. Thus, within this context, there is an adamant need to analyse and explore the behaviour of the consumers in the shopping malls and collate information about their preferences for shopping and the various factors impacting their consumer buying experiences/behaviour.

For both organized and unorganized retailers, the primary importance is to enhance the sales and customer traffic. The shopping malls of Durban are not exceptional cases. However, with the growth of a large number of malls in the cities and towns, the competition is also increasing for which different shopping malls are implementing different strategies, so that the customers can enjoy a new shopping experience. Malls are in a race to provide discounts or introduce entertaining programs in the malls so that they can attract more customers since mall visits are somewhat of a leisure activity apart from their buying attraction. For instance, some of them provide offers, some have a kids zone for entertainment while some provide discounts on clothing or food or even free cinema tickets. Henceforth, the researcher consequently focused on the various determinants which contribute in affecting the purchasing behavior of the customers who frequent shopping malls.

Data collection methods

The study was quantitative in nature and questionnaires were distributed as a survey method to collect required primary data. Through the questionnaire, the researcher wanted to identify the buying behavior of the customers at the shopping malls of Durban. At the same time, the researcher wanted to find out the essential factors which influence the customers to visit the
malls and purchase the necessary items. The questionnaire was developed on the basis of a five-point Likert scale and it was distributed among the customers visiting the shopping malls. The customers were chosen as per their purchasing power and comprised of both females and males. The researcher focused on a diverse population. The researcher also used secondary research methods to collect evidence and to complete the literature review section of the study. The primary data was collected using a questionnaire survey process which consisted of close-ended questions. The secondary data was collected from the relevant secondary resources including books, academic peer reviewed journals and related popular literature articles.

Population design

The study has been conducted in seven shopping malls of Durban city for which seven hundred customers were approached. The malls used included the following:

1. La Lucia Mall
2. West Wood Mall
3. The Workshop Shopping Centre
4. City View Mall
5. Chatsworth Centre
6. Windermere Shopping Centre
7. The Atrium Shopping Mall

Sampling methods and sample size

The researcher selected a non-probability convenience sampling technique which is a non-random selection method since, the number of customers are infinite. For this, consumers were sporadically chosen. The targeted respondents were approximately 100 from each of the malls, for which a total 700 customers were chosen. The customers were chosen irrespective of their age, gender, income or ethnic grouping, so as to verify the factors which affect their purchasing behavior. Research was ethically conducted with permissions and consents granted by relevant parties.

Data analysis

After the completion of questionnaire, the collected data was analyzed and it assisted in meeting the research objectives and research aims. The Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling was used as a statistical tool to analyze the variation in the consumer buying behavior due to several determinants. The results were interpreted as per the Consumer Buying Behavior Model. The completed questionnaires were coded; the responses were captured in Excel and then exported into SPSS. The results of this study are dealt with under the analysis of the findings section.

Objectives of the study

Shopping malls have become one of the most popular shopping and leisure places for the enhancement of consumption levels and emerging lifestyle trends. With shopping malls being developed at a rapid rate across the Metropolitan area of Durban, a phenomenon has resulted which is referred to as a “shopping mall culture” in Durban, which is in line with what is happening in other metropolitan cities.

The reason for the increasing popularity of Durban shopping malls is that they fill the gap between shopping, cinema visits, restaurant visits and all of this is in an air-conditioned environment in a tropical climate city. Within this context, there is a need to study the behaviour of consumers in large shopping malls and obtain information that can assist shop owners to provide better customer satisfaction and increased lifetime value.
Within the above context, the objectives of this study were to:

**Objective 1:** To study consumer buying behaviour at selected shopping malls in Durban and the reasons for consumer preferences for shopping at the shopping mall.

**Objective 2:** To determine consumer buying tactics, shopping priorities and experiences during their visits to shopping malls in Durban.

**Objective 3:** To study the consumer buying behaviour at shopping malls with reference to gender, age, occupation and income.

**Objective 4:** To analyse the influence of factors like accessibility, ambience, availability of services, sales personnel and other facilities affecting consumer’s buying behaviour

**Method of research**

The study was exploratory and descriptive and it consisted of a quantitative approach with some qualitative aspects as stated earlier. Qualitative and quantitative research was used since both approaches provide different perspectives and they usually complement each other to achieve the best insights (Creswell 2013:215).

