

# Periodic Research

## Demographic Profile and Preference of Customers in Visiting Shopping Malls: A Case Study of Cuttack City in Odisha

### Abstract

The Indian retail sector is going through a transformation and this emerging market is witnessing a significant change in its growth and investment pattern. Both existing and new players are experimenting with new retail formats. The objectives of this study were to investigate the preference of Indian shoppers in visiting shopping malls and to study the variations in these styles across different demographic variables. The required data for this study has been collected from the customers visiting shopping malls in Cuttack city. On the basis of convenience sampling method 50 customers were selected for this study. A well structured questionnaire was used to collect data from various customers. Customers for this present study include students, housewives, professionals, govt. and private sector employees, etc. The analysis of data has been done by using percentage analysis. Chi-square test was used to test the significant relationship between demographic variables and the preference of customers' in visiting shopping malls. The study concludes with the suggestion that Consumer dynamics in India is changing and the retailers need to take note of this and formulate their strategies and tactics to deliver value to the consumers. This study may be helpful for the managers of shopping malls to understand the underlying styles of the shoppers and help them to craft their marketing strategies.

**Keywords:** Retailing, Shopping mall, Customer, Demographic variable, Kirana stores, Preference

### Introduction

The retail industry of India is booming at a rapid speed in the recent times. Big Indian cities like Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta, Chennai and Bangalore have received greater economic and social contributions from the malls not only in India but also around the globe. Spencer Plaza is the first mall in the history of India which was started its business in the year 1863 at Chennai. A mall is a place which has a collection of independent retail stores, services and a vast parking area; they also contain restaurants, banks, theatres, professional offices, service stations, etc. Mall shopping is a buzzword for Indian youth. Mall culture is viewed as a significant change in the lifestyle of Indians, as shopping is no longer an activity of buying things but also viewed as a status symbol and a one-stop retail solution. Cuttack is well known as the business centre of Odisha. Most of the people of Cuttack city are businessmen and professionals who have lot of money and property. All most all of them have luxurious vehicles. They need parking place while going for shopping to park their motor vehicles. This clearly shows that the shopping habits of the people of Cuttack have changed and will keep changing. To meet the changing habits of customers, retail stores had to change themselves.

This led to the development of mall culture in Cuttack. Comfort, entertainment, fashion, food court, window shopping, multi brand portfolio, quality, mall essence, convenience, attractiveness and luxury are the most important factors which motivate customers to go for shopping malls. Several factors such as increase in the per capita income, emergence of nuclear families and entry of multinational companies offering a huge variety of products has also enhanced the demand of household products. This has been seen as an opportunity for the organized retail sectors in India. Even in the small towns, the shopping malls have been successful to snatch the customers of small kirana shops at a very fast pace.

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Retailers across the world have always been trying to provide the best quality services and environment to their customers, which have led to the emergence of organized retailing. Due to better services and shopping environment, these stores have always been attracting more customers than the traditional retailers. India is also witnessing significant socio-demographic changes in its system in the present time which has led to many new developments. As the trend of nuclear families are increasing at a very fast speed in India, the huge demand for the household products have also been projected. Moreover, the growth in the Indian GDP and per capita income with the Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) has made Indian market the leader as far as growth of retail industry is concerned. With the rapid economic growth, consumer behaviour also tends to change. Consumer with increased purchasing power looks for 'comfort, easiness and pleasure' while shopping. Mall shopping is a buzzword, for Indian youth. Mall culture is viewed as a significant change in the life style of Indians, as shopping is no longer an activity of buying things but also viewed as a status symbol and a one-stop retail solution. Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore have received greater economic and social contributions from malls.

Retail industry is currently the flourishing sector of the Indian economy. This trend is expected to continue for the coming years and it is attracting a huge attention from all sections of the society-entrepreneurs, business heads, investors as well as real estate owners and builders. Availability of quality products, wide retail space and a variety of brand communications are some of the most important factors which drive the Indian retail industry ahead. India Retail sector is also supporting to create huge employment opportunities. Over the last few years, retail has become one of the fastest growing sectors in the Indian economy. Organised retailing accounts for less than 5% of the retailing industry in India. Consumers are the major beneficiaries of the retail boom. The Indian consumer is changing rapidly. They have a choice of a wide range of products, quality and prices. Organised retailing is changing the whole concept of shopping in terms of consumer buying behaviour. In the last decade, retailing sector in India has seen a vast transformation from traditional retailing to modern retailing. The traditional retail consists of small retailers like local Kirana shops, general stores, medical stores, footwear stores, apparel shops, hand-cart hawkers and footpath vendors. As per investment commission of India, there are 15 million such retail outlets in India. As the economy has started growing in India, retail sector has also started modernising and growing. Some of the major industrial houses like Reliance Industries, Bharti group, Aditya Birla group and ITC have entered this sector.

## Significance of the Study

Cuttack is a place of business. It is the oldest capital of Odisha. It is a city of people from different culture and from different sections of the society. The population of this beautiful city has increased with the

increase in the migration of people from different villages and rural areas in search of work. The more the population the more is the need of goods and services. With this increasing trend a number of shopping malls are entering into the market of Cuttack city to fulfil the need and wants of people. Rapid advances in various areas like education, communication, information technology and transportation have created a sense of freedom in the minds of people. But at the same time there is also a rise in the double income group in the family. With the increase in disposable family income people prefer to maintain a luxurious and comfort life. They are willing to pay more to satisfy their personal needs. Therefore, there is a need to understand the behaviour of customers in large shopping malls which can be helpful in designing appropriate marketing strategy for the marketers as well as satisfying customers' needs and wants.

