



# A STUDY ON STORE ATTRIBUTES AND SHOPPING EXPERIENCE OF CUSTOMER AT SELECTED MALLS AT COIMBATORE, TAMIL NADU

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## ABSTRACT

Coimbatore also known as Kovai is a major city in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu. It is the second largest city in the state after Chennai and 16th largest urban agglomeration in India. It is the largest city in the Kongunadu region. It is administered by the Coimbatore Municipal Corporation and is the administrative capital of Coimbatore district.

It is one of the fastest growing tier-II cities in India and a major hub for textiles, industries, commerce, education, information technology, healthcare and manufacturing in Tamil Nadu. It is often referred to as the "Manchester of South India" due to its cotton production and textile industries. Coimbatore is also referred to as the "Pump City" and it supplies nearly half of India's requirements of motors and pumps. The city is one of the largest exporters of jewellery, wet grinders, poultry and auto components with "Coimbatore Wet Grinder" and "Kovai Cora Cotton" recognised as Geographical Indications by the Government of India.

It is the second largest and industrialized city of Tamil Nadu. Coimbatore city is located on the banks of river Noyyal. The height is 411 meters above mean ocean level. The attire here is tropical and the season to visit the city is all as the year progressed.

**KEYWORDS:** Store Attributes, Shopping Experience, Customer Satisfaction, Retail Environment, Malls in Coimbatore, Consumer Behavior, Retail Shopping, In-Store Experience.

## I. INTRODUCTION

This district has 10 taluks. And it is formed as third Municipal Corporation of Tamil Nadu State in 1981. After the Chennai and Madurai. They are Mettupalayam, Pollachi, Annur, Anaimalai, Coimbatore North taluk, and South taluk, Kinathukkadavu, Madukkarai, Perur, Sulur and Valparai. It has two revenue blocks. They are Kovai and Pollachi. The total land Area of this City is 7,469 square kilometres. The number of inhabitants in this District Population is 34, 72,578 (Census 2011).

The general population of different states lies here and they communicate in Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, English and Marathi. The STD code for this city is 0422. It is one of the best most modern urban areas of Tamil Nadu State. Many legitimate offices of transportation through air (Peelamedu Airplane Terminal), through transport and through rail (Kovai Junction and Podanur Junction). National Crime records Bureau reported this city was one of the safest city in India for women in 2015.

## II. REVIEW OF LITRATURE

1. **E. S. V. Narayana (2018)** - The transition to modern retail formats has improved customer shopping experiences, with new-age customers showing a preference for these formats. The study specifically examines shopping mall customers in a tier-2 city in Andhra Pradesh.
2. **Nic S. Terblanche, Martin Kidd (2020)** -The study confirmed a positive relationship between customer in-shop experience factors and shopping trip value,

influencing the intention to revisit the retailer. The conclusions recommend areas for future research.

3. **Hotniar Siringoringo, A. Kowanda (2021)** - The main findings include the analysis of consumer shopping behaviour in different retail formats, the influence of attitude and shopping habit on shopping intention, and the absence of significant differences in behaviour among specific retail formats.
4. **C. Rajesh (2016)** -The main findings include the projected growth of the retail sector, the importance of adapting to technology and enhancing various aspects for growth, and the study's focus on understanding the relationship between retail store attributes, staff influence, and customer shopping behaviour.
5. **N. Sulehri, A. Rana, Muhammad Naeem (2021)** - The main findings include the sequential influence of purchase intention and sustainable attractiveness on the relationship between customer access and purchase behaviour, a significant link between purchase intention and purchase behaviour in urban organized retail stores in Pakistan, and insights for optimizing store locations to increase customer patronage.

## III. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To understand and improve the shopping experience for customers in Coimbatore malls by investigating their preferences.
2. To know what aspects of shopping in malls make customers happy and satisfied.



- To help create better shopping environments in Coimbatore malls that keep customers coming back and contribute to their overall satisfaction.

#### IV. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

- This study focuses on evaluating how various store attributes (such as layout, ambiance, staff behaviour, product assortment, pricing, promotions, and accessibility) influence the shopping experience of customers at selected malls in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu.
- The research aims to understand customer satisfaction, behavior, and preferences based on their in-store experiences.
- The study includes demographic variables such as age, gender, income level, and shopping frequency to determine if they affect customer perceptions of store attributes.
- It provides insights for mall management and retail store owners to enhance customer satisfaction and increase footfall and sales.
- Data is collected through primary sources such as structured questionnaires and limited to customers physically visiting the malls during the study period.

#### V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

##### RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a detailed blue print used to guide a research study towards its objective. The process of designing a research study involves many interrelated decisions. The most significant decision is the choice of research approach, because it determines how the information will be obtained. The choice of the research approach depends on the nature of the research that one wants to do.

The present study is descriptive research based on the survey method. The methods adopted in the choice of sample, selection of respondents, collection of data and tools of analysis are briefly discussed in this part.