**Phase I**

The purpose of the first phase of the empirical study was to identify the determinants of shopping and buying behavior of shopping malls in Durban.

**Table 1: List of Participants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Number of Responded</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Number of Responded</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 - 25</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 - 35</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 - 45</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 - 55</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>Private Sector</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>45.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56 and above</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>Public Sector</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>32.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Qualification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Self Employed</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pension Person</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In table 1, the researcher has presented the data regarding the demographic profile of the chosen candidates. Except for the names of the candidates which was optional, the researcher has analysed the data collected regarding their gender, age or their position in terms of occupation. As per the results, it can be interpreted that most of the customers were female compared to male and most of them were in the age group 26 to 35 years.

**Phase II**

The aim of the second phase of the empirical research was to address the objectives of this study - to study the determinants of shopping and buying behavior of seven shopping malls in Durban, South Africa. The questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first part provided general information about the study. The second part comprised of the profile of the respondents and problems relating to each stage in the procurement process. The questionnaire consisted of closed and open-ended questions. The closed questions were arranged in sections and a comments section was given at the end of each section so that respondents would be able to elaborate or comment on the sections. Such items were included in the questionnaire for collecting responses on a five-point Likert scale (1 – strongly agree, 5 – strongly disagree).

A structured questionnaire has been prepared to fulfill the objective of the research. The questionnaire has been pretested by academic experts and their suggestions have been incorporated. After pretesting of the questionnaire, data has been collected from consumers at shopping malls at Durban. Convenience sampling was used to reach to the respondents. After the data collection, reliability and validity of the data has been done through SPSS. Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling has been used as a statistical tool to analyze the variation in the consumer buying behavior due to several determinants. The results have been interpreted as per the Consumer Buying Behavior Model.
Results and discussion

In this section, the researcher analyzed the quantitative data with the help of the chosen data analysis tool. The results were further presented in the form of tables and in numeric terms so that the readers can understand them easily. Further, the data presented in the table has been interpreted to explain the results in detail.

Consumer Preferences for Shopping

The nine reasons for consumer preferences for shopping at the shopping malls has been identified from the literature and nine factors have been analyzed. The skewness and kurtosis value are in the range of +1 to –1. This shows that the data is normally distributed.

The table 2 predicts that most consumers prefer shopping at a shopping mall because they can get all the products they need under one roof. The second factor which is of prime importance for shopping is the shopping experience. The preferences of other factors have been presented in the table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attracted by Advertisement</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word of mouth</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulk purchase</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>22.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping experience</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>50.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All product in one roof</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>81.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because of family and friend’s influence</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>86.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low price</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>97.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference Group</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>98.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impulse</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above table, the researcher has analysed the different reasons consumers prefer to shop at the shopping malls. As per the results, it has been understood that most of the customers choose shopping malls to shop in since they get all the products under one roof. Apart from that, they choose it for a positive shopping experience as they receive the desired ambience and all types of products together in one place, thus making life easier for themselves.

Other reasons for which the customers prefer to use the shopping malls are the attraction of the advertisements, word of mouth, bulk purchase ability, the influence of family and friends, low prices, reference groups and impulse purchasing motivations.
Table: 3 Descriptive Statistics: To determine consumer buying tactics, shopping priority and experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I had trouble reading the labels/price tag on the items in the mall</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.2029</td>
<td>.60422</td>
<td>2.646</td>
<td>5.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt under pressure at the mall to complete the shopping trip on time</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.2086</td>
<td>.61170</td>
<td>2.595</td>
<td>4.748</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I usually find great pleasure in shopping at malls</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.2486</td>
<td>.96931</td>
<td>-.514</td>
<td>-.1740</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The items on the shopping list were easy for me to find in the mall</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.4943</td>
<td>.86992</td>
<td>-1.140</td>
<td>-.703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I love to browse when shopping</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.3314</td>
<td>.94415</td>
<td>-.704</td>
<td>-1.509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I shop, I tend to Impulse buy.</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.0800</td>
<td>.99751</td>
<td>-.161</td>
<td>-1.980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchasing in shopping malls is a new thrilling experience</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.0543</td>
<td>.99924</td>
<td>-.109</td>
<td>-1.994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchasing products from a shopping mall is a status symbol for consumers</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.0457</td>
<td>.99967</td>
<td>-.092</td>
<td>-1.997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will prefer to buy the products which have good brand image in the market</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.0200</td>
<td>1.00051</td>
<td>-.040</td>
<td>-2.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>700</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The data is normally distributed since the skewness and kurtosis value is within the range of +1 and -1 as shown in table 3. It has been found through the responses that people mostly love to browse during shopping and go for shopping items easily available in the malls.

