

Determinants of Retail Shopping Experience in the Era of e-Retailing

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Abstract

Indian retailing is transforming in the form of store formats and online retailing. In rapidly changing digital era, attracting footfalls in retail stores has become challenging for every retailer. It is important for the retailer to focus on creating customer value which can be done through delivering a pleasurable shopping experience. This study has been carried out to understand the determinants of retail shopping experience in the era of e-retailing in Indore, Madhya Pradesh. Application of Factor Analysis with 150 as sample size identified eight factors namely Merchandize and Service Excellence, Store Ambiance, Execution Experience, Employee Engagement, Store Cleanliness, In-Store Experience, Reliability and Queue Management. T-statistics confirms that irrespective of genders there is no significant difference between the perceptions towards retail shopping experience.

Keywords: Shopping Experience, Online Channels, Perceptions, Innovations.

INTRODUCTION

India's retail sector has been transforming during past few years. In the era of multi channel and digital retailing, still there is a place for brick and mortar stores preferred as a favoured shopping destination by the consumers. In fact, a brick and mortar store is a tool for delivering pleasing shopping experience to the customers even in the era of online shopping. Traditional shopping still plays an important role in highly organized market. With the help of digital experience and in store displays the retailers are constantly trying to manage footfalls and deliver values through customer experience. (Marg, 2016) A retailer can deliver values to its customers through Service, Expertise, Exclusivity, Convenience and Experience. (George, 2017) Repeated visits and store loyalty can be ensured with better shopping experience within store.

Retail stores now days have become hangout place with constant search for better store

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experience. Shopping experience involves pre-store preparation for customers, delivering the in-store experience and the post-store services. (Ascent White Paper Report, 2013). Customers are required to be made aware of the offers available in a specific store before or as they enter into the store. This virtual pre-store experience gets enriched through interaction with trained staff and feels of 'touch' the products. Retailers need to create pleasing shopping experience that will keep customers coming back. (IBM Business Report 2005). Customers want ease of shopping with less time and efforts. Thus retailers may add up with redesigning store layout to meet the needs of customer segments as a move towards positive shopping experience.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The retailer's alternate channel constitutes as a reference point for customer evaluations (Zeithaml et. al, 2002). When a number of channel options are available they may rotate channel usage and thus experience of one channel is most likely to affect the experience in the other channel. (Montoya et. al. 2003). Online shopping has opened up new market and opportunities besides physical outlets and made shopping very convenient. However, it has limitations as it does not create new value but competes mostly on the lowest price and the fastest deliveries. Also, brick and mortar retail stores provide advantage over online shopping as the customers are able to see, touch and feel the products (Morse, 2011) and create value to the customers through the enjoyment of the personal and sensual pleasure of going shopping (Doherty and Ellis-Chadwick, 2010). Enjoyment itself has been reported as a motivation for "bricks" shopping, as opposed to shopping on the Internet. (Dennis et. al., 2005), and shopping has been referred to as a fun, pleasurable activity that leads to feelings of 'joy' (Jin and Sternquist, 2004). The quality of the shopping experience has a positive effect on customers' behavioral intentions (Tai and Fung, 1997; Wakefield and Baker, 1998), and pleasurable experiences raised the store patronage (Mano, 1999). New technologies can be integrated through touch screens, bar code

scanners, virtual dressing rooms and mobile technology for enhancing customer shopping experience in brick and mortar stores. (Tynan and Mckechnie, 2009). Although the influence of digital retailing is growing, consumers still prefer conventional stores because of organized merchandize, eye contact with customers, way of handling customer queries and benefit of in-store sales. (Cognizent, 2015) Shopping experience could be a function of gender. (Hart et. al., 2007). It is beneficial for the retailers and the store operators to gain insight into gender based shopping experience. Male shoppers appreciate the creative techniques used to create attractive displays. Training of sales personnel would enhance shopping enjoyment for male and female shoppers and consumers from different ethnic backgrounds. Men generally perceive themselves as being competent shoppers and buy impulsively. They enjoy the shopping more when the store is clean, the level of service quality is acceptable and the salespeople have good product knowledge. (Lee et. al., 2005).

