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# Malls vs E-tailing as buying destination: An empirical study of customers preferences

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## Abstract

Shopping centres or shopping malls provide a diverse and diverse range of items to customers, such as fashion shops, electrical gadgets, groceries, presents, restaurants, and theatres, among others, while E-tailing delivers things directly to the consumer's door. A user may buy things from a virtual shop by utilising the internet. A virtual store is constructed on a web server, and the items are shown using photos with price tags and features. Shopping malls give customers with a social setting with soothing activities and enable them to touch, see, and feel the items, while e-tail buyers can only view photos shown on websites, which might be fraudulent or authentic. Technological progress has, in some ways, damaged the sense and thrill of shopping. Consumers' busy lives and the convenience of internet buying encourage them to do so. Malls and e-commerce both have their own customer base and are impacted by a variety of variables. As a result, the research "Malls versus E-tailing as Buying Destination: An Empirical Study of Customers Preferences" was conducted to analyse consumer preferences. This research is descriptive in nature, with data gathered from 160 respondents. The mean and t-test were used.

**Keywords:** online retailing, malls, convenience, shopping experience, shopping center

## Introduction

A shopping mall is a contemporary name for a retail area or shopping centre that has more than one structure and a number of stores connected by passageways that connect various areas of the mall. A large grin is always there when the word "shopping" is spoken; shopping is something that everyone enjoys. People like wandering around and window shopping from time to time. Previously, it was all about buying at marketplaces on the side of the road or in the bustling centre of the city, but then came the period of malls, shopping centres, and internet shopping. Every person has their own set of choices and preferences. Shopping is lot simpler today because there are so many alternatives accessible; consumers may purchase based on their needs and tastes. They may purchase online, at a mall, or at traditional marketplaces. It makes life so much easier for everyone. Each style and manner of purchasing has benefits and drawbacks. But the most essential thing is that all of these methods have made shopping easier and more pleasant in our hectic and fast-paced world. In this day and age of internet buying, we must remember that conventional shopping is still the greatest option since it provides so much convenience and savings. There are still many individuals who like going to the market and shopping in real businesses (Lovelock, 2004) <sup>[10]</sup>. Shopping online is more convenient than shopping in physical locations such as malls and shops. Instead of travelling to the store, you may shop from the convenience of your own home. The procedure is simple; just choose the item that meets your needs and preferences, make your money, and have the thing delivered to your home. There are a plethora of items from which to pick. When buying online, one may avoid the procedures of waiting in lines, inquiring about the pricing of the goods, and inquiring about the quality and durability of the goods (Close *et al.*, 2010) <sup>[11]</sup>.

Fantastic bargains and offers are given by online retailers since they do not have to pay the additional charges that malls must bear, which is why these online traders typically provide great bargains to their consumers, which is not feasible for offline shops and their traders. Customers are willing to pay delivery costs because they know it is much better and less painful. Online merchants charge delivery costs from their customers, but they are also extremely minor, and customers are pleased to pay them because it is much better and less painful. When the price is reduced, the desire for shopping increases, and when the price is raised, the desire decreases. The price of an item always influences the strength of a certain

buyer's purchase. The customer is always pleased when they can get high-quality goods at a reasonable or standard price.

### Literature Review

Palaci (2019) discovered that contentment is the cornerstone to the success of any company style. As a result, malls and online merchants should maintain a set of services in order to amuse their clients and give them with pleasure with their goods and services. However, since customer satisfaction is always changing, marketers must design new methods on a regular basis.

Panda (2016) <sup>[3]</sup> discovered that malls are no more only places where people go to buy; they also go to recharge, mingle, and enjoy themselves. A large and excellent retail store offers everything under one roof, such as clothing, basic necessities, electrical items, footwear, and so on. Malls have proven to be a unique shopping experience for Indians. Shopping in the sweltering heat has given way to cool air conditioning. Malls have become a place to thrive in today's environment. People wanted to go to the mall and purchase branded items to flaunt and retain their status. Without a question, shopping malls in India have entirely introduced a new and pleasant shopping culture that is considerably superior to and distinct from the traditional one.

According to Sanyal (2018) <sup>[4]</sup>, shopping malls are perceived as having the same designs as retail outlets, but the commodities are more expensive in contrast to conventional retail outlets since there is a prevalent opinion that the commodities in malls are of large brands and of higher quality. Customers' spending power, as a result, plays an important part in determining purchasing selections at malls. The findings of the study are consistent with other studies that have acknowledged similar indications pertaining to store selection by customers and their purchasing behaviours. The main factors impacted by consumer earnings are the variety, standard, and pricing of items bought at shopping malls. A discernible shift in customer purchasing behaviours may be detected when income levels grow. The proximity of shopping malls becomes less of an influential element. However, the quality and variety of items appear as the most important elements affecting customer purchasing behaviour. This is a crucial concern for merchants whose primary goal is to preserve diversity and standards in their items, as well as right pricing, in order to entice customers with high-level incomes.

