Prospects of Shopping Malls in India: An Analytical Study

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Abstract

A **shopping mall**, **shopping centre**, **shopping arcade**, **shopping precinct** or simply **mall** is one or more buildings forming a complex of shops representing merchandisers, with interconnecting walkways enabling visitors to easily walk from unit to unit, along with a parking area — a modern, indoor version of the traditional marketplace. This in a nutshell, is the developing Indian retail story that is luring investors, domestic and foreign, to make a pitch for a portion of the great Indian market , its growing and ever-hungry consumers, and their apparently insatiable demand for all the good things in life -- from groceries to vegetables to fancy gadgets to fancier cars . The purchasing power comes from the growing industry and services sectors, and a small section of the rich agrarian buyers. If one looks at Gurgaon, adjacent to the union capital of New Delhi, any weekend presents a chaotic picture with traffic congestions and huge crowds of visitors crowding the twenty odd big malls that it houses. And this is only Gurgaon. At the other end of Delhi in the East is Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh which also boasts sprawling malls.

Sales and bargain deals, attractive prizes, and schemes are the sure fire success formulae that the shopkeepers and showroom and super bazaars use to lure visitors in huge numbers. Malls are a mega hit. Now, let's look at the reality. Malls were hailed as one of the key growth drivers for the retail and entertainment sector in the country 5-7 years ago, as they provided a plug and play opportunity for retailers to expand footprint and promote consumption. Today, there are an estimated 150 malls in India, and the sad reality is that only around 20-25 of these are successful. Malls like Select City Walk and Ambience in the NCR, Inorbit and High Street Phoenix in Mumbai, Forum inKolkata, Garuda and Forum in Bangalore have done a phenomenal job of creating shopping and leisure destinations for consumers and retailers. They have even impacted traditional high streets such as South Ex., Greater Kailash-1 (M Block) in Delhi, and Commercial Street and Brigade Road in Bangalore amongst others.However, with fewer than 20% malls delivering on the customer and financial counts, one can clearly say that the mall revolution has not been a grand success in India. Issues with malls exist at a mindset, planning (or lack of it), execution, as well as mall management level. Few developers realise that malls are a "retail" business that needs to be planned, managed and nurtured like one, and not just another piece of real estate to sell to the highest bidder at the soonest possible. Also, with rentals taking up a disproportionate share of revenues for a retailer (25-35% for a number of fashion retailers!), this is a broken economic model for the occupier, hence for the developer.

KEYWORDS:-Food Court, shopping centers, mall, plaza, sales outlets, retail outlets,.

1. Introduction:

1.1.Meaning of shopping mall - mercantile establishment consisting of a carefully landscaped complex of shops representing leading merchandisers; usually includes restaurants and a convenient parking area; a modern version of the traditional marketplace; "a goods plaza should have a movie house"; "they spent their weekends at the local malls" shopping center, shopping centre, mall, plaza, center;food court - an area (as in a shopping mall) where fast food is sold (usually around a common eating area)mercantile establishment, outlet, retail store, sales outlet - a place of business for retailing goods

1.2.A **shopping mall**, **shopping centre**, **shopping arcade**, **shopping precinct** or simply **mall** is one or more buildings forming a complex of shops representing merchandisers, with interconnecting walkways enabling visitors to easily walk from unit to unit, along with a parking area — a modern, indoor version of the traditional marketplace.

Modern "car-friendly" strip malls developed from the 1920s, and shopping malls corresponded with the rise of suburban living in many parts of the Western World, especially the United States, after World War II. From early on, the design tended to be inward-facing, with malls following theories of how customers could best be enticed in a controlled environment. Similar, the concept of a mall having one or more "anchor" or "big box" stores was pioneered early, with individual stores or smaller-scale chain storesintended to benefit from the shoppers attracted by the big stores.[1]

2. Objective of Research

1.To find our regional difference with regard to shopping malls;
2. To find out the history of shopping malls;
3. To assess Consumer Buying Behaviour & Brand Perception of consumers in Shopping Malls;
4. To know whether mall culture capturing India;
5. To assess the Mall Culture and its Place in the Indian Environment
6. To assess whether Mall culture not a big success in India?

