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1

Effectiveness of Large format Retail Outlets from Consumers Perspective In Semi Urban Areas

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Research Paper - Commerce

ABSTRACT

Now a day's malls and super markets are no wonder in the Indian market structure. The urban and semi urban areas are the most affected areas by the influence of malls and super markets. It has certainly changed the way of retailing in almost every part of the country. The systematic arrangements of products, innovative marketing practices, discounts and occasional gifts etc. are the few noticeable features of these malls which attract common people and create new segment of customers for many brands. The concept of one stop shop has changed the view of many customers towards retail market. Therefore the emergence of malls and super markets in semi urban areas has opened many doors for possible growth of the retail sector in India. The issue of the influence of malls and super markets on customers is therefore of utmost importance. Consumer behavior is a psychological phenomenon. It is a result of many things affecting on the decision making of the customer. A consumer is supposed to be rational about product selection, though earlier he was exploited by many sellers from wholesaler to retailer. But now with the entry of malls and super markets the customer gets qualitative goods at reasonable prices and even some times at discount. This creates an interesting situation regarding decision making of customers of different products. The current policy of the Indian Government also suggests that there is an ample scope

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for malls and super markets in the near future in India. Therefore the study regarding the impact of malls and super markets on consumer behavior becomes very significant. The present article is an attempt to throw light upon the various aspects of consumer behavior in malls and super markets.

Keywords: Consumer behavior, Malls, Super markets, decision making

Introduction:

Modern market structure is very complex one. The entry of malls and super markets has posted serious challenges in front of the small retailers. On the other hand it has also created new market spectrum for Indian customers. The systematic arrangements of different products, attractive packaging, low pricing, choice of multiple brands, products in a huge range etc. are some of the features of super markets and malls which directly or indirectly influence the customers. The traditional retailing is failing to provide quality goods at cheap rates due to many mediators and hence the option of malls and super markets is preferred by many customers. The big cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata and Bangalore are the prime locations where one would find many malls full of customers in India. It does affect on the mind set of other customers and therefore one finds opportunities in multi brand retailing in India. The recent policies of the Govt. about Foreign Direct Investment in many sectors including retailing give a ray of hope to many retailing companies. A retail shop is the place where the consumers can purchase commodities of their daily use. The traditional definition of retailing is, *'the processes of selling goods in small quantities to various customers through a small shop say Kirana shop etc. to fulfill their needs'*. **According to Philip Kotlar**, *'Retailing includes all activities involved in selling goods or services directly to the final consumer for personal or non-business use'*. But in the modern days, the concept of retailing has changed and now more emphasis is given on providing qualitative products at lower costs with fare competition in the market. With the entry of multiple brands of almost all products in the market, the proper approach of selling the goods has become a vital part of each and every company's strategy. At the same time, the increasing population of the country is creating tremendous opportunities for new products. This has caused a boom to the retail sector in the Indian economy. The long debated foreign direct investment in retail sector



has given many hopes to the retailing companies but at the same time, it has raised issues regarding the future of small retail shops, wide spread in India.

Consumer behavior is a complex phenomenon which deals with psychological aspects of consumers. Therefore it is very important to understand the impact of malls on consumer behavior. Every business enterprise has to consider the decision making of every customer; hence actions are taken to attract customers towards the product. With the emergence of multiple choices of products, one finds it difficult to sell his product. The retail shops like Big Bazaar, Shoppers Stop, and regional or local super markets influences directly on the customers as they provide many products under one roof. The newly urbanized areas or semi urban areas are therefore target places for such internationally acclaimed retail shops. The cost of establishment is comparatively lower in semi urban areas and thus the mega stores find it convenient to establish their business in semi urban areas. The malls and super markets are still a new idea in many cities in India and so they get tremendous response from customers. The present article speaks about the emergence of malls and super markets in Indian market and its impact on consumer's behavior.

Objectives of the study:

- 1) To study the classification of retailers.
- 2) To discuss the difference between common or regular retail shops and super markets.
- 3) To study the purchased decision making process of customers at super markets and mall.

Research Methodology and sources of data:

The present article is based on some on field observations and secondary sources of data therefore the descriptive method of research is adopted by the researcher. The data has been collected from various sources like journals, news papers and electronic sources. The qualitative data is obtained; therefore the analysis of data is done accordingly. Informal discussions were also made with few customers from the mall and super market.

