

# Occupation and Mall Shopping

Monika Gupta

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## Abstract

*The study focused on whether occupation of shoppers has any influence on shopping from malls or not? For the purpose, primary data has been collected from shoppers visiting select malls in Delhi region. 400 mall shoppers have been contacted and their responses have been recorded using structured questionnaire via mall intercept survey method. The respondents have been clustered into different groups based on occupation. Clustering technique has been used to analyze the responses. The shoppers have been clustered into Mall Sightseers and Mall Dawdlers. It is found that occupation of mall shoppers also influences decisions of mall shoppers besides other demographic variables viz. age, gender, income group. Most of the shoppers surveyed were either students or were in jobs. Accordingly, an attempt has been made to propose strategies creating mall loyalty while keeping in view occupation of shoppers.*

**Keywords:** Occupation, Mall Shoppers, Clustering, Mall Shopping, Clustering, Strategies.

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## INTRODUCTION

The role of occupation of mall shoppers is a fascinating area of research in the area for shopping from malls. Singh and Prashar (2013) explained the composition of shopping experience for mall shoppers of Dubai. An attempt has been made to portray shopper's expectations from shopping malls. Does occupation of mall shoppers influences shopping from malls? For the purpose, study has been conducted in select shopping malls in Delhi region. People have varied occupations. Some are professionals, in service or carrying out business activities, some are busy doing research work, some are managing houses effectively, some are still studying and others are busy in other varied occupations. Female fashion occupies most of the retail space (Michon et al.,

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**Monika Gupta**  
Research Scholar,  
MM Institute of Management,  
Maharishi Markandeshwar University,  
Mullana-Ambala, Haryana  
E-mail: monika18gupta@gmail.com

2008). The mall image helps shaping perceptions of merchandise and service quality.

Yaaminidevi (2013) The objective of this research is to understand the consumer behavior towards mall in a urban Tier II city like Madurai which is in the process of a radical shift from conventional trader run shops to organized and large retail mall formats. The study of consumer behavior is the most important factor for marketing any goods and services, as the consumer behavior suggest how individual, groups and organization select, buy use, and dispose goods services, ideas or experience to satisfy their needs and wants. The study was carried out in a recently emerged mall - Vishal De Mall in Madurai city. A sample of 100 respondents was taken for the study. Facility Management a crucial part of Mall management in terms of ambience, infrastructure and traffic was analyzed. It was suggested that Mall owners need to improvise their services to meet the expectations of the customer and develop innovative ideas in marketing their products and services to ensure high footfall.

The primary objective is either to earn the livelihood or learning the skills to earn the same. This in turn contributes to assessing the buying power of the shoppers as well as to know their tastes and preferences towards the purchase of different product categories. Due to rapid increase in shopping malls, it is suggested to mall managers to have thorough understanding of various attributes of mall shoppers from different perspectives viz. occupation of mall shoppers in order to formulate effective strategies to make them loyal and to be successful in times to come.

Thus, the objective of the study undertaken is:  
"To understand the role of occupation of shoppers in mall shopping"

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature has been reviewed to know the research already conducted in the area of the study. Singh and Prashar (2013) made an attempt

to describe the profile of respondents. The sample of 200 respondents' depicted composition of working population in Dubai having more than half the sample (54.5) employed with 'Private Sector' while remaining proportion of sample got divided between four occupations viz. 'Government Service' (7.5%), 'Professional' (13.5%), 'Business' (7%) and 'Student' (17.5%).

Michon and Chebat provided sample demographics between Low and High Hedonic/ Utilitarian Shoppers. The demographic variable 'Occupation' comprised sub-categories as 'Working full-time', 'Working part-time', 'Full time student', 'Retired', 'Looking for work' and those 'Staying at home'. The mall shoppers were categorized into four value segments (low hedonic/ low utilitarian, low hedonic/ high utilitarian, high hedonic/ low utilitarian, and high hedonic/ high utilitarian). Some shoppers were likely to enjoy the shopping experience and be looking for a specific product at the same time. Browsers would enjoy shopping without any specific purchase in mind. Pure utilitarian shoppers who do not enjoy shopping were still required to patronize shopping malls to achieve their objectives. Non-hedonic shoppers who cannot to complete their task were likely to score low on both hedonic and utilitarian dimensions.