3. Methodology:

Primary and secondary data were used. Sample size is 200. Period covered in research is 2005-2012. Statistical tool applied are average, range, index, etc.

4. Hypothesis:

Ho1: The growth of shopping malls is not satisfactory.

Ho2: The shopping malls areopening only in big cities.

5. Regional differences relating Shopping Malls

In most places, the term *shopping centre* is used, especially in Europe, Australia and South America; however *shopping mall* is also used, predominantly in North America[2]and the Philippines. Outside of North America, *shopping precinct* and *shopping arcade* are also used. In North America, Gulf countries and India, the term *shopping mall* is usually applied to enclosed retail structures (and is generally abbreviated to simply *mall*), while *shopping center* usually refers to open-air retail complexes; both types of facilities usually have large parking lots, face major traffic arterials and have few pedestrian connections to surrounding neighborhoods.[2]

Shopping centres in the United Kingdom can be referred to as "shopping centres" or "shopping precincts", however due to much Americanised media influences from television or film, "shopping mall", or simply "mall" could be used to describe a British shopping centre. *Mall* primarily refers to either a shopping mall – a place where a collection of shops all adjoin a pedestrian area – or an exclusively pedestrianised street that allows shoppers to walk without interference from vehicle traffic. *Mall* is generally used inNorth America to refer to a large shopping area usually composed of a single building which contains multiple shops, usually "anchored" by one or more department stores surrounded by a parking lot, while the term *arcade* is more often used, especially inBritain, to refer to a narrow pedestrian-only street, often covered or between closely spaced buildings (see town centre). In Britain, a larger, often partly covered and exclusively pedestrian shopping area is also termed a *shopping centre*, *shopping precinct*, or*pedestrian precinct*.

The majority of British shopping centres are located in city centres, usually found in old and historic shopping districts and surrounded by subsidiary open air shopping streets. Large examples include West Quay in Southampton, Manchester Arndale,Bullring Birmingham, Liverpool One, Buchanan Galleries in Glasgow and Eldon Square in Newcastle upon Tyne. In addition to the inner city shopping centres, large UK conurbations will also have large out-of-town "regional malls" such as Meadowhall, Sheffieldserving SouthYorkshire,the TraffordCentre in GreaterManchester and Bluewater in Kent. These centres were built in the 1980s and 1990s, but planning regulations prohibit the construction of any more. Out-of-town shopping developments in the UK are now focused on retail parks, which consist of groups of warehouse style shops with individual entrances from outdoors. Planning policy prioritizes the development of existing town centres, although with patchy success. Westfield Stratford City is the (shopping centre), in Stratford (London), is the largest shopping centre in Europe with over 330 shops, 50 restaurants and an 11 screen cinema and Westfield London is the largest inner-city shopping centre in Europe. Bullring, Birmingham is the busiest shopping centre in the UK welcoming over 36.5 million shoppers in its opening year.[3]

In Hong Kong, the term "shopping centre" is the most frequently used, and the name of a shopping centre in Hong Kong usually contains the word "centre" or "plaza". In Brazil, the most frequently used term is just "shopping"[4] (*pl.* shoppings), sometimes added with "center", "plaza" or "mall".

6. History of Malls

Numerous covered shopping arcades, such as the 19th-century Al-HamidiyahSouq in Damascus, Syria, can be considered precursors to the present-day shopping mall.[5] Isfahan's Grand Bazaar, which is largely covered, dates from the 10th century. The 10 kilometer long covered Tehran's Grand Bazaar also has a long history. The Grand Bazaar of Istanbul was built in the 15th century and is still one of the largest covered markets in the world, with more than 58 streets and 4,000 shops.

GostinyDvor in St. Petersburg, which opened in 1785, may be regarded as one of the first purposely-built mall-type shopping complexes, as it consisted of more than 100 shops covering an area of over 53,000 m^2 (570,000 sq ft).

