

GENDER AND MALL SHOPPING

An Analysis Of Patronage Patterns, Shopping Orientation And Consumption Of Fashion Of Indian Youth

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ABSTRACT

Indian Retail is generating considerable interest within the country and abroad. A good percentage of this retail growth is fueled by the youth in the country. Organized retail, best represented by the mushrooming malls, has come to play a defining role in building and supporting this veritable base of retail consumers. Therefore, it is of utmost interest to the retailers and academia alike to understand the consumer dynamics behind the newly evolved consumption culture. This study seeks to address how Indian youth behave in the Mall. It has attempted to identify the recreational and utilitarian orientation among Indian youth and examine gender differences in their attitude to the malls. It also addresses the mall patronage patterns and gender related regional differences within the country in consumer behavior. Prior research in this area stems from the west and the first part of the paper explores the existing literature to formulate the research questions. In the analysis no major differences in the attitude or motives of both genders for shopping in malls but there is evidence to suggest that purchase of fashion differ across sexes. In all, the study questions the fundamental stereotyping of shopping as a feminine activity.

Key words: Gender, Indian Malls, Shopping habits, Segmentation

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Introduction

Indian Retail is generating considerable interest within the country and abroad as it contributes 33% of the country's fast growing GDP. Organized retail, best represented by the mushrooming malls, has come to play a defining role in building and supporting this veritable base of retail consumers. A good percentage of this retail growth is fueled by consumption of the youth in the country who constitute 54% of the population and number about 555 million (Shastri, 2004). Further, the post liberalization generation has grown up without any guilt about consumption. This would lead to a substantial shift in consumer behavior (Goswami, 2007). Therefore, it is of utmost interest to the retailers and academia alike to understand the consumer dynamics behind the newly evolved consumption culture.

Moreover, relatively, little attention has been paid to differences in retail patronage between the sexes (Anselmsson, 2006). If gender beliefs, attitudes, and consumer behavior pattern exists, it is vital for retailers to recognize them, understand them and use them to design gender specific promotions. This study explores the shopping habits of the youth in this country and attempts to identify and contrast possible differences between the sexes. This study also addresses regional differences within the country in the role of gender. In order to do so, hypotheses have been developed based on literature and tested in the Indian context.

Gender and Marketing

One of the major goals of marketing is to segment the consumers and try to target the products/services to their specific needs. Gender has a long history in marketing as a important segmentation variable. This is because it is a group that meets all the criteria of a good segmentation variable; it is easily identifiable, information is accessible and the segments are large enough to generate more profit (Meyers-Levy and Sternthal, 1991,

Palanisamy, 2004). Gender in this study is operationalized as a binary construct -male/female and is termed as "gender" as opposed to "sex" because gender is viewed both a biological and sociological process (Babin & Boles, 1998, Wolin & Korgaonkar, 2005).

Research on shopping has indicated strong differences in shopping behavior between the genders. (Grewal et al. 2003, Otnes & McGrath 2001) This seems to stem from the fact that the traditional division of labor at home called for the man, the husband and father, to be the breadwinner while the woman, the wife and mother, was expected to take care of the family and the home. She undertook the child care and nearly all the household chores, including shopping for the entire family. In spite of the fact that gender roles in other walks of life have stretched due to women being employed outside the home, women continue to be the principal buying agents for the majority of families (Alreck & Settle, 2001, Miller 1998, Lunt & Livingstone 1992). This has led to gender stereotypes. Both men and women associate shopping as a feminine activity or a "female typed task" (Dholakia & Chiang, 2003, Firat & Dholakia, 1998, South & Spitze, 1994)). This stereotyping of shopping roles has been dubbed "the Savannah hypotheses" by Dennis and McCall (2005), whose study across cultures indicated that this difference was evolutionary rather than culturally determined.

Recent studies though have unveiled some evidence that points towards an increase in male participation in shopping-related activities. This is reflective of the trend wherein men are assuming a more egalitarian role due to gender role transcendence as well as facing increasing pressure to share the shopping duties in today's time crunched world (Lee, Ibrahim & Hsueh-Shan, 2005, Dholakia, Perderon & Hikmet, 1995). But most of these studies on gender and shopping orientation or behavior are in the American context. Given that the Indian retail environment, mall

penetration, demographics and cultural background is very different, there is need to investigate the issue in the local context.