**Table 4 Descriptive Statistics** - To study the consumer buying behaviour at shopping malls with reference to gender, age, occupation and income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education Qualification</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>2.9157</td>
<td>1.18770</td>
<td>.420</td>
<td>-.813</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.1714</td>
<td>.80185</td>
<td>-.169</td>
<td>-.291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly Income</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>2.5757</td>
<td>1.22386</td>
<td>.444</td>
<td>-.691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>700</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data is normally distributed since the skewness and kurtosis value is within the range of +1 and -1 as shown in table 4.

**Table 5 Descriptive Statistics** - To analyse the influence of factors like accessibility, ambience, availability of services, sales personnel and other facilities affecting consumer’s buying behaviour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mall Image and popularity</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.5129</td>
<td>.86490</td>
<td>-1.676</td>
<td>.092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spacious shop floor</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.3700</td>
<td>.80518</td>
<td>-.983</td>
<td>.092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billing and checkout time</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.0029</td>
<td>.71565</td>
<td>-.075</td>
<td>.092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee/Staff’s Behaviour and service</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.9029</td>
<td>.90254</td>
<td>.157</td>
<td>.092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amenities</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.0486</td>
<td>1.00809</td>
<td>-.131</td>
<td>.092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer service quality</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.8514</td>
<td>.89869</td>
<td>.178</td>
<td>.092</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
After analysis, the data is normally distributed since the skewness and kurtosis value is within the range of +1 and -1.

**Research Model**

In order to develop a questionnaire to measure the consumer behaviour on four factors namely social, personal, cultural and psychological, an extensive literature review was conducted, and several items were identified. These items were influencing consumer behaviour to a great extent. Such items were included in the questionnaire for collecting responses on a five-point Likert scale (1 – strongly agree, 5 – strongly disagree). The questionnaire has been pretested and the content validity has been checked through academic experts. The study resulted in seven hundred valid responses. After the data collection, the normality, reliability and validity of the data were checked. Partial Least Square method of Structural Equation Modelling were used to develop a model for consumer behaviour in the selected shopping malls.
The figure above presents the consumer buying behavior model to interpret the factors which influence a customer to visit the shopping malls and buy the products. As per the analysis, it has been noted that there are personal, social, cultural and psychological factors that make an impact on the consumer buying behavior.

Hypothesis Development:

H1: Personal Factors leads to Consumer Buying Behavior in shopping malls
H2: Social Factors leads to Consumer Buying Behavior in shopping malls
H3: Cultural Factors leads to Consumer Buying Behavior in shopping malls
H4: Psychological Factors leads to Consumer Buying Behavior in shopping malls