Sarwar (2017) <sup>[5]</sup> discovered that while Indian customers are drawn to the ambience and variety of product ranges available in malls, they are frequently irritated when shopping at these stores because modern retail stores are unable to restock finished commodities within the timeframe and frequently shoppers are unable to obtain the desired products. The restocking or refilling rates at modern Indian retail establishments are quite low, at roughly two-thirds of the world average of 90 percent or more, which is the same as what is supplied by traditional 'kirana' businesses. A typical customer, for example, who arrives with a list of 20 commodities, may not be able to get all of the items due to a lack of availability. This would entail another trip to the mall/supermarket or a neighbouring business to complete his shopping, which would increase the cost.

Katrodia (2018) <sup>[6]</sup> discovered that buyers obtain the bulk of their information about shopping malls via different

advertising schemes, ads, and friends. A large proportion of those who took part in the research drove to malls and paid using credit cards. Consumers are drawn to specific malls for a variety of reasons connected to society, culture, and psychology. Psychological features such as popularity and similarity to certain malls, as well as diverse and flexible invoicing and payment choices, draw customers to them. Culture-related characteristics have also been discovered to influence consumer buying tendencies. Furthermore, social factors such as parking location, amusement areas for children, product exchange assistance, market communication systems, and brand image, among others, play an important role when customers must choose between multiple malls.

Thomas (2018) <sup>[7]</sup> studied and discovered that the researcher concentrated on the planned strategies to increase the usefulness of Rajasthan's prominent retail malls. However, little focus was placed on highlighting the state's existence of both organised and unorganised retail sectors. The unorganised retail sector accounts for a significant portion of the prevalent retail industry in each of India's states. As a result, its application and significance in the Indian context cannot be questioned. It serves about a billion people in India. The main challenge is obtaining the best from both the organised and unorganised retail sectors. Customers should have an extraordinarily valuable purchasing experience as a result of the results. Nonetheless, the well-established outlook for the retail business remains upbeat, aided by favourable factors such as increased consumer incomes, demographic shifts, the introduction of multinational brands, and increased urbanisation. In general, the numerous mall elements should have a positive and strong alliance and impact on customers' affection for the mall in a high-quality retail mall.

Elangovan and Sangeetha (2017) <sup>[8]</sup> did a study and discovered that the researcher analysed the changing consumer behaviour and economic upliftment of the nation. It has been noticed that, over time, the culture of shopping malls has usurped the place of traditional department stores and retail businesses. Nowadays, shopping malls are the preferred location for buyers. It provides a variety of retail amenities as well as a pleasant ambience for visitors, resulting in a longer stay and more frequent visits by customers. Attributes such as parking space availability, as well as the variety and quality of products and services provided, have a significant impact. Other considerations include: a competitive pricing range, mall amenities and beautification, leisure centres and discount programmes, and so forth. Access to worldwide brands, as well as the most recent goods and services, has a good influence on customers and encourages them to visit malls on a regular basis.

Asha (2017) <sup>[9]</sup> examined and discovered that people like to visit shopping malls that also offer entertainment centres so that they can take use of many amenities in one location. This further indicates that consumers visit malls to mingle with different groups as well as for entertainment. They also spend time dining at restaurants and shopping at various stores in the mall. Malls are increasingly becoming hubs of interaction and entertainment (apart from shopping), and as a result, customers are demanding more and more from shopping malls. They see malls as a location where they can satisfy all of their interests and needs, such as dining, watching movies, relaxing, shopping, and reuniting with old

friends.

According to Kshirsagar (2016) [1], retailing is one of the most important industries in the global economy. The retail industry in India is undergoing modernization. The pace of growth in the Indian retail industry is estimated to be 15%. This phenomena is expected to continue for at least the next 20-30 years, and it has piqued the attention of a variety of corporate leaders, heads of organisations, capitalists, real estate owners, and builders. The rising population of working-age Indians, high-paying jobs, nuclear families in cities, a growing number of working women, and new prospects in the service industry are raising expectations in India's retail sector. With the prominence of retail shops such as D-mart, Big Bazaar, Mc Donald's, and Oasis Mall, among others, the retail sector in Solapur has been noticed to have a notable shift in terms of pattern. The organised retail industry is changing the entire perception of shopping in terms of shopping trends. The growth in family wages, educational level, convenience of access to all essential commodities in one location, and payment options such as cards are some of the important factors that draw customers to organised retail outlets. The purpose of this study was to identify the factors that impact customer purchasing behaviour toward organised retail stores. The information for this study was gathered using a self-managed questionnaire and face-to-face contacts with visitors to the

forementioned municipal outlets.

**Objectives**

1. To know the Customers Preferences between Malls and E-tailing as buying destination.
2. To know recent perspectives and future trends of E-tailing, Malls and Customer preferences.