## Review of Literature

There are number of studies carried out by various researchers in this area. Some of the selected research works are as follows.

**Kumar Ajay & Thakur Yeshwant Singh (2014)** in their research article, "A study of key factors affecting customer relationship towards shopping mall" they had analysed the opinion of customers regarding the shopping mall products and its prices and to provide managerial implications to improve performance of shopping mall. They have found that the main factors affecting the malls are availability of branded quality and variety products, alternative and easy in finding products, introduction of new products, safety and security of the customers visiting shopping malls with family.

**Dubihlela Dorah & Dubihlela job (2014)** in their research article "Attributes of shopping mall image, customer satisfaction and mall patronage for selected shopping malls in southern Gauteng, South Africa" they had studied to know about the mall features are positively related to customer satisfaction and mall patronage. They have found that five main factor i.e. merchandising, atmosphere, accessibility, entertainment in mall convenience are the important attributes of shopping mall image.

**Ubeja Satnam (2014)** in his research article "A study of sales promotion mix on customer satisfaction with reference to shopping mall in Indore" he had examined the combined effect of promotional scheme on customer satisfaction with reference to shopping mall in FMCG sector and to know the effect of sales promotion schemes on customer satisfaction with reference to various demographic variables. He had found that the five new factors like lucky bumper, frequent and warranty, monetary and quantity benefit, gift and exchange and finally discount offers are the most important promotional schemes. Men and women are not so conscious about sales promotion schemes but students are more conscious about sales promotion schemes.

**Astono Cynthia (2014)** in his research article "The effect of shopping mall attributes towards

customer satisfaction of ABC mall and XYZ mall” he had analysed whether shopping mall attributes simultaneously and individually affect customer's satisfaction of shopping malls and also to analyse and find out shopping mall attributes that able to increase customer satisfaction. He had found that convenience; mall's environment, service quality and marketing focus affect customer's satisfaction.

**Choudhury Afreen, Alam Muhammad Intisar & Islam Sigma (2014)** in their research article “Customer attitude towards shopping mall” they have examined the frequency and purpose of visiting of customer to shopping malls and identify the importance of variables which affect shopping malls. They have found that convenience, quality, availability of product, price, entertainment and overall services are the five factors that affect the customer's attitude towards shopping mall.

**Kumar G. Arun(2014)** in his research article “Attributes of easy day supermarket and customer satisfaction ” he had examined the relationship between the attributes of supermarket and customer satisfaction in easy day supermarket in Mysore city. He found that the supermarket need to improve some attributes as the customers are not satisfied with them i.e. promotion attributes.

**Hariharan Dr.S & Selvakumar Mr.N(2014)** in their research article “A study of consumer satisfaction towards supermarket with reference to Coimbatore ” they have examined the relationship between demographic variable of the consumer and satisfaction of consumer in different attributes of supermarket in Coimbatore region. They have found that factors like supermarket location & ambience, quality & merchandise, sales personnel attributes and other services of supermarket satisfy customers.

**Pattarakitham Amornra (2015)** in his research article “The influence of Customer Interaction, Variety, and Convenience on Customer Satisfaction and Revisit Intention: A Study of Shopping Mall in Bangkok” he had made an attempt to explore knowledge about the impact of customer interaction, variety, and convenience on customer satisfaction and revisit intention towards shopping mall in Bangkok. He found that convenience has the greatest influence on the satisfaction, followed by variety, and customer interaction. In addition, convenience and satisfaction are important factors that influence revisit intention in this study.

**K. Ms. Latha & Mohanapriya S (2015)** in their research article “A Study on Customer Preference and Satisfaction Towards Modern Shopping Centres in Coimbatore City” they have studied the level of awareness of customers towards the modern shopping centres in Coimbatore city and also to study the customer's ideas, opinion and preference towards the various aspect of modern shopping centres in Coimbatore city. They have suggested that factors like quality of customer care, parking facility, special offers and discounts, better display of product, feedback system improve the satisfaction of customer.

## Research Gap

A number of research works have been done in different areas of shopping malls in Odisha. After an intense review of related literature it was observed that a few studies were conducted to study the demographic profile of customers visiting shopping malls in Cuttack city with their personal likings and disliking. There were a few studies to examine the significant relationship between the demographic variables of customers and their preference in visiting shopping malls in the Cuttack City. There is a huge scope for the growth of retailing in Cuttack because of its people and favourable environment. Therefore, it is an attempt made by the researchers to fill the existing gap by conducting this study.

## Aim of the Study

1. To study the demographic profile of customers visiting shopping malls in the Cuttack city.
2. To examine the significant relationship between demographic variables and preference of customers in visiting shopping malls in Cuttack.

## Hypothesis

### Null Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between demographic variables and preference of customers in visiting shopping malls.

## Research Methodology

The researcher has applied convenient sampling technique which is carried out in various stages. Non-Probability convenient Random sampling technique based on judgment of surveyor has been used for the purpose of collection of data. The purpose of using convenient sampling technique is as per the convenient of a researcher. The present study is based on both primary and secondary data. Data have been collected through well structured questionnaire formulated for this purpose. Data have been collected from 50 respondents (shopping mall customers only) which include students, service holders, housewives, businessmen and professionals of Cuttack City during the month from May to June, 2016. Collected data was edited, coded, tabulated, grouped and organized according to the requirement of the study. Percentage and Chi-Square test was applied for the analysis and interpretation of data.

## Emergence of Shopping Malls in India