By orchestrating the influential in-store characteristics, retailers could deliver a unique in-store experience focusing on quality of merchandise, price, availability in each category, store ambience, store layout and décor. (Triantafillidou et. al. (2017). Taking step to improve the store experience includes motivating people to step in-store. (Watrous, 2017) A retailer can serve better to its customers by ensuring the availability of staff, encouraging loyalty programmes and educating customers so that they can select the best product. The routes to purchase between in-store, online and through mobiles, the role of retailers has changed vitally in delivering shopping experience. (Drodge, 2017) Considering the above literature the present study is carried out with following objectives:

OBJECTIVES

1. To identify factors influencing Customer Shopping Experience in retail stores
2. To Analyze the effects of Gender on factors influencing Customer Shopping Experience

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Type of Study: This study is designed to find out the factors associated with shopping experience in a retail store and the effect of Gender on shopping experience. The study is Descriptive in nature based on Survey Approach

Sampling Plan

Population: The present study consists of the respondents of Indore, Madhya Pradesh, India

Sampling Technique: Simple Random Sampling

Sample Size: 150

Method of Data Collection: Primary data has been collected through structured questionnaire. The variables considered for construction of questionnaire were supported by the literature on retail shopping experience.

Scaling Technique: Five point Likert Scale has been used ranging from 5 as Strongly Agree to 1 as Strongly Disagree.

Data Analysis Techniques and Tools: Percentage Analysis, Factor Analysis, t-Test

HYPOTHESES

$H_{0(1)}$: There is no significant difference between genders towards the perception of store experience based on Merchandize and Service Excellence.

$H_{0(2)}$: There is no significant difference between genders towards the perception of store experience based on Store Ambiance.

$H_{0(3)}$: There is no significant difference between genders towards the perception of store experience based on Execution Experience.

$H_{0(4)}$: There is no significant difference between genders towards the perception of store experience based on Employee Engagement.

$H_{0(5)}$: There is no significant difference between genders towards the perception of store experience based on Store Cleanliness.

$H_{0(6)}$: There is no significant difference between genders towards the perception of store experience based on In-Store Experience.

$H_{0(7)}$: There is no significant difference between genders towards the perception of store experience based on Reliability.

$H_{0(8)}$: There is no significant difference between genders towards the perception of store experience based on Queue Management.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondents' Profile

Out of total 150 respondents selected for study 45% are male and 55% are female respondents. 23% respondents are less than 20 years of age, 41% are between the age group 20-35 years, 33% belong to 35-50 years of age and only 3% respondents are more than 50 years in age. The highest numbers of respondents belong to the age group 20-35 years of age. 57% respondents are service class respondents, 22% are self employed or professionals and 12% are housewives. Students in the present study comprise of only 9%. 39% respondents have Rs. 15000-30000 income per month which is highest in this category and only 18% respondents have more than Rs. 45000 income per month. Out of total 150 respondents, 57% percent respondents hold the post graduate or professional degree and 43% hold the graduation degree. **(Table 1: Respondents' Profile)**

Identified Factors for Customer Shopping Experience in Retail Stores

To ensure the reliability of constructs Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated. The value of Cronbach's alpha was found to be 0.859. This indicates that the instrument is acceptable (Table 2: Reliability Statistics). To identify factors that influence Customer Shopping Experience in retail stores, Factor analysis was applied. The appropriateness of any data for factor analysis depends upon KMO measure of sample adequacy and Bartlett's test of Sphericity. KMO measure of sample adequacy was found to be 0.720 and Bartlett's test of Sphericity was also found to

be significant. (Table 3: KMO and Bartlett's Test), thus it was considered to be fairly acceptable for factor analysis. Factor analysis with Principal Component Analysis and Varimax Rotation Method has extracted total of eight factors (Table 4: Total Variance Explained and Table 5: Rotated Component Matrix). 63.71 percent of variance is explained by these eight factors. The structure of factors is narrated in Table 6. (Factor Structure for Retail Shopping Experience)