**Methodology**

Present study is exploratory in nature. A survey method was used to collect the primary data from the respondents, for which a structured questionnaire was developed and used to validate the hypothesis of this study. A sample of 160 respondents has been considered. The sampling method was purposive sampling. Mean and t-test was applied to find out appropriate results of the study.

**Findings of the Study**

Table 1 shows that number of Male respondents are 43.13% and female respondents are 56.87%, respondents. Respondents Age below 35 is 24.38%, 35-50 are 45.62%, and above 50 are 30%. With reference to Marital Status, Unmarried are 39.37% and married are 60.63%. With reference to Income of consumers (Per Month), Below 20,000 are 11.88%, 20,000-80,000 are 55.62% and above 80,000 are 32.5%.

**Table 1:** Demographic profile of the respondents

Variables	Number of respondents	%age
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	69	43.13%
Female	91	56.87%
Total	160	100%
<b>Age</b>		
Below 35	39	24.38%
35-50	73	45.62%
Above 50	48	30%
Total	160	100%
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	97	60.63%
Unmarried	63	39.37%
Total	160	100%
<b>Income (P.M)</b>		
Below 20,000	19	11.88%
20,000- 80,000	89	55.62%
Above 80,000	52	32.5%
Total	160	100%

**Table 2:** Customers Preferences between Malls vs E-tailing as Buying Destination

Sr. No.	Statements	Mean Score
1.	E-tailing makes shopping comfortable and easy buying destination	4.45
2.	Malls provide overall consumer satisfaction ranging from availability of products, restaurants, cinemas etc.	4.25
3.	Consumer can easily and quickly access shopping at any time from any place in E- tailing with internet.	4.22
4.	Shopping malls provide wide variety of different products under one roof.	4.13
5.	E-tailing saves consumers time that may be spent on travelling in real world to shopping place	3.65
6.	Customers can feel and see the products before purchasing in shopping malls.	4.35
7.	Possibility of defective quality of the products is more in E-tailing as compare to malls	3.70
8.	Consumers enjoyed and feel relaxed while shopping in malls	4.11

Table 2 shows the Mean value for the statements with reference to the “Customers Preferences between Malls vs E-tailing as Buying Destination”. The highest mean value was observed for the statement that “E-tailing makes shopping comfortable and easy buying destination” the mean value is 4.45 followed by “Customers can feel and see

the products before purchasing in shopping malls” with a mean value of 4.35 and “Malls provide overall consumer satisfaction ranging from availability of products, restaurants, cinemas etc.” with a mean value of 4.25. The statement “Consumer can easily and quickly access shopping at any time from any place in E- tailing with

internet” also got a good mean value of 4.22, which is followed by “Shopping malls provide wide variety of different products under one roof” with mean value of 4.13 and “Consumers enjoyed and feel relaxed while shopping in malls” having a mean value of 4.11. Two statements showed a mean value of much below 4, and the statements are

“Possibility of defective quality of the products is more in E-tailing as compare to malls” and “E-tailing saves consumers time that may be spent on travelling in real world to shopping place ” having the mean value of 3.70 and 3.65 respectively.

**Table 3:** Customers Preferences between Malls vs E-tailing as Buying Destination

Sr. No.	Statements	t Value	Df	Sig
1.	E-tailing makes shopping comfortable and easy buying destination	12.228	159	0.000
2.	Malls provide overall consumer satisfaction ranging from availability of products, restaurants, cinemas etc.	9.079	159	0.000
3.	Consumer can easily and quickly access shopping at any time from any place in E- tailing with internet.	8.500	159	0.000
4.	Shopping malls provide wide variety of different products under one roof.	6.353	159	0.000
5.	E-tailing saves consumers time that may be spent on travelling in real world to shopping place	1.587	159	0.057
6.	Customers can feel and see the products before purchasing in shopping malls.	10.144	159	0.000
7.	Possibility of defective quality of the products is more in E-tailing as compare to malls	2.480	159	0.007
8.	Consumers enjoyed and feel relaxed while shopping in malls	8.366	159	0.000

Table 3 shows that all the above statements with reference to the Customers Preferences between Malls vs E-tailing as Buying Destination are found to be significant, as the t-value for all the statements are positive and significance value is less than 0.05.

### Conclusion

In terms of customer preferences, this research compares e-commerce versus retail malls. It was discovered that both purchasing locations had their own set of advantages and disadvantages. Shopping malls provide overall satisfaction to customers by offering competitive prices, various types of shops under one roof, recreation centres and discount schemes, and access to the latest and global brands, products, and services. These factors have a positive influence on consumers and encourage them to visit malls on a regular basis. While E-commerce allows consumers to purchase at any time and from any location with internet connection, it also saves consumers time travelling and provides a new platform for items from all over the globe. Both purchase places were discovered to be popular among customers, and they chose them based on their needs and comfort.

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