Michon et al. (2008) carried out with female shoppers only (312 usable questionnaires) and displayed Shoppers profile in terms of 'occupation' variable as 'At work' (54%), 'Students' (25%), 'Retired' (11%) and 'At home' (10%). It is found that shoppers' fashion attitude (importance of being well-dressed) has no significant influence on the perception of the mall environment'. Mall personality dimensions (sophistication and enthusiasm) have a focused impact on the perception of product and service quality. The perception of the mall environment has a positive impact on the perception of product and service quality. The attainment of shopping goals outplays the hedonic shopping experience.

Yaaminidevi (2013) described the demographic profile of the respondents about the 'occupation' of the respondents. The statistics revealed that 26 % of respondents were 'service professionals', 58% were 'students', 11% were 'self-employed' and a considerably low percent of respondents with 5%, fell under the category of 'Others' (for example, 'Retired', 'Housewives' etc).

### **Directions for Future Research**

Singh and Prashar (2013) indicated deeper insight could be obtained by studying differences along demographic parameters of respondents like age, gender, income, occupation etc. for single-market studies. Such a study would help practitioners in devising segment specific strategies. Michon and Chebat conducted the research in only one enclosed mall. It should obviously be extended to other regional and other types of shopping malls. Findings might be different in community malls, manufacturers' outlets and mega-centers.

Michon et al. (2008) highlighted the central role of the shopping center image in the retail shopping process and the creation of business value. A pleasing mall personality supports retail merchandise and service quality. Moreover, mall atmosphere helps bring shoppers back. The study also illustrated the importance of fashion orientation as a moderating variable on shoppers' response. The mall image helps shaping perceptions of merchandise and service quality. The research should be replicated to a variety of mall formats and shopper segments.

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The literature reviewed aggravated the researcher for carrying out research focusing 'Occupation' variable and its role in mall shopping.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Research has been conducted primarily to know more about shoppers visiting select malls in Delhi region such as Ansal Plaza, Ambience, and Sahara. The data has been collected using structured questionnaire to know more about mall shoppers tastes and preferences, likes and dislikes towards various product categories offered in malls and also to know whether the profession of shoppers has any influence on these variables or not. The data has been collected via mall intercept survey method. Graduate marketing students handled the fieldwork. Some were responsible for recruiting participants as they exited from the mall and others supervised the self administered questionnaire. Recruiters had to meet selection criteria based on age and gender distribution, day of week, and time of day to avoid systematic biases (Michon et al., 2008).

Non-random judgement sampling technique has been used to target 400 respondents at the time of conducting the research. Only the adult shoppers who appear to either 18 years of age or more were contacted for gathering the response. The secondary data has been collected from renowned national and international journals, magazines, newspapers, websites, online research database and so on.

### **Instrument Development**

**Measures:** The questionnaire carrying various items relevant to the study conducted such as 'occupation', one of the major demographic variables was based on literature reviewed by the researcher. Shopping Motivation Measurement Scale developed by Arnold and Reynolds (2003) comprising eighteen items, focused on capturing the hedonic fulfillment experienced through shopping was used. The five-point Likert Scale ranging from 'Strongly Agree' (5-points) to 'Strongly Disagree' (1-point) was used to measure items on this scale.

The items pertaining to demographic variable 'Occupation' in mall shopping scenario were drawn from researches conducted by Michon et al. (2008), Michon, R., and Chebat, J., Singh and Prashar (2013) and Yaaminidevi, Dr. S. (2013).

**Table 1: Overall Mall Shoppers' Sample Frequencies**

Descriptive	Code	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Occupation</b>			
Businessperson	1	59	14.75
Service	2	109	27.25
Homemaker	3	43	10.75
Student	4	153	38.25
Retired	5	21	5.25
Others	6	15	3.75
Total		400	

In response to the question on occupation of mall shoppers, the maximum number (38.25 %) of the respondents indicated that they were 'students'; the next highest number (27.25 %) indicated they were in 'service', 14.75 % were 'businesspersons' and small minorities belonged to 'other' occupational categories.