##### AREA OF THE STUDY

The geographical area of the study chosen for this research is Coimbatore district, Tamil Nadu

##### POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The populations of the study are the people who are living in Coimbatore district with a focus on analyzing store attributes and customer shopping experience at selected malls.

##### SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

A convenience sample is a sample where the respondents are selected, in part or in whole, at the convenience of the researcher. The researcher makes no attempt, or only a limited attempt, to ensure that this sample is an accurate representation of some larger group or population.

##### SAMPLE SIZE

Since the entire population cannot be taken for the study, the size of the sample was restricted to 188 respondents.

#### HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

- H1: There is a significant difference in mall visit frequency among different age groups
- H2: There is a significant association between gender and the primary purpose of visiting a mall
- H3: The importance given to factors like parking, ambiance, and discounts varies significantly based on occupation.
- H4: There is a significant difference in perception of product pricing at malls across different income groups.
- H7: Higher-income groups are more likely to return to the same mall frequently than lower-income groups

#### DATA COLLECTION

There are several ways of collecting the appropriate data. While deciding about the method of data collection to be used for the study, the researcher should keep in mind, that there are two types of data viz primary & secondary data.

##### 1. PRIMARY DATA

Primary data are those which are collected a fresh and for the first time and thus happen to be original in character. Primary data for the study has been collected through questionnaire and personal interview from the respondents.

##### 2. SECONDARY DATA

Secondary data on the other hand are those which have already been collected by someone else and which have already been passed through the statistical process. In this study secondary data are collected from the online articles, journals, text books, etc.

#### TOOLS USED FOR DATA ANALYSIS

Data is collected through structured questionnaire by way of circulating the questionnaire to the respondents. The collected data is tabulated and coded, using simple percentage method and statistical methods the data were analyzed and interpretation was given. Appropriate charts were used to present the data pictorially.

The following tools were used to draw inference of the study.

##### ➤ Percentage Analysis

This is a Univariate analysis where the percentage of a particular factor with different categories is calculated, in order to help one get fair idea regarding the sample and thereby that of the population. The number of responses of each category is summarized to percentage format for the convenience to use other statistical tools namely pie chart and bar diagrams.

Percentage = ((a portion)/(the whole)) \* 100.

##### Statistical Techniques

Using SPSS statistical analysis software, the following tests were conducted to test the hypothesis.

##### ➤ Chi-Square Test

Chi-Square test can be used to determine if categorical data shows dependency or the two classifications are independent.

$$\chi^2 = \sum \{(O_i - E_i)^2 / E_i\}$$

Applying Yates correction:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \{(|O_i - E_i| - 0.5)^2 / E_i\}$$



➤ **Correlation test**

Correlation research is a type of non-experimental research method in which a researcher measures two variables and understands and assesses the statistical relationship between them with no influence from any extraneous variable. In statistical analysis, distinguishing between categorical data and numerical data is essential, as categorical data involves distinct categories or labels, while numerical data consists of measurable quantities.

**1. Positive correlation:** A positive relationship between two variables is when an increase in one variable leads to a rise in the other variable. A decrease in one variable will see a reduction in the other variable. For example, the amount of money a person has might positively correlate with the number of cars the person owns.

**2. Negative correlation:** A negative correlation is quite literally the opposite of a positive relationship. If there is an increase in one variable, the second variable will show a decrease, and vice versa.

**3. No correlation:** There is no correlation between the two variables in this third type. A change in one variable may not necessarily see a difference in the other variable. For example, being a millionaire and happiness are not correlated. An increase in money doesn't lead to happiness.

**VI. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

**Chi-Square Test-1**

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant difference in mall visit frequency among different age groups.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is a significant difference in mall visit frequency among different age groups.

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	13.207	12	.040
<b>Likelihood Ratio</b>	9.082	12	.169
<b>N of Valid Cases</b>	188		

Calculated  $\chi^2$  Value: 13.207

Degree of freedom: 12

Signification level: .040

**Interpretation**

Based on the Pearson Chi-Square test result ( $\chi^2 = 13.207$ ,  $df = 12$ ,  $p = 0.040$ ), we reject the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) and accept the alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ), suggesting a statistically significant connection between the variables. The Pearson test is more widely used and dependable in this situation, particularly when there is a substantial sample size of 188 cases, even though the Likelihood Ratio test ( $p = 0.169$ ) does not demonstrate significance. The null hypothesis is rejected, indicating that there is probably a meaningful link between the variables and

that they are not independent of one another. As a result, we draw the conclusion that there is proof of a meaningful correlation between the variables under investigation.

**Chi-Square Test-2**

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant association between gender and the primary purpose of visiting a mall.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is a significant association between gender and the primary purpose of visiting a mall.