Gender and Shopping Attitude

Research indicates that women find shopping and buying more satisfying or pleasurable, and/or less dissatisfying or irritating than do men. They have more positive attitude towards browsing, social interaction, associating buying with leisure. Men at the same time tend to be negative towards shopping see buying as work and they want to accomplish this task with the minimum of time and effort (Campbell, 1997, Dholakia 1999, Reid and Brown 1996)). Shopping plays a stronger emotional, psychological and symbolic role for women compared to men(Dittmar &Drury,2000, Nelson,2000, Noble, Griffith& Adjei,2006).

Time, Frequency, Money Spent and Gender

Generally men spend less time shopping than women but spend more money than women when they do shop.(Fischer& Arnold, 1990, Cody, Seiter and Montatangne-Miller 1995).Women spend twice as long in a shop as men and the typical browser or window shopper is a woman. On the other hand, men see shopping as a mission and tend to go straight for what they want in a purposeful way (Dennis and McCall, 2005). It has also been found that women are more likely to visit stores frequently. (Korgaonkar, Lund &Price, 1985). Also women tend to buy more of clothing and fashion while this is less interesting to men.(Solomon &Schopler 1982:Cox & Dittmar 1995).

Gender and Shopping Orientations

Shopping orientations is an area in consumer behavior which has been pursued extensively in literature.(Darden & Reynolds ,1971, Moschis 1976; Stephenson & Willett 1969; Darden & Ashton 1975, Bellenger & Korgaonkar 1980,Westbrook & Black ,1985, Jarratt 1996.) Stone (1954) was considered a pioneer when he suggested a shopper typology namely the economic shopper, the personalizing shopper, the ethical shopper and the apathetic shopper. According to Westbrook and Black (1995), when consumers shop they are motivated by purchase needs, experiential needs or a combination of both. Shim (1996) proposed that there are three basic shopping traits, utilitarian, social/conspicuous or undesirable orientations. Bellenger et al (1997) found that retail patronage behavior could be studied along the dichotomy of recreational and economic shopping. Utilitarian/economic styles usually pertain to the 'perfectionism' and 'value consciousness' traits because they favor quality and/or price. They generally dislike shopping or are neutral towards it. In contrast, 'the Recreational' trait is associated with the traits of novelty/fashion consciousness, shopping as leisure consciousness. This study proposes to test shopping motivation by studying the Utilitarian/economic and recreational motivation among men and women along the dichotomy suggested by Bellenger et al (1997) based on the profile of 324 shoppers, they were divided into two groups: recreational shoppers who enjoy shopping and economic shopper who has very functional approach to shopping. The items used to test gender based shopping orientation has been adapted from Bellenger et al (1997).

Regional Culture and Gender Differences

Findings from the literature survey on gender and shopping is summarized in Table 1. Though very few studies have currently been done on the Indian consumer buying behavior and especially the role of gender, there are indicators that different findings from those from the west may evolve. In India shopping dynamics can be different. Here, shopping is a family activity: nearly 70 percent of its shoppers always go to stores with family, and 74 percent see shopping as the best way to spend time with family. This preference for family-oriented shopping was found to be consistent across age groups, income segments, regions, and city sizes (Sheth& Vittal, 2007). A recent study by Prasad and Reddy (2007) also found that male and female respondents' patronage of retail outlets is almost same irrespective of the

type of retail outlet.

An analysis of cross-cultural shopping behavior is attempted in this study by examining the states of origin of the respondents. The four different regions (North, South, East and West) of India is selected for two reasons. First, many large retailers and malls are expanding into all these markets which speak different languages, have different customs and hold different beliefs. It would be of considerable interest to them to analyze if regional differences exist to a significant extent. This will enable them to tailor their marketing strategies in these markets accordingly. Secondly, should differences emerge in within the same country, it is highly likely that greater differences will exist between comparatively dissimilar nations.