The Marché des Enfants-Rouges in Paris opened in 1628 and still runs today. The Oxford Covered Market in Oxford, England opened in 1774 and still runs today.

The Passage du Caire was opened in Paris in 1798[6]. The Burlington Arcade in London was opened in 1819. The Arcade in Providence, Rhode Island introduced the retail arcade concept to the United States in 1828. This was a forerunner of today's shopping mall [7] The Galleria Vitoria Emanuele II in Milan, Italy followed in the 1870s and is closer to large modern malls in spaciousness. Other large cities created arcades and shopping centres in the late 19th century and early 20th century, including the Cleveland Arcade, Dayton Arcade and Moscow's GUM, which opened in 1890. Early shopping centers designed for the automobile include Market Square, Lake Forest, Illinois (1916) and Country Club Plaza, Kansas City, Missouri (1924).

An early indoor mall prototype in the United States was the Lake View Store at Morgan Park, Duluth, Minnesota, which was built in 1915 and held its grand opening on July 20, 1916. The architect was Dean and Dean from Chicago and the building contractor was George H. Lounsberry from Duluth. The building is two stories with a full basement, and shops were originally located on all three levels. All of the stores were located within the interior of the mall; some shops were accessible from inside and out.

In the mid-20th century, with the rise of the suburb and automobile culture in the United States, a new style of shopping centre was created away from downtown.[8]

7. Consumer Buying Behavior & Brand Perception of consumers in Shopping Malls:

In India Shopping Malls industry is upcoming industry in India. Today in India Shopping Mall industry is worth 17000 Cr. Industry. In NCR (National Capital Region) Gurgaon is the most favorite place for the shopping malls. M.G. (Meharuli – Gurgaon) Road is the place for all famous shopping malls in Gurgaon. In NCR DLF, MGF, JMD, SAHARA, all big big players are in shopping mall industry. On M.G. Road Gurgaon MGF Group has two shopping malls in operation MGF Metropolitan Mall, MGF Plaza, Sahara Group has its Sahara Mall and DLF Group has its City Centre.

The project involved the study of comparative analysis consumer buying behavior and brand perception of consumers regarding shopping malls on M.G. Road and Metropolitan Mall as a base. The methodology adopted to study the consumer buying behavior& brand perception of consumer is through survey in shopping malls on M.G. Road, 745 consumers were surveyed. The survey is done through the personal interviews by putting different set of structure questionnaire to them.

Consumer purchasing power is the main factor, which determines their buying behavior and brand of shopping malls. Shopping Malls are the places for the fun & entertainment, family outing, shopping and eating's. In shopping Malls age factor is the most dominant factor in daily footfall. What I studied that in different shopping malls different age group consumers come and they impact on the buying behavior.

7.1. Metropolitian Mall: In Metropolitan Mall consumers belong to age 20 – 25 and 25 -35 were in the maximum numbers. They either belong to students or services or they are professionals. Consumers in this age group come to the shopping malls either in once in a week or twice in a week. Their purposes to come to a shopping mall are just for fun and entertainment (PVR Movies), eating, and shopping's. On average they used to spend Rs. 500- 2500 on their per visit in Metropolitan Mall. As a consumer they spend the most on music and entertainment and food and beverages. After this

they spend on apparels and sportswear & footwear. In case of girls in this age group they spend a large amount on gifts and beauty products. In this age group the consumers like the metropolitan mall most. The most important think that we observed that the annual house holds income of this category either their own or their parents between 2-5 lakhs and 5 – 10 lakhs. In Metropolitan Mall consumer are specially brand oriented. Consumers in the age group between 25 –35 were also in good numbers. The main different between the age group of 20 –25 and 25 –35 was that consumers in the age group 25 –35 they don't come just come for the fun they were serious buyers of branded products. The brand images in their minds of Metropolitan Mall were different – different. A large group of this segment have image only of PVR Gurgaon. Next they have image of Shoppers Stops, McDonalds, and Metropolitan Mall. Consumers have the image of Metropolitan Mall is the best place for the entertainment and eating because of good Food joints, restaurants. Most of the consumers of any age group were very much impressed by the ambience and gentry of Metropolitan Mall. A common brand image of Metropolitan Mall was that it is some costly for a big shopping.