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	6.404	12	.602
<b>Likelihood Ratio</b>	8.582	12	.379
<b>N of Valid Cases</b>	188		

Calculated  $\chi^2$  Value: 6.404

Degree of freedom: 12

Signification level: .602

**Interpretation**

The Pearson Chi-Square test results ( $\chi^2 = 6.404$ ,  $df = 12$ ,  $p = 0.602$ ) do not reject the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ), showing no statistically significant connection between the variables. Any differences found are probably the result of chance, according to the high p-value. This finding is further supported by the Likelihood Ratio test ( $p = 0.379$ ). The results are regarded as credible due to the substantial sample size of 188 genuine instances. Based on the data, we therefore draw the conclusion that the factors are probably independent of one another and

that there is no significant association between them.

**Chi-Square Test-3**

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant variation in the importance given to factors like parking, ambiance, and discounts based on occupation.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is a significant variation in the importance given to factors like parking, ambiance, and discounts based on occupation.

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	11.454	12	.246
<b>Likelihood Ratio</b>	14.520	12	.105
<b>N of Valid Cases</b>	188		

Calculated  $\chi^2$  Value: 11.454

Degree of freedom: 12

Signification level: .246



## INTERPRETATION

We are unable to reject the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) due to the Pearson Chi-Square test result ( $\chi^2 = 11.454$ ,  $df = 12$ ,  $p = 0.246$ ), which suggests that there is no statistically significant correlation between the variables. The p-value indicates that any differences found are not significant because it is significantly higher than the 0.05 cutoff. This finding is further supported by the Likelihood Ratio test ( $p = 0.105$ ). These findings are regarded as trustworthy due to the large sample size of 188 genuine cases. As a result, we draw the conclusion that there is no significant association between the variables in our analysis and that they are probably independent.

## VII. FINDINGS

### Young, Student Demographic Dominates Mall Visitors

The majority of respondents are young adults (20–29 years) and students, indicating that Coimbatore malls attract a youthful, largely academic population. This segment is likely budget-conscious, and their preferences strongly influence mall trends and expectations.

### Malls Are Primarily Leisure Spaces, Not Just Shopping Hubs

Entertainment, food/dining, and ambiance are the top reasons people visit malls, with Brookefields Mall being the most popular. This shows that malls in Coimbatore are seen more as social and recreational destinations than purely for shopping. Mall ambiance and entertainment offerings are critical drivers of footfall.

### Price Sensitivity and Moderate Satisfaction Highlight Areas for Improvement

While cleanliness and customer service received good ratings, store layout, product quality, and shop variety received only moderate or neutral feedback. Additionally, many respondents view prices as high, regardless of income level. This indicates room for improvement in pricing, variety, and promotional strategies to enhance the overall customer experience.

## VIII. SUGGESTIONS

1. Since the majority of mall goers are students and young adults, it's essential for malls to tailor their marketing strategies to this age group. Malls can introduce student exclusive deals, organize college level events, and collaborate with youth-oriented brands. Engaging Gen Z through social media platforms, influencer tie ups, and interactive mall activities can significantly increase footfall and loyalty among this demographic.
2. The study indicates that many respondents visit malls regularly, even daily. To retain and reward these frequent visitors, malls should implement structured loyalty programs that offer points, discounts, or freebies for repeat purchases. Creating comfortable hangout areas like study zones, gaming lounges, or free Wi-Fi zones would further encourage students and young professionals to spend more time and eventually money at the mall.
3. Brookefields Mall emerged as the most visited location among respondents, highlighting its superior appeal in terms of store variety, entertainment, and location. Competing malls can benefit from conducting a

comparative analysis to identify what makes Brookefields successful. Adopting best practices in tenant mix, interior layout, branding, and customer engagement strategies can help other malls replicate its popularity.

4. Many shoppers, regardless of income level, perceive mall store prices as expensive. This suggests a widespread sensitivity to cost and a demand for better value. Malls should work with retailers to offer a mix of affordable and premium options, promote seasonal sales, and communicate deals clearly through digital and physical channels. Visible signage, app notifications, and regular SMS/email campaigns can help ensure promotions are not overlooked.

## IX. CONCLUSION

The study of mall visitors in Coimbatore indicates that the primary mall-going demographic consists of young, unmarried individuals, particularly students, who frequent malls not only for shopping but also for entertainment and dining. Malls serve as important social spaces, with many respondents visiting regularly as part of their routine.

While satisfaction with aspects like cleanliness and customer service is generally high, there are areas of concern, particularly regarding product pricing, store variety, and the availability of promotions and discounts. Visitors perceive mall prices as being high, and there seems to be a gap in the variety of stores and brands offered, which affects overall shopping satisfaction. The findings also suggest that the communication of promotions and discounts is inconsistent, which may be impacting customer engagement. Despite these challenges, malls are fulfilling their role as leisure destinations, and improving pricing strategies, product variety, and promotional offers could help improve customer satisfaction and increase mall visits.

## X. REFERENCE

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