In summary, the sample respondent profile can be described as:

*The shopping mall shoppers included in the sample were mainly 'students' or were in 'jobs'.*

### Statistical Analysis

The study tested statistically the shoppers' motives towards mall shopping. The statistical significance was set at a level of 0.05. Cluster analysis via Ward's method was used and only one case was assigned to one cluster (Malhotra and Dash 2009). An attempt has been made to identify relatively homogeneous groups of cases (or variables) based on selected characteristics.

Singh and Prashar (2013) collected demographic information with the help of questionnaire and analysed using simple numbers and percentages to develop mall shoppers' profile residing in Dubai.

## RESULTS AND FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

SPSS Statistics, 16.0.1 version, was used for performing Cluster Analysis. A new shopper typology, named as Mall Sightseers and Mall Dawdlers, was evolved. Mall shopping scenario based on profiling of shoppers types was created. Profiling of mall shoppers clusters based on shoppers' loyalty was done. A significant association between loyalty and shopping motives was checked using Pearson Correlation Coefficient. This indicates that shopping motivation is directly proportional to shopping mall loyalty.

The next stage of profiling included demographics and shopping behavior variables. For cross-tabulating the data, a Chi-Square Test has been administered in order to profile the two segments. The statistically significant differences were found (Refer Table 2).

**Table 2: Mall Shoppers' Frequencies**

Descriptive	Mall Dawdlers (Cluster I)	Mall Sightseers (Cluster II)	Total Sample Frequency
<b>Occupation</b>			
Businessperson	13	16	29
Service	23	64	87
Homemaker	12	31	43
Student	19	94	113
Retired	13	8	21
Others	9	6	15
Total	89	219	308

**Table 3: Occupation\* Mall Shopper Clusters**

**Crosstab**

			Cluster		
			1	2	Total
<b>Occupation</b>	<b>1</b>	Count	18	11	29
		Expected Count	20.7	8.3	29.0
		% within Occupation	62.1%	37.9%	100.0%
		% within Cluster	8.2%	12.5%	9.4%
		% of Total	5.8%	3.6%	9.4%
	<b>2</b>	Count	61	26	87
		Expected Count	62.1	24.9	87.0
		% within Occupation	70.1%	29.9%	100.0%
		% within Cluster	27.7%	29.5%	28.2%
		% of Total	19.8%	8.4%	28.2%
	<b>3</b>	Count	34	9	43
		Expected Count	30.7	12.3	43.0
		% within Occupation	79.1%	20.9%	100.0%
		% within Cluster	15.5%	10.2%	14.0%
		% of Total	11.0%	2.9%	14.0%
	<b>4</b>	Count	81	32	113
		Expected Count	80.7	32.3	113.0
		% within Occupation	71.7%	28.3%	100.0%
		% within Cluster	36.8%	36.4%	36.7%
		% of Total	26.3%	10.4%	36.7%
	<b>5</b>	Count	16	5	21
		Expected Count	15.0	6.0	21.0
		% within Occupation	76.2%	23.8%	100.0%
		% within Cluster	7.3%	5.7%	6.8%
		% of Total	5.2%	1.6%	6.8%
	<b>6</b>	Count	10	5	15
		Expected Count	10.7	4.3	15.0
		% within Occupation	66.7%	33.3%	100.0%
		% within Cluster	4.5%	5.7%	4.9%
		% of Total	3.2%	1.6%	4.9%

<b>Total</b>	<b>Count</b>	220	88	308
	<b>Expected Count</b>	220.0	88.0	308.0
	<b>% within Occupation</b>	71.4%	28.6%	100.0%
	<b>% within Cluster</b>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	<b>% of Total</b>	71.4%	28.6%	100.0%

(Occupation: 1-Businessperson, 2-Service, 3-Homemaker, 4- Student, 5- Retired, 6-Others; Cluster 1: Mall Dwardlers, 2-Mall Sightseers)

**Result of Chi-Square Test:** *The null hypothesis cannot be rejected. There is significant relationship between occupation and shopping motives-based clusters ( $\chi^2_{cal} = 2.952$ ,  $\chi^2_{tab} = 11.071$ ,  $df = 5$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.707$ )*

## DISCUSSIONS

Students and those in jobs enjoyed mall shopping more than those in other professions.