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constructs</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Factor</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>● Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>● Gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>● Education Qualification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>● Occupation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>● Monthly Income</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Social Factor             | 8 | ● what is your usual mode of transport to get to the mall  
|                          |   | ● Parking  
|                          |   | ● Play area for children  
|                          |   | ● Elevators and escalators  
|                          |   | ● Marketing communications/Promotions  
|                          |   | ● Product return and exchange services  
|                          |   | ● Brand reputation of products  
|                          |   | ● Visiting shopping mall helps to improve my social networking  
| Psychological Factor     | 9 | ● Mall image and popularity  
|                          |   | ● Spacious shop floor  
|                          |   | ● Billing and checkout time  
|                          |   | ● Employee/Staff Behaviour and service  
|                          |   | ● Attractive interior decor  
|                          |   | ● Operating time  
|                          |   | ● Flexibility in payment mode  
|                          |   | ● The ambience of the shopping mall increases your inclination to purchase.  
|                          |   | ● I had trouble reading the labels/price tag on the items in the mall  
| Cultural Factor          | 11 | ● Amenities  
|                          |   | ● Customer service quality  
|                          |   | ● Safety and Security  
|                          |   | ● Atmosphere  
|                          |   | ● Temperature control  
|                          |   | ● Cleanliness  
|                          |   | ● Toilet/Washroom/ Baby room facility  
|                          |   | ● Information booth  
|                          |   | ● Superior quality products are available at the shopping mall  
|                          |   | ● Highly branded products are available at the shopping mall  
|                          |   | ● Products of new style and designs are available at the shopping mall  
| Consumer Buying Behavior | 7 | ● When do you prefer going to shopping malls  
|                          |   | ● What made you to come to this shopping mall  
|                          |   | ● How often do you visit a mall  
|                          |   | ● How much time do you spend at a mall  
|                          |   | ● How much do you normally spend in shopping malls in a single shopping experience?  
|                          |   | ● I felt under pressure at the mall to complete the shopping trip on time  
|                          |   | ● Purchasing products from a shopping mall is a status symbol for consumers  

As per the above table, it can be interpreted that there is certain persona, social, cultural and psychological factors which influence the customers to shop from the malls. As per the interpretation, it has been seen that cultural factors affected the customer buying behavior the most. This includes the customer service quality provided to the customers from different religions or occupational backgrounds. Apart from that, there are other factors like safety and security, temperature, cleanliness and atmosphere etc. which influence a customer to visit the shopping malls. After cultural factors, the psychological factors like popularity and image of
the malls along with payment flexibility and billing facilities also attract the customers in the malls. This is followed by the social factors like parking area, entertainment area for the kids, product exchange services, market communication techniques and brand reputation etc. also affect the minds of the customers for which they choose the organized retailer shops like malls to buy their necessary products rather than visiting the unorganized non-retailing stores. Personal factors like age, gender, educational qualification, occupation and monthly income also influence the customers a lot when deciding to visit the shopping malls.

### Data Analysis and Interpretation

The overall KMO statistic for the study was 0.643 (table 8) which indicated that the sample size was adequate for proceeding with PCA (MacCallum et al., 1999; Tabachnick and Fidell, 2001; Field, 2009). The KMO values for individual constructs have also been derived by studying the diagonal elements of the anti-image correlation matrix. The values for all constructs were above the acceptable threshold of 0.5 (Hair et al., 2011). Bartlett’s test, indicated that correlations between items were sufficiently large to proceed with the PCA. After the KMO and Bartlett’s test validity of the items have been checked.

**Table-7: KMO and Bartlett's Test**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.</th>
<th>.643</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approx. Chi-Square</td>
<td>6634.227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bartlett's Test of Sphericity</td>
<td>Df 595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. 0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Reliability

Cronbach alpha was used to measure the reliability. The consistency of each construct in the model has been checked through Cronbach alpha. The table below explains the reliability of each items pertaining to the construct. The Cronbach alpha value greater than 0.5 indicates that the data is reliable.

**Table: 8 The reliability of each items pertaining to the construct**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
<th>Cronbach Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Factor</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Factor</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Factor</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Factor</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer Buying Behavior</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Validity

Validity comprises of convergent validity and discriminant validity. This has been again checked through PCA. The factor loadings have been obtained. It has been found that the
Average variance error is more than 0.5 and socio composite reliability is greater than 0.7 for every construct. This reflects that the constructs are valid.

Figure 3: Buying Behavior of Consumers

The beta coefficients and the significance value have been mentioned in the figure above. The model proves that the personal and psychological factors play an important role in determining Consumer Buying Behavior. The model fit and quality indices have been discussed in table 9 below. The model fit indicate that the model is a good fit.