Factor group I is named as **Merchandize and Service Excellence** consisting of eight variables. Facility of home delivery of product constitutes highest importance (.759) within a factor group followed by parking facility, product display on shelf, services offered by the store, range of product available and so on. The second factor group is named as **Store Ambiance** consisting of variables as store layout (.802) followed by colour and lighting scheme, complaints handling within store and overall store ambiance and environment. Factor group III is named as **Execution Experience** where store location is the most important variable (.807) followed by availability of information about offers in store, promotional offers and return policy of purchased goods.

Factor group IV is named as **Employee Engagement** with three variables. These are product demonstration, friendliness of the staff and store timing. Factor group V is named as **Store Cleanliness** with .818 factor loading. Factor group VI is named as **In-Store Experience** consisting of two variables namely window displays (.764) and availability of local brands (.689) Factor group VII is named as **Reliability** consisting of two variables namely salesperson cooperation and price of products with .739 and .553 factor loading respectively. Factor group VIII has one variable with factor loading .923 and is named as **Queue Management**.

DISCUSSION

Findings of the study revealed significant difference in perception of male and female respondents towards shopping experience factors

store ambience and execution experience (Table 13). So, null hypotheses $H_{0(2)}$ and $H_{0(3)}$ were rejected. Shopping experience of male respondents was found to be more influenced by store ambience, whereas female respondents were more influenced by execution experience (Table 12). However, no significant difference in perception of male and female respondents was observed towards other factors of shopping experience. Null hypotheses $H_{0(1)}$, $H_{0(4)}$, $H_{0(5)}$, $H_{0(6)}$, $H_{0(7)}$ and $H_{0(8)}$ were not rejected. Findings of the study are in consistent with the earlier findings that factors of shopping experience for women and men differ (Minahan and Beverland, 2005). Women view the process of shopping as a very social experience (Campbell, 1997), they evaluate pros and cons of the promotional offers and especially the in-store offers in making purchase decision (Laroche, Saad, Cleveland and Browne, 2000). Women were also found to be more particular about return policy of the stores. They take pride in their ability to shop (Underhill, 1999) and consider the shopping process as a leisure activity (Bakewell and Mitchell, 2004), and search for entertainment in the shopping (Haytko and Baker, 2004). Whereas, shopping style of men have generally characterized by a lack of patience and trying to complete the shopping activity in the shortest possible time (Bakewell and Mitchell, 2004). Men give more weightage to the practical aspects of shopping centre management, which includes layout design, cleanliness, safety, and opening hours of stores.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Shopping experience is all about how customer feels within a store. To enhance this, new technologies can be integrated through touch screens, bar code scanners, virtual dressing rooms and mobile technology for enhancing customer shopping experience. Retailer need to undertake innovative strategies orchestrating with digital aids to improve retail shopping experience, increase footfalls and sales, create store differentiation, sustain in competition and deliver customer value in true sense. Thus, determinants of retail shopping experience can be used for designing and offering customized services to different group of customers.

Table 1: Respondents' Profile

Gender	No. of Respondents	%
Male	67	45%
Female	83	55%
Total	150	100
Age	No. of Respondents	%
< 20 yrs	35	23%
20-35	61	41%
35-50	50	33%
>50 yrs	04	03%
Total	150	100
Occupation	No. of Respondents	%
Self employed/Professional	33	22%
Service	85	57%
Housewife	18	12%
Students	14	09%
Total	150	100
Income of Family p.m.	No. of Respondents	%
Less than 15,000	34	23%
15000-30000	59	39%
30000-45000	30	20%
>45000	27	18%
Total	150	100
Education	No. of Respondents	%
Up to Graduation or UG	65	43%
Post Graduate/ Professional	85	57%
Total	150	100