7.2. Sahara Mall: Consumers in Sahara Mall belong to 25 – 35 age and age 35 and above were in the maximum numbers. In this age group consumer were either Homemakers or services, or they were professionals. They come in either once in a week or twice in a month. In Sahara Mall consumers were serious buyers and they either come for the family shopping or for the eating. The annual holds income is between 2 – 5 lakhs common. Consumers spend Rs. Between 500-2500 and more then Rs. 2500.Consumers in shopping mall and spend mostly on Households and eating. Consumers in Sahara Mall are very much influence by discount schemes. A large segment comes for Sahara Mall only for the Pantaloon store. Consumers in Sahara Mall come only for the BIG BAZZAR, HALDIRAM and PANTALOON. The brand image of Sahara Mall in consumers is only Big Bazaar and Haldiram. Some have the image of Pantaloon. The common brand image of Sahara Mall is a mall for the MIDDLE CLASS. It's a good place for eating and family shopping.

7.3. MGF PLAZA: MGF PLAZA is commonly visited by consumer in the age group of 25- 35 and age above then 35. Consumers in MGF Plaza are belonging to business, services and most of them Home Makers. Consumers in MGF PLAZA are serious buyers. They come to the Mall once in a month or twice in a month. They just come for the family shopping for the home furnishing and electronic items like TV, Refrigerators etc. Consumers in MGF Plaza are mostly brand oriented. Their common annual house holds income between 2-5 and 5- 10 lakhs. The brand image that they have of MGF Plaza is a complete place for the home furnishing items. Arcus, Samsung, Philpes, LG and Electrolux brand in this mall. Most famous is the Arcus home furnishings. MGF PLAZA a place for the home furnishing items. This mall is totally different from Metropolitan Mall and DLF City Centre.

Consumer who visits any shopping mall on M.G.Road almost comes to visit every shopping mall. In study of shopping malls I found after analysis that Metropolitan Mall is the best place for the fun & Entertainment, eating and branded shopping. Metropolitan Mall is not a place for the middle class. Sahara Mall is good for the family shopping like households, apparels due to Big Bazaar and Pantaloon and good for the eating due to the Haldirams. Sahara Mall is the only one mall on M.G. Road for the middle class. Regarding the MGF PLAZA it is the place only for the home

furnishings and essential items for the family. It is the place both for the middle class and higher class.

In our study consumers were taken for all age groups and all classes. In Metropolitan Mall management should think about the indoor games like bowling, snooker for their good time pass in mall. In Metropolitan Mall there should be a disco for the complete fun and entertainment. In Sahara Mall management should also think about to promote other stores except Big Bazaar. Make it like a Shopping mall not like a Big Bazaar store. In MGF PLAZA there are basically home furnishing items so make some plans for these serious customers who visit and purchase from the mall.

8. Is mall culture capturing India?

Absolutely, without any doubt the mall culture has gripped Indians and they seem love every bit of it.

Few days back we visited a newly opened 2 million square feet everything-under-one-roof mall in Pune. We were shocked to see the number of people that had thronged the place. It seemed to be some kind of a huge people procession out there.

In earlier days (about a decade back), if you wanted to do any kind of shopping, one had couple of places to go (or should we say streets) like Bara bazar or Main street (every city has shopping streets like these, especially in the downtown area), where small shoppers line up across the roads. Bargaining to extract the best price was common place- and it had it own charm too.

But everything has changed now. The younger and older generation alike prefer buying stuff from huge malls where one not only get variety, but quality too at moderate prices.

Even for your everyday grocery buying superstores have come up at every nook and corner. Just to give you an example, we have around 8 superstores (Reliance fresh, Spencers, Big Bazaar) within area of roughly 5 sq. km. The main attraction with all of them is competitive pricing as compared to next door retail grocery shop.