Objectives of this study

This paper attempts to study the young consumers who patronize the mall in Mumbai and report their gender related behavior in the Indian mall context. Therefore the objectives of the study was to

- 1.Profile the young male and female mall consumers along the other demographic variables like age, income, marital status, number of earning members, family size, number of children, qualification and state of origin.
- 2.To understand the differences between genders in their attitude to shopping
- 3.To understand the differences between genders in mall patronage

Table 1 Summary of literature findings on Gender differences and shopping behavior

Shopping issue	Male shoppers	Female shoppers
Shopping attitude	Less positive	More positive
Time spent/Freq shopping	Less	More
Money spent	More	Less
Purchase of apparel and Fashion	Less	More
Shopping motivation	Utilitarian	Recreational/leisure/social

patterns ie the frequency of visits, time spent and the amount spent.

- 4.To study differences between the genders in their purchase of apparel and fashion at the malls
- 5.To analyze differences in their recreational and utilitarian orientation to shopping.
- 6.To explore whether differences exit in mall shopper behavior in the different regions of India.

Methodology

■ The instrument

A questionnaire survey was carried out to collect empirical data in order to statistically test the Hypotheses. The individual responses were kept confidential in order to encourage openness and disclosure. The demographic data collected included gender, age, marital status, education, family income and state of origin in India. The other items, which were relatively simple to operationalize, were frequency of mall visits, time and money spent while shopping at a mall and the purchased items at the mall. This information was collected by asking the respondents to respond to categories of frequency of mall visits per month (ranging from less than two times to more than six visits), average time spend per visit (ranging from less than two hours to more than six hours) and average money spent per month (ranging from Nothing to above Rs.10,000). The purchase pattern was elicited by asking respondents to tick the items frequently purchased by then during mall visits from a list of plausible mall purchases.

The items used to test gender based shopping orientation has been adapted from Bellenger et al (1997). Some changes were incorporated by the author

keeping in mind the relevance of the items in the Indian mall context. A total of 19 mall shopping orientation questions were included asking respondents to indicate their agreement on a five point Likert scale (5-completely agree and 1-completely disagree). The shopper's attitude towards mall shopping was measured by asking respondents to indicate their level of agreement with 30 mall experience attributes on a 5-point Likert scale (5-completely agree and 1-completely disagree). Half the statements were composed so agreement would indicate a positive or favorable attitude towards mall shopping and agreement to other half would indicate a negative or unfavorable attitude. The items were randomly ordered on the questionnaire.

■ The sample

The questionnaire was administered to a non-probability sample of 300 undergraduate and graduate students aged between 18-35 years old from different parts of India. 16 of the questionnaires were incomplete and therefore rejected. The sample is represented by 190 young male mall patrons and 94 young female mall patrons. A student sample was used because they are relatively homogeneous which reduces the potential for random errors compared with a sample from the general public (Calder, Phillips & Tybout 1981, Sproules and Kendal 1986).

Refer Table 2 for the demographic profile of the sample.

■ Analysis

Univariate, Bivariate and Multivariate statistical analysis were performed for the collected data. Simple frequency distribution was performed to gather information on demographics such as gender, age, Income, marital status, and education. Bivariate analysis was carried out to examine the relationship between gender and the variables like attitude, time and money spent at the mall. Principal component analysis with a varimax rotation was used to analyze the shopping orientation statements. Only factors with latent roots or eigenvalues greater than one was used, Rotated loadings were considered significant if they were .40 or greater; therefore, variables with factor loadings less than .05 were deleted from further analysis. To ensure all constructs (attitude, recreational and utilitarian motivation) have reliable questionnaire items, a reliability analysis was conducted with the use of Cronbach Alpha standards.