Scope of the Study:

The present article is limited to the aspects of consumer behavior in malls and super markets. Personal observations are made to assess the decision making of the

buyers. The buying behavior of semi urban customers is the main focus of the article.

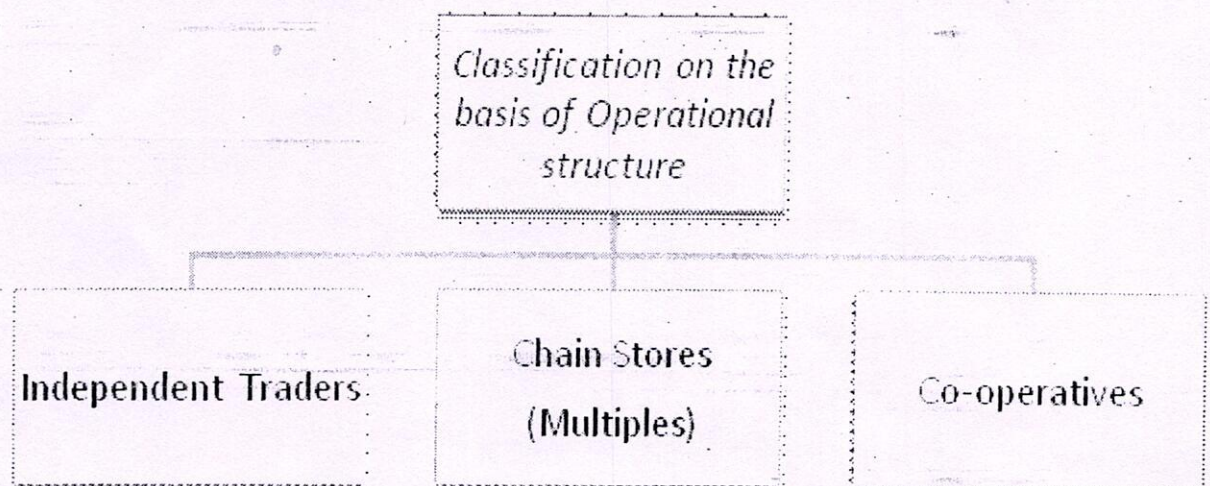
Classification of Retailers:

The retail market in India is wide spread. It consists of Kirana shops to Super markets and malls etc. The retail sector is the most booming sector in the recent few years across the globe. The patterns of retailing are changing significantly worldwide. New concepts of retailing are taking birth and the traditional methods of retailing are no longer the source of guaranteed income. This creates a picture of opportunities for big players in retail sector. Especially in India, the foreign as well as domestic giants in retail are more hopeful of creating new wonders in this sector. With a view of classifying the retail sector; following types of retail are given in a diagram.

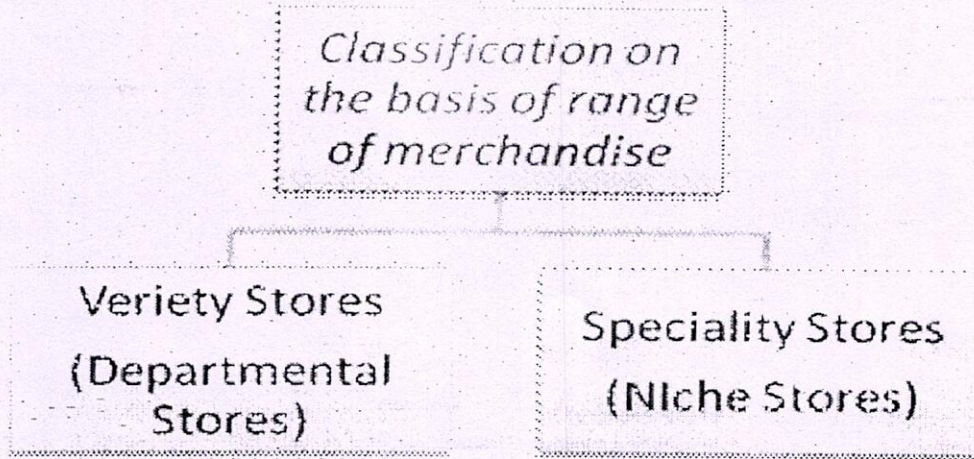
1.1 Classification on the basis of legal form