Table 2: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
.859	25

Table 3: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.720
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1105.585
	Df	300
	Sig.	.000

Table 4: Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigen values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumul-%	Total	% of Variance	Cumul-%	Total	% of Variance	Cumul-%
1	4.835	19.339	19.339	4.835	19.339	19.339	3.183	12.732	12.732
2	3.539	14.155	33.494	3.539	14.155	33.494	2.582	10.329	23.061
3	1.498	5.991	39.484	1.498	5.991	39.484	2.462	9.846	32.908
4	1.421	5.682	45.166	1.421	5.682	45.166	1.901	7.604	40.511
5	1.284	5.136	50.302	1.284	5.136	50.302	1.634	6.536	47.047
6	1.191	4.762	55.065	1.191	4.762	55.065	1.631	6.522	53.570
7	1.111	4.444	59.509	1.111	4.444	59.509	1.432	5.726	59.296
8	1.052	4.208	63.717	1.052	4.208	63.717	1.105	4.421	63.717
9	.941	3.764	67.480						
10	.821	3.283	70.763						
11	.750	2.999	73.762						
12	.696	2.786	76.548						
13	.678	2.712	79.260						
14	.676	2.706	81.966						
15	.580	2.321	84.287						
16	.552	2.206	86.493						
17	.532	2.129	88.622						
18	.480	1.921	90.542						
19	.441	1.765	92.308						
20	.427	1.709	94.017						
21	.398	1.591	95.608						
22	.377	1.506	97.114						
23	.292	1.167	98.281						
24	.242	.966	99.247						
25	.188	.753	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 5: Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Facility_of_Home_delivery_of_products	.759	-.046	-.047	.124	-.205	-.038	.064	-.053
Parking_facility	.693	.008	.049	-.008	.083	.233	-.023	.118
Product_display_on_shelf	.601	-.026	.181	.225	.139	.174	.159	-.003
Services_offered_by_the_store	.567	.118	.153	.085	.036	.077	.090	-.042
Product_range_available	.559	.076	.260	.010	-.288	-.122	-.219	-.007
Stores_Attractiveness	.498	-.129	.316	.347	-.148	-.111	.296	-.047
Merchandise_Arrangement	.492	-.128	.452	-.299	.009	.141	-.156	-.067
Product_Quality	.461	-.025	.271	.377	-.202	-.075	.364	-.124
Store_layout	.067	.802	-.028	.031	.257	.021	-.036	-.094
Colour_and_Lighting_Scheme	-.018	.783	-.032	.162	-.095	.115	.254	.005
Complaints_handling	-.010	.766	-.060	.130	-.070	.099	-.135	.080
Store_Location	.061	-.086	.807	.061	-.035	-.009	.124	-.088
Information_about_latest_and_forthcoming_offers	.142	.035	.713	.056	-.142	-.083	.125	.032
Promotional_offers_on_merchandise	.248	-.048	.599	-.018	-.305	.327	-.161	.007
Return_policy	.248	-.161	.552	.155	.422	-.041	-.079	.160
Product_demonstration_within_store	.159	.028	.029	.723	.116	.263	.114	.049
Friendly_staff	.279	.273	.085	.684	-.033	-.037	-.163	.039
Store_timing	-.081	.320	.009	.554	.130	.388	-.069	-.120
Stores_Cleanliness	-.147	.056	-.140	.049	.818	.003	-.031	.026
Store_ambiance_and_environment	.065	.559	-.152	.071	.578	.047	.056	-.221
Window_displays	.017	.139	-.025	.300	.075	.764	.077	-.088
Availability_of_local_brands	.263	.100	.025	.010	-.073	.689	.215	.066
Salesperson_co_operation	.239	-.100	.223	.002	.004	.197	.739	-.075
Price_of_products	-.125	.334	-.157	-.071	.021	.153	.553	.277
Management_of_Queues	-.012	-.046	-.006	.012	-.013	-.034	.032	.923

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 8 iterations.