Table 9: Model fit and quality indices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indices</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Acceptable Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average block VIF (AVIF)</td>
<td>1.025</td>
<td>acceptable if &lt;= 5, ideally &lt;= 3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average full collinearity VIF (AFVIF)</td>
<td>1.111</td>
<td>acceptable if &lt;= 5, ideally &lt;= 3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenenhaus GoF (GoF)</td>
<td>0.152</td>
<td>small &gt;= 0.1, medium &gt;= 0.25, large &gt;= 0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sympsoon's paradox ratio (SPR)</td>
<td>0.750</td>
<td>acceptable if &gt;= 0.7, ideally = 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-squared contribution ratio (RSCR)</td>
<td>0.958</td>
<td>acceptable if &gt;= 0.9, ideally = 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistical suppression ratio (SSR)</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>acceptable if &gt;= 0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonlinear bivariate causality direction ratio (NLBCDR)</td>
<td>0.875</td>
<td>acceptable if &gt;= 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The Goodness of Fit has recently gained increasing dissemination as an index to judge the overall model fit in PLS path models. The Goodness of Fit Indices are a means to validate a PLS path model. The predicted indices are a means to predict the fitness of the model. The indices clearly speak that they are in the favour of the model.

Research Findings

The current research will orient the factors that significantly influence the consumer buying behaviour within the realms of modern retail malls in Durban, South Africa. The findings of the research will help in the formulation of new strategies that can retain the consumer base and enhance the service quality of the retailers in shopping malls. They will also provide insights into the perceptions of the consumers and their relative tactics while being persuaded to go shopping. The findings also signify the particular aspect of demography, such as gender, age, occupation and income on their buying power and can lead to discovery of important aspects that can aid the retailers to enhance their business. The results can be valuable for the formulation of training of sales personnel, marketing intricacies, such as sales and campaigns.

Thus, there are certain factors or determinants which influence the consumers in visiting the shopping malls at Durban. As per the primary analysis, it has been understood that most of the people prefer to purchase the products from the shopping malls since they find it easy to purchase in one place. At the same time, they get all the products under one roof for which they can save time and money as well. When the results were compared with the secondary data, it has been interpreted that the customers are also motivated due to the shopping experience that they receive on purchasing a product from the mall. They can purchase bulk products at the same time and can also choose them as per their needs (Ali, 2013). This is helpful for them in terms of purchasing their preferred products. Other than these, as per the customer buying behavior analyzed both in the primary and secondary researches, it has been seen that there are personal, social, psychological and cultural factors which influence the buying behavior of a customer. For instance, if a mall has a proper ambience with a proper child zone section, then, a family including the children prefers to visit the mall and spend some time in shopping and indulging in entertainment as well. At the same time, there is a need for an effective customer service quality to serve the customers as best possible and to make them feel comfortable without reference to their socio-economic status, age, gender or occupation.

The retailers need to serve the customers effectively so that they can get required satisfaction of needs and wants (Khare, 2012). Thus, considering these factors as described in the literature review section and in the primary analysis, the researcher has highlighted the determinants influencing the buying behavior of the customers.

Opportunity for further research

The current research intended to specifically to analyses and study consumer shopping behavior in different shopping malls in Durban by quantitatively analysing the responses of seven hundred shoppers in the defined realm of Kwa-Zulu Natal and in seven malls, namely, La Lucia Mall, Workshop Shopping Centre, Westwood Mall, City View Mall, Windermere Shopping Centre, Chatsworth Centre and Atrium Shopping Mall. However, further research can be conducted within the discussed/researched domain keeping the below mentioned perspectives in consideration:

i. The current research only investigated within Durban city, Kwa-Zulu Natal, South Africa and involving a selection of seven shopping malls. Future research can be undertaken in other shopping malls, and even in other cities in other provinces, and a comparative analysis can be made of results.
Only quantitative analysis was conducted which observed the perception of the shoppers; thus, an investigation can be further pursued to analyse the perception of the retailers in the context of management and marketing or any other variable/s.

The advent of digital media and online shopping can also be studied to analyse the preferred or the current scenario of shopping malls in a digitised age.

The impact of millennial shoppers within the shopping malls can also be analysed. Their motives and intentions towards the purchase of the products being consumed can be explored along with other factors that influence their shopping behaviour as compared to other generations, such as X or Y.

The impact of teen shoppers within the shopping centres and the influence they have on directing their parents to the shopping centres is also a worthy topic for possible future research.

References