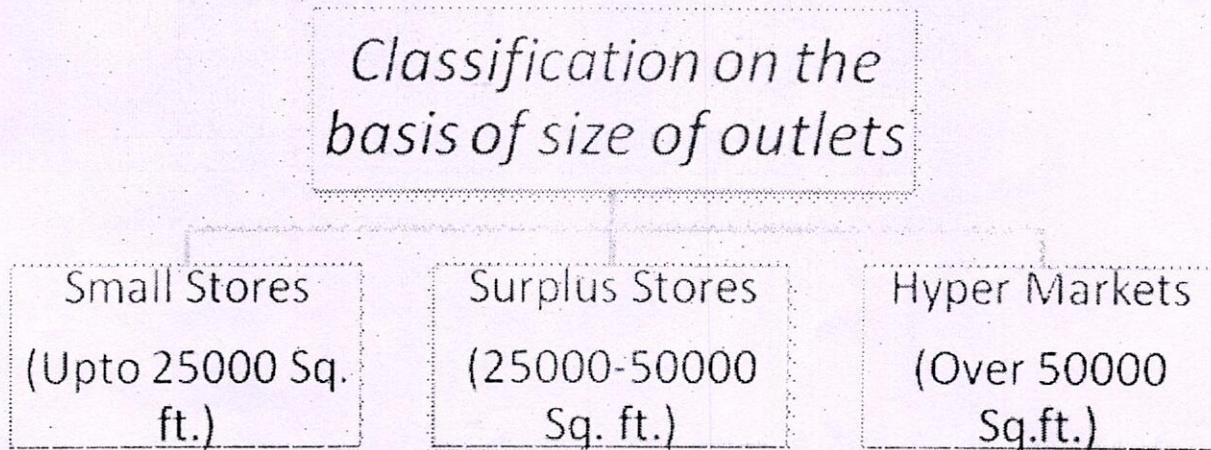
1.2 Classification on the basis of Operational structure



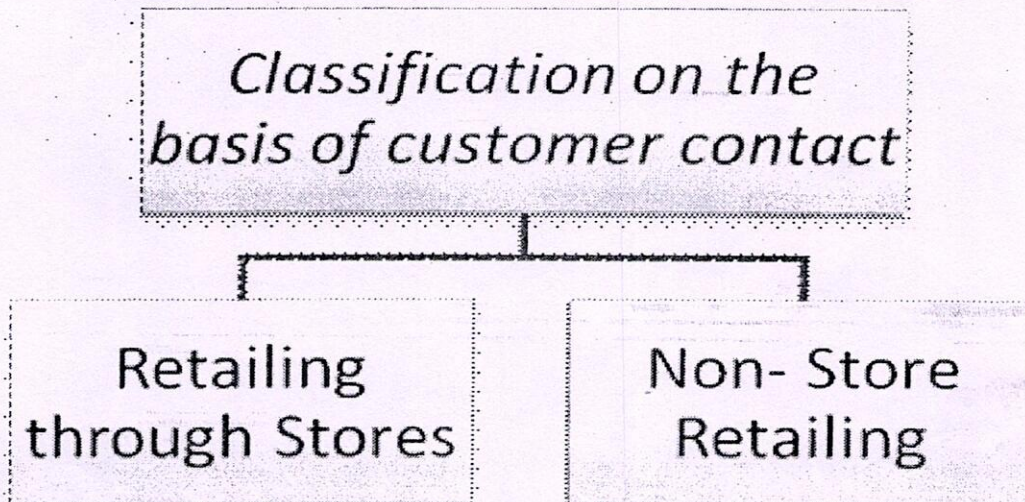
1.3 Classification on the basis of range of merchandise



1.4 Classification on the basis of size of outlets



1.5 Classification on the basis of customer contact



Difference between Small Retail Shops and Super Markets:

The small retail shops are very popular in India due to high density of population in semi urban and urban areas. The main characteristic of these shops are the accessibility to the common people. Still we can found many advantages of malls and super markets than the small shops. Off course; the customer class is the big difference in these two phenomenons. The past few decades have really boosted the confidence of the giant players of retail in India. As a result of this, we can see more super markets and malls taking place in the semi urban and urban areas with a rapid pace. The features of super markets and malls distinguish them from other forms of retailing. Therefore it will be interesting to see the key points of distinction between small retail shops and big retail shops. The difference between small retail shops and big malls can be highlighted with the help of following points.