Table 2 Demographic profile of the sample

	Demographic Variable	Male		Female		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Gender	190	66.9	94	33.1	284	100
2	Age (yrs)						
	18 or less	13	6.8	4	4.3	17	6
	18 - 25	148	77.9	79	84	227	79.9
	26 - 35	29	15.3	11	11.8	40	14.1
3.	Income (INR.)						
	Less than 10,000	16	8.7	3	3.4	19	7
	10,000-30,000	59	32.1	26	29.2	85	31.1
	30,000-60,000	39	21.2	30	33.7	69	25.3
	60,000-100,00	27	14.7	12	13.5	39	14.3
	More than 100,000	43	23.4	18	20.2	61	22.3
4.	Marital Status						
	Married	13	7	6	6.4	19	6.8
	Unmarried	174	93	88	93.6	262	93.2
5	Education						
	Professional	15	7.9	1	1.1	16	5.6
	Post graduate	59	31.1	50	53.2	109	38.4
	Graduate/Diploma	52	27.4	31	33	83	29.2
	12th	64	33.7	12	12.8	76	26.8
c	Region in India						
	North	48	25.4	32	34	80	28.3
	South	22	11.6	5	5.3	27	9.5
	East	12	6.3	9	9.6	21	7.4
	West	107	56.6	48	51.1	155	54.8

N-Number of Respondents INR -Indian Rupees

%-Percentage of respondents

✎ Findings

Attitude and Gender

The dimensionality of the attitude scale was examined by considering the Cronbach alpha score. The scale has a coefficient alpha of 0.724 (refer appendix, exhibit 1 for scale items). The rating by the respondents for each of the items on the attitude scale (Refer Exhibit 1 in the appendix) was averaged to get attitude scores for the shoppers and the t-test for independent samples was applied. From the mean score calculated (Refer table 3), it was evident that there was not much difference in the attitude to mall shopping between the male and female shoppers. Since the Sig. (India) = 0.548 assuming equal variance (Levene's test of equality of variance indicates F =0.488 which is greater than .05) between the two populations, it was concluded that there is no significant difference between the genders in terms of their attitude towards mall shopping. These results were found to be consistent across the various regions of the country.

Table 3 Mean scores for attitude and gender

Different regions of India (T-test level of significance)	Male			Female		
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
North(t=-.12, df=77, Sig.=.903)	48	3.57	0.36054	31	3.56	0.33585
South (t=-.005, df=25, Sig.=.996)	22	3.55	0.49404	5	3.55	0.30966
East (t=-1.46, df=16.1, Sig.=.165)	11	3.61	0.31616	9	3.83	0.36150
West (t=-329, df=96.1, Sig.=.743)	106	3.57	.41200	48	3.59	0.4002
India (t=-601, df=279, Sig.=.548)	188	3.57	.40268	93	3.60	0.36737

N-Number of Respondents

Sig.- Significance at .05 level

⌘ Time spent at the mall

The inter-relationship between time spent at malls and gender was explored through cross tabulation. It was observed that overall female respondents spent marginally more time at the mall than the male respondents (mean time spent at mall: male 3.1hrs, female 3.35hrs). A Pearson's chi-square was then calculated to understand whether there is significant association between the variables. At a significance level of 90%, the chi-square significance value of 0.095 indicates that overall there is a significant relationship but the contingency coefficient, which gives the strength of the output, shows a value 0.149, which is closer to 0 than one indicates that this association is not high. Since the findings from the various regions also indicate lack of a significant difference in time spent at the mall by the genders, it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship (Refer Table 4).

■ Frequency of visits

A t-test for independent samples was used to test whether there is a significant difference between the frequency of visits to a mall between young male and female shoppers. A significance level of 0.284 again indicates that there is no relevant difference between the genders in terms of their mall visit frequency (Refer table 5). While on an average male respondents visit malls 5.26 times in a three-month period, the female respondents visit only 4.89 times. But an examination of the finding from the regional data finds deviation from the national pattern in the responses from the eastern states and the northern states. In the eastern states, the women visit 7.11 times and men visit 4.08 times on an average in three months. Here women were significantly higher in their mall visits. At the same time, the finding from the northern states indicate that men visit significantly more than women (mean: male 5.52 visits, female 3.56 visits)

■ Gender and money spent

Literature indicates that male customers tend to spend more money at malls than do the female patrons. The data though indicated the reverse to be true among the Indian youth. On an average the young Indian male spent approximately Rs.1383 while young women spent Rs.1573. But when tested through a cross-tabulation, it was found that there is no significant difference between the two (Refer table 6). The Pearson's chi-square significance level of 0.201 confirmed this finding. It was supported by the value of the contingency co-efficient value of 0.127 which being closer to zero indicates that there is no significant association between the two variables studied. This same trend is seen in the results from the different regions.