Customer Perception towards Attributes of Shopping Experience

Table 6: Factor Structure for Retail Shopping Experience

Factor Group I Merchandize and Service Excellence	
Attributes	Factor Loading
Facility of Home delivery of products	.759
Parking facility	.693
Product display on shelf	.601
Services offered by the store	.567
Product range available	.559
Stores Attractiveness	.498
Merchandize Arrangement	.492
Product Quality	.461
Factor Group II Store Ambiance	
Store layout	.802
Colour and lighting scheme	.783
Complaints handling	.766
Store ambiance and environment	.559
Factor Group III Execution Experience	
Store Location	.807
Information about latest and forthcoming offers	.713
Promotional offers on merchandize	.599
Return policy	.552
Factor Group IV Employee Engagement	
Product demonstration within store	.723
Friendly staff	.684
Store timing	.554
Factor Group V Store Cleanliness	
Stores Cleanliness	.818
Factor Group VI In-Store Experience	
Window displays	.764
Availability of local brands	.689
Factor Group VII Reliability	
Salesperson co operation	.739
Price of products	.553
Factor Group VIII Queue Management	
Management of Queues	.923

Table 12: Gender-wise Mean and Standard deviation

Factors	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation
Merchandize_and_Service_Excellence	Male	3.6679	.71263
	Female	3.7831	.62958
Store_Ambiance	Male	3.6642	.81132
	Female	3.3554	.95726
Execution_Experience	Male	3.5224	.75344
	Female	3.8012	.78063
Employee_Engagement	Male	3.8458	.80889
	Female	3.7510	.79094
Store_Cleanliness	Male	2.8657	1.24189
	Female	2.9036	1.13282
Instore_Experience	Male	3.4030	.93029
	Female	3.1627	.96622
Reliability	Male	3.3881	.80632
	Female	3.1988	.88669
Queue_Management	Male	3.1343	1.38055
	Female	2.9036	1.36698

Table 13: Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Factor 1	Equal variances assumed	1.003	.318	-1.050	148	.295	-.92178	.87754	-2.65590	.81235
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.037	132.903	.302	-.92178	.88923	-2.68066	.83710
Factor 2	Equal variances assumed	2.288	.133	2.100	148	.037	1.23503	.58805	.07298	2.39708
	Equal variances not assumed			2.138	147.629	.034	1.23503	.57779	.09323	2.37683
Factor 3	Equal variances assumed	.154	.696	-2.209	148	.029	-1.11527	.50495	-2.11310	-.11743
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.217	143.322	.028	-1.11527	.50303	-2.10958	-.12096
Factor 4	Equal variances assumed	.526	.470	.722	148	.471	.28430	.39367	-.49364	1.06225
	Equal variances not assumed			.720	140.047	.472	.28430	.39462	-.49589	1.06449

Factor 5	Equal variances assumed	.671	.414	-.195	148	.845	-.03794	.19424	-.42179	.34590
	Equal variances not assumed			-.193	135.304	.847	-.03794	.19616	-.42589	.35000
Factor 6	Equal variances assumed	.022	.882	1.540	148	.126	.48067	.31217	-.13622	1.09756
	Equal variances not assumed			1.546	143.444	.124	.48067	.31090	-.13387	1.09521
Factor 7	Equal variances assumed	1.590	.209	1.353	148	.178	.37853	.27979	-.17437	.93143
	Equal variances not assumed			1.367	145.869	.174	.37853	.27696	-.16884	.92590
Factor 8	Equal variances assumed	.108	.743	1.023	148	.308	.23071	.22550	-.21491	.67634
	Equal variances not assumed			1.022	140.817	.309	.23071	.22574	-.21557	.67700

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