In a recent survey done by ***Jones Lang LaSalle Meghraj, a real estate consultancy firm,*** it reports that **328 new malls are expected to come up in metros and Tier I, II, III cities by 2010.**

And the reason for so many malls and super stores coming up is simple – huge consumer demand.According to study carried out by Assocham, a **whooping Rs. 1,31,804 crore has been invested in organised retailing in last 6 months alone**.

9. Mall Culture and its Place in the Indian Environment:

Indians are no longer afraid to dream. Why, some farmers in Maharashtra got together to float a company to build a special economic zone out of their farmlands. In Punjab, a few aggressive farmers have dared to take on the retail might of the likes of Reliance, and Soubhagya, with their very own retail ventures.

This in a nutshell, is the developing Indian retail story that is luring investors, domestic and foreign, to make a pitch for a portion of the great Indian market , its growing and ever-hungry consumers, and their apparently insatiable demand for all the good things in life -- from groceries to vegetables to fancy gadgets to fancier cars

. The purchasing power comes from the growing industry and services sectors, and a small section of the rich agrarian buyers.

If one looks at Gurgaon, adjacent to the union capital of New Delhi, any weekend presents a chaotic picture with traffic congestions and huge crowds of visitors crowding the twenty odd big malls that it houses. And this is only Gurgaon. At the other end of Delhi in the East is Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh which also boasts sprawling malls.

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And in fact, it is the semi-urban areas, small towns and cities, described as Tier II and Tier III towns (say an Amritsar or a Moga in Punjab, or Indore in Madhya Pradesh, or Nagpur in Maharashtra, or Pune for that matter) that are powering the retail revolution which is sweeping the urban and rural areas. Malls, the temples of consumerism are cropping up everywhere. These malls have changed the way people are shopping. They are teaching them how to appreciate the good things of life. ‘Comfort’, ‘style’, ‘convenience’ and ‘cool’, are only some of the words used by the shoppers introduced to the mall culture.

And no one is complaining. Not the mall owners, not the shopkeepers, and certainly not the marketing men and women of the big brands. Malls are the battlegrounds where the brands, small, medium and big, the known, the not-so-well-known and the wanna-be ones, fight it out for the consumer’s attention. And the consumer is ‘loving it’ and asking for more.

Yes, this is one culture that consumers are happy about. So happy that no one seems to mind the 'unplanned expenditure' incurred by an outing to such an enticing place. They enjoy air-conditioned comfort, availability of a range of merchandise under one roof, and a one-stop family entertainment arena.

While the consumer is thus slowly getting hooked onto the mall culture, the owners of the malls are hardly complaining. Actually, they are busy planning the erection of new malls, and the more the merrier seems to be motto of the moment. Given the rate at which malls are coming up, the commercial as well as residential real estate business is spiraling upwards. The range and scope of the economic activity generated from mall culture promises many things to many people.

Other than offering shoppers more value for money, the scale of operations generates employment opportunities, direct and indirect, for thousands of people.

India was to have some 350 malls out of which nearly 250 were planned in tier II and tier III towns, taking this revolution further. Now there is a new association of big brands that has come together to give brand loyalists something to cherish, aspire for, and much, much more. Gurgaon alone hopes to play host to some 150 odd malls.

But are all the investors who rushed into the mall business happy? Are the returns coming in? Going by the mall traffic on weekdays, this seems highly unlikely.

Barring the ones that have hit the big time and built a stable, loyal customer base, the shop owners and showroom managers are worried. Worried, as the Indian customer is yet to vote for malls when it came to making concrete purchases that translate into turnovers and profits. He still votes for the friendly, neighbourhood 'kirana' stores when it comes to groceries, and for the shopping complexes where he has been shopping all his life.