■ Gender and purchase of apparel and fashion

To identify possible differences in terms of their purchase of apparel and fashion, a cross tabulation was done separately on gender and purchase of Apparel, jewelry, footwear, and fashion accessories. Overall, a good majority of young women (63.8% of the female respondents) agreed to frequent purchase of clothes while only 46.8% of the male respondents reported spending frequently on apparel. Similarly 14.9% of the female respondents indulged in jewelry at the mall while only 5.3% of the male respondents bought jewelry. It was also observed that both male and female respondents reported purchasing footwear frequently (51% of male and 47.9% of female shoppers) at malls. Surprisingly it was seen that more male customers (48.9%) reported purchasing fashion accessories than the female respondents (37.2%).

To test the significance of these relationships the chi-square test value was

Table 4 Gender and time spent at the mall

Time spent at the mall	Number of respondents		Pearson's Chi-square (Sig.)	Contingency Coefficient
	Male	Female		
North	48	32	0.564	0.158
South	22	5	0.216	0.319
East	11	9	0.904	0.100
West	106	48	0.179	0.176
India	187	94	0.095	0.149

Table 5 Mean scores for frequency of visits (in three months)

Different regions of India (T-test level of significance)	Male			Female		
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
North(t=3.208, df=73.6, Sig.= .003)	48	5.52	3.032	32	3.56	2.564
South (t=1.049, df=7.3, Sig.=. 328)	22	4.86	2.933	5	3.60	2.302
East (t=-2.723, df=18.47, Sig.= .014)	12	4.08	2.717	9	7.11	2.369
West (t=1.162, df= 95.15, Sig.= .248)	107	5.34	3.012	48	4.75	2.855
India (t=1.075, df=209.4, Sig.=. 548)	190	5.26	2.973	94	4.89	2.596
N-Number of Respondents			Sig.- Significance at .05 level			

Table 6 Gender and amount spent at malls

Amount spent at the mall	Number of respondents		Pearson' s Chi-square (Sig.)	Contingency coefficient
	Male	Female		
North	48	32	0.967	0.057
South	22	5	0.882	0.155
East	12	9	0.221	0.416
West	106	48	0.172	0.177
India	188	94	0.201	0.127

calculated (Refer Table 7). The relationship between apparel and gender was found to be significant with a Pearson's chi-square significance of 0.007 and the relationship between jewelry and gender was found to be significant with a Chi-square significance of 0.006. Therefore it can be concluded that women purchase clothes and jewelry more frequently than do men. The relationship between purchase of shoes and fashion accessories seemed to indicate that men marginally purchased more of these items. But the Pearson's significance of 0.0614 for footwear and 0.062 for fashion accessories indicates a lack of significant relationship between gender and these items.

An analysis of the regional data (Refer Table 8) indicates that while there is not much difference between purchase of apparel in the north and the south, in the east and west of the county it is found that women buy more apparel. Interestingly, it was found that only in the North women bought more fashion jewelry compared to the opposite sex. In all other regions, no significant difference is indicated by the data.

■ Shopping orientation and Gender

Principal component analysis with varimax rotation was used to analyze the data on shopping orientation using the two known factors as the criterion for the factors (recreation and economic shoppers) extracted (Refer table 9 and 10). Rotated loadings were considered practically significant if they were 0.40 or greater therefore only 12 statements which loaded .40 or greater were used for further analysis. Cronbach alphas, for each dimension, were then calculated as 0.602 for the recreational scale and 0.532 for the Utilitarian/economic scale. According to previous studies, the items that loaded high under the first factor are mostly considered to be recreation oriented with the exception of last two, which usually is expected to load on the utilitarian/economic orientation. In this context it can be interpreted to mean that the recreational shoppers in India enjoy bargain hunting and are price sensitive. It is also evident that while Indian youth enjoy spending time at the mall with their friends, when the whole family visits the malls, it is usually with the explicit purpose of shopping. The rating by the respondents, on the Likert scale for the items loaded high,