Mall Sightseers and Mall Dawdlers

### Summary of Results of Chi-Square Tests of Independence on Mall Shopper Clusters

In summary, we can say that there is a statistically significant relationship between the shopping motives-based clusters (Mall Sightseers and Mall Dawdlers) and the select demographic variable: Occupation.

**Table 4: Segmentation Profiles of the Mall Shoppers Clusters**

Characteristics	Mall Dawdlers	Mall Sightseers
<b>Shopping motives</b>	Avoid shopping	Enjoy shopping
<b>Occupation</b>	16.8% Students	83.2% Students
	26.4% Service	73.6% Service
	27.9% Homemakers	72.1% Homemakers
	44.8% Businesspersons	55.2% Businesspersons
	60.0% Others	40.0% Others
	61.9% Retired	38.1% Retired

### Shopping Mall Marketing Strategies for Building Shopping Mall Loyalty among Shoppers:

Retailers and mall managers also need to take into consideration the professions of mall shoppers which might directly or indirectly influence their purchase decisions to some extent, besides other demographic and behavioural variables. As people spend more than half of the time at their work place, the

marketing positioning strategies such as formal and casual apparels, full meal and working lunch, accessories for office wear and casual wear besides party wear, electronic devices containing software facilitating office tasks as well as providing entertainment during relaxing hours and so on. Michon and Chebat focused on how various shopper types respond to the mall atmospheric environment. Despite various mall patronizing motives and shopping values, a

pleasing mall atmosphere is expected to enhance perceptions of product and service quality, and foster shoppers' approach behavior.

## CONCLUSION

Michon and Chebat indicated that Hedonic and utilitarian shoppers were both responsive to the perception of product and service quality, most likely for different reasons. Hedonic customers with a propensity for experiential shopping benefits are likely to stay longer in the store and engage in additional unplanned purchases. Task-oriented shoppers are not immune either to unplanned purchases, perceived length of stay, and extended store visits.

Yaaminidevi (2013) observed as Madurai city is entering into mall culture and many more malls are likely to come up; there will be stiff competition between malls in the future. Therefore, managing a mall will be more challenging. Mall owners need to understand the mindset of the customers and deliver products and services catering to the needs of customers belonging to various groups. Malls not only cater to the product needs of the customers, but also a source of entertainment, recreation. It is high time that mall owners need to come up with an USP to create visibility in the mall to get desired footfalls.

## FURTHER SCOPE OF STUDY

The findings of the first objective of the study provide the basis for further research to be carried out in the same field with larger sample size, larger area, might be expanded across the boundaries, or could be applied to stores. It can be used to analyse the underlying perceptions, attitude and behavior of buyers as well as retailers (Kar & Sahoo, 2007). It can further help categorise malls on different basis, typology of shoppers as well as strategies to enhance loyalty among customers towards a specific mall (LeHew et al., 2002). Some are inculcating 'Buy the Class' attitude (DLF Emporio, Delhi); some focus on 'Customer Loyalty Concept' by providing 'at home' feel to customers; some on Entertainment Shopping (The Great India Place, Noida); some focusing on Utility (Sahara Mall, Gurgaon); some on 'everything under one roof' (Ambience Mall, Gurgaon). 'How malls sustain' is another relevant area that needs to be explored further. As 'A' Class cities are reaching the stage of saturation; 'B' and 'C' Class cities including are at growing stage, possess good economic strength and real estate value; there are immense opportunities to grow any further. Organized retail may reach 14% of GDP by 2015, as predicted by Govind Srikhande, CEO, Shopper's Stop and major players like Reliance, Birla on the basis of experience.

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