For the big buyers, say for weddings, or corporate purchases, the preferred venues are still the traditional markets like the Johari Bazar in old Jaipur city where bargaining still rules. Trust and faith still matter the most. Mall owners and shop owners in the malls, wish that all visitors (often a visit to a mall is just seen as entertainment) would turn into customers. It's no surprise that more than half of the malls report substantially poor occupancies, resulting in a depression in rentals.

The investors are not the only cribbers. Town planners are at their wits' end trying to figure out where to fit in all the traffic and how to cope with the pressures on infrastructure that is already under severe pressure. If power is a perpetual problem, then parking blues refuse to go away, what with the addition of several thousand new vehicles adding to the Indian roads each day.

These are the problems that any politician, economist or administrator laments about as India drives along the development superhighway, punctuated with modern marvels – designer glass structures that seem to touch the skies, and a dazzling display of the fierce battle of brands .

10. Does Mall culture not a big success in India?

Let's begin with defining success. In the case of a shopping mall (and most other consumer facing businesses), we believe this lies at two levels - success at a customer value proposition level (end consumer and retailer/occupier), and then at a financial level for the mall developer. For the shopping mall revolution to be considered a grand success, one would want at least 50-60% of malls in the country to deliver on these two counts.

Now, let's look at the reality. Malls were hailed as one of the key growth drivers for the retail and entertainment sector in the country 5-7 years ago, as they provided a plug and play opportunity for retailers to expand footprint and promote consumption.

Today, there are an estimated 150 malls in India, and the sad reality is that only around 20-25 of these are successful. Malls like Select City Walk and Ambience in the NCR, Inorbit and High Street Phoenix in Mumbai, Forum inKolkata, Garuda and Forum in Bangalore have done a phenomenal job of creating shopping and leisure destinations for consumers and retailers. They have even impacted traditional high streets such as South Ex., Greater Kailash-1 (M Block) in Delhi, and Commercial Street and Brigade Road in Bangalore amongst others.

However, with fewer than 20% malls delivering on the customer and financial counts, one can clearly say that the mall revolution has not been a grand success in India.

Issues with malls exist at a mindset, planning (or lack of it), execution, as well as mall management level. Few developers realise that malls are a "retail" business that needs to be planned, managed and nurtured like one, and not just another piece of real estate

to sell to the highest bidder at the soonest possible. Also, with rentals taking up a disproportionate share of revenues for a retailer (25-35% for a number of fashion retailers!), this is a broken economic model for the occupier, hence for the developer.

Like in any other industry, understanding, partnering and servicing customers on a continual basis is the key to success for developers. Till this happens, a number of retailers will continue to refer to CAM (Common Area Maintenance charges) as SCAM.

11. Conclusions and findings

Here are some of the highlights of the study:

- **Organized retail growing at estimated 25%**; set to penetrate tier II and tier III cities like Pune, Chandigarh and Hyderabad; investment worth Rs27,550 crore announced
- Real estate companies like Unitech and DLF draw up plans that cater to growing demand of shopping malls; **capex of Rs65,000 planned to be invested in real estate development for retail space in next four to five years**; food and grocery is next big retail segment with investment plan of Rs22,100 crore
- Hyper marts will soon dot the Indian retail space with investment announcements of Rs29,154 crore expected to set them up
- Companies like Reliance Retail have set aside Rs24,000 crore for setting up hyper marts by 2010-11 in National Capital Region; Spencer retail announced capex of Rs3000 crore for expanding its retail outlet and setting up hyper marts by 2010
- Increased competition among food & grocery retailers will provide better services to users; capex of Rs22,100 crore planned to set up chains of food and grocery stores in next three years
- **Past six months witnessed major expansion in textile and apparel segment** by large retailers including Provogue, Trent and Arvind Mills drawing up an investment chart of Rs7,900 crore for setting up new stores in Pune, Hyderabad, Navi Mumbai
- Job creation centres of the future will be cities like Hyderabad, Pune, Surat and Chandigarh among others

Retail sector seems to be the next big thing in India, and with Software jobs going down, retail seems to be the perfect sector to dive in for aspiring candidates !

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