Table 7 Gender and Purchase of fashion

Items	Frequent purchasers		Pearson' s Chi-square (Sig.)	Contingency coefficient
	Male	Female		
Apparel	46.8	63.8	0.007	0.152
Jewelry	5.3	14.9	0.006	0.161
Footwear	51.1	47.9	0.614	0.030
Fashion accessories	48.9	37.2	0.062	0.11

Table 8 Gender and purchase of fashion across different regions

Purchases	Pearson' s Chi-square (Sig.)				Contingency coefficient			
	North	South	East	West	North	South	East	West
Apparel	0.436	0.825	0.044	0.002	0.087	0.043	0.403	0.237
Jewelry	0.012	0.484	0.31	0.166	0.271	0.134	0.426	0.110
Footwear	0.648	0.332	0.098	0.469	0.051	0.182	0.340	0.058
Fashion accessories	0.271	0.239	----*	0.239	0.094	-----*	0.094	

*Not calculated due to inadequate representation

Table 9 Recreational scale items

No.	Recreational scale items (Cronbach alpha= 0.602)	Factor Loadings
1	I think shopping is fun	526
2	I usually go to malls with friends	423
3	I think Malls are great places to spent time	573
4	I think being seen at malls give people a better image	564
5	I enjoy the mall exhibits when I shop	659
6	I enjoy browsing through racks for a long time before making up my mind	582
7	I come here when I see that a sale is going on in one of the stores	613
8	I would come to a mall more often if the prices were lower	751
9	In addition to what I plan to buy I often end up buying other things*	348
10	I spent most of my time at the mall window shopping*	398
11	I enjoy having sales people bring products out and showing them to me*	332
12	I often go shopping to get ideas though I have no intention of buying*	318
13	I go to a mall to take a break* .	209

*Not used in analysis

Table 10 Utilitarian/Economic scale items

No	Utilitarian scale items (Cronbach alpha= 0.532)	Factor Loading
14	I come to the mall with a list of things either in hand and stick to it	633
15	Malls are where I go to pick up my provisions	595
16	I like to find what I want in the least amount of time and leave the mall	505
17	I usually go to malls with family	728
18	I only visit malls that are closest to where I live*	372
19	I plan my mall trips very carefully*	299

*Not used in analysis

was averaged to estimate the degree of recreational as well as utilitarian orientation. These were then subject to t-test for independent samples to arrive at the mean values and check for significant differences (Refer table 11). Since the Sig.= 0.578 and 0.210 for recreational motivation and utilitarian motivations, it is concluded that there is no significant difference

between male and female respondents in terms of their recreational or utilitarian motivation. Similar findings emerge on inspection of the regional data. Significant difference was only found in the utilitarian motivation of the respondents from the East where women were surprisingly found to have a more utilitarian attitude towards shopping.

Table 11 Mean scores for recreational and utilitarian motivation

Different regions of India (T-test significance level)	Male			Female		
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
North Recreational (t= .648, df=78, Sig.= .519) Utilitarian (t=-.864, df=57.6, Sig.= .391)	48	3.30 2.79	.64874 .70128	32	3.21 2.95	.68650 .85839
South Recreational (t=-.094, df=25, Sig.= .926) Utilitarian (t=-.898, df= 25, Sig.=. 378)	22	3.17 2.98	.68531 .93194	5	3.2 3.4	.59419 1.0398
East Recreational (t= -1.264, df=18.6, Sig.= .222) Utilitarian (t= -2.644, df=17.6, Sig.= .017)	12	3.08 2.33	.64021 .65134	9	3.41 3.08	.55072 .63738
West Recreational (t= -.834, df= 110.7, Sig.= .406) Utilitarian (t=. 015, df=101.4, Sig.= .988)	107	3.37 2.84	.72678 .82050	48	3.46 2.83	.58680 .73204
India Recreational (t=-557, df= 282, Sig.= .578) Utilitarian (t=1.256, df=279, Sig.=. 210)	190	3.31 2.80	.69758 .81077	94	3.36 2.93	.62279 .78513