| <i>Small Retail Shops (Kirana Stores, Provision Stores etc.)</i> | <i>Malls, Hyper Markets and Super Markets etc.</i> |
|--|--|
| ➤ Small Area or Size of the shop | ➤ Big Area is covered |
| ➤ Low capital investment | ➤ Huge Capital Investment |
| ➤ Lack of Variety of goods | ➤ Large Variety of goods |
| ➤ Less human resource required | ➤ Large No. of employees are required |
| ➤ Limited volume of transactions | ➤ Large volume of transactions |
| ➤ Less hygienic | ➤ More hygienic |
| ➤ Limited customers | ➤ No limit to the customers |
| ➤ Mostly lower and Middle class customers | ➤ Mostly higher middle class and rich customers |
| ➤ Emphasize on quantity than quality | ➤ Emphasize on quality with quantity |

Why Malls are more successful in Metros?

The super markets or malls are more popular in metro cities than the small towns just because of the variety that they provide to their customers in almost all things. The systematic arrangements of products, ready to help support staff, freedom of choice of

products, discounts and gifts, occasional offers, free home delivery services, entertainment facilities, attractive promotion of new products and many other features differentiate the shopping experience in a mall than an ordinary shop.

Also, one of the most important features of malls and super markets is the saving of money as well as time. People usually prefer malls because they get each and every commodity of their need under one roof. Therefore the popularity of malls and super markets is increasing day by day in metro cities. The same pattern is followed in small towns and semi urban areas. The increasing purchasing power of people is creating excellent opportunities for the malls and super markets in semi urban areas. The newly developed cities or developing cities are the preferred target of the malls and super stores. Also the cities attached to metros are very significant for the opening of malls and super markets. At the end, we can certainly say that malls are getting more attention in the metros and are followed by the small towns in most of the parts in India.

Observations of consumer's behavior in the malls:

Now a day we see, malls full of customers and empty retail shops. Why this happened? The answer is; shopping in malls has increased the customer satisfaction. The consumer behavior is a very complex phenomenon. The consumer always tries to match the price he is paying for the commodity, with the satisfaction that he gets from it. He is also conscious about the quality of the product and the after sales services rendered by the shop. Therefore the mindset of a customer is un-predictable one. Off course; the customer satisfaction is the motto of every shop in the modern times, but it is more applicable with the degree of satisfaction. Buying behavior also depends upon the economic, intellectual, social and perceptual factors of the customer. The following observations are made about buying behavior of the different customers in a mall or super market.

- a) Daily utility goods are the prime shopping commodities in the malls.
- b) Clothing and fashion articles are the more demanded products by youth.
- c) The no. of youth attending shopping is greater than the middle age or old age people.
- d) Shopping in malls is considered to be prestigious by many customers.

- e) Shopping in malls becomes a habit after few months.
- f) People ask for branded products and hence malls help in improving standard of living.
- g) Customers feel satisfied as he has the freedom of choice of different products.
- h) Shopping in malls increases the purchasing power of people.
- i) People can take some time out with shopping for relaxation from their busy schedule.
- j) People are attracted towards the discounts and gift coupons which motivates their savings.

The above mentioned observations are derived from personal observations of the researcher at *Big Bazaar, Latur* and *Vishwa Super Market, Latur*. Also some informal discussions were made with few customers about their experience of shopping. This led us to draw the following conclusions.

Summary and Conclusion:

The customer behavior in malls and super markets is an outcome of multiple variables affecting the decision making of the customers. The influence of malls and super markets can be seen in the semi urban areas. Malls are preferred than small shops in the metro cities by certain category of customers and the same trend is followed in the semi urban areas. The customer awareness is the most important factor in promoting malls and super markets. Therefore we can say that the trend of malls and super markets has a good future in a very vastly spread country like India. The policies of the Govt. regarding FDI in retail sector can give boost to the establishment of various malls in India. At the same time consumer's behavior can be better understood for better quality assurance.

Acknowledgement:

The present article is an attempt to through light upon the various aspects of consumer's behavior in malls and super markets. We are heartily thankful to **Dr. Shivajirao Patil Nilangekar** (Former Chief Minister, Maharashtra State & President, M.S.S., Nilanga) for providing us an opportunity to work in this college. We are also thankful to **Dr. V.L. Yerande**, Principal, and **M.M. Nilanga** for his kind support and motivation. At last we express our thanks to all those who helped us directly or



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