Discussion

The study indicates hardly any significant difference in the behavior of young male and female patrons of the malls in India. They spend a lot of time (89.15 spend more than two hours per visit) and money there (68.6% spend more than Rs500 per visit), yet their perception of shopping in malls and their motivations are not very different. It is evident from this study that both groups enjoy shopping. Further more it is interesting to note that young men apparently enjoy fashion almost as much as women. There seems to be a blurring of gender divisions across the various regions of the country. These results become relevant because most of the shopping experience in malls tends to be oriented towards women since they are perceived to enjoy shopping more.

The results also indicate that a difference in shopping behavior between the sexes is cultural and subject to change over time, rather than evolutionary as suggested by the Savannah hypothesis (Dennis& McCall, 2005). If it had not, then results should have been consistent across cultures.

Also evident in the study is the role of price peculiar to the Indian context. While literature indicates that recreational shoppers tend to be more tolerant of price, this study finds indications that utilitarian shoppers are more tolerant of price. They seem to accept high prices in exchange for the convenience of shopping for all their purchases under the same roof and

thus save on shopping time. Recreational shoppers enjoy hunting for bargains and see it as part of the shopping experience.

Limitations and Future Research

As with previous research, the use of a non -probabilistic student sample places limits on the generalizability of the results. The very fact that malls are in India a novelty would attract a great deal of attention from the youth. Further, young men are known to be more interested in fashion and shopping at new formats like mall than older men. Maybe as the format matures, a similar study might yield different results. But since this study is a cross-sectional comparison between genders, it is valid to assume that the trend might continue. Since research has indicated that sex differences tend to be reduced when men and women enjoy similar status, another possible limitation is that the surveyed group belongs to urban, middle income and educated background. But this was necessary to maintain all variables other than gender constant (Miller, 1998). Attitude in this study has been taken as a unidimensional construct in order to limit the scope of this study but it would be interesting to examine each of the attitudinal questions separately to find whether there are gender and /or regional differences on certain items that the aggregate score is covering up. Again, while this study has attempted a regional comparison of mall shopping behavior, the East and South of the country has not been adequately

represented in the sample questioning the validity of the results from those regions. Moreover different states in India have different cultures, generalizing them into East, West and South and North is useful only to a limited extend. Therefore, in continuation of this study, it would be interesting

to study the gender related shopping behavioral differences between cultures, income classes, age groups and other purchase categories. On a final note it can be said that this study questions the fundamental gender stereotyping of shopping as a feminine activity.

Appendix

Exhibit 1: Scale Measuring Attitude to Malls (Cronbach alpha= 0.724)

(1-Completely disagree, 2-disagree,3-neither agree nor disagree, 4- agree,5-completely agree)

1. Malls are exciting
2. My friends shop in malls
3. Overall I would rate your experience with malls excellent
4. Malls allow for a peek into a new culture
5. Malls are conveniently located according to me
6. Parking at malls is usually inconvenient *
7. The exterior design of malls is usually boring*
8. The interior of malls is very dull*
9. The overall mall environment ie colours, smells, sounds, décor etc is very inviting
10. The layout of malls are well organized
11. I feel a sense of freedom when I shop
12. Malls allow for spacious shopping
13. Signage in malls is very difficult to understand and follow*
14. It is difficult to locate the stores or items you want in malls*
15. Displays in the malls common areas are usually unattractive*
16. There is a large variety of stores in the mall
17. The products seen in a mall is of high quality
18. Products in a mall are priced reasonable
19. It would not be intelligent to shop at a mall if you were looking for good value for money*
20. The malls are doing bad in terms of sales*
21. Over all my experience regarding the customer service at malls has been bad*
22. Personnel in malls are friendly
23. The customers in a mall are from the upper class
24. The food in the malls are mostly uninteresting*
25. The premises of malls are neatly maintained
26. The stores in malls generally maintained messy*
27. The food courts' hygiene is maintained badly*
28. The restrooms in malls are inconveniently located*
29. The rest rooms maintained clean
30. I feel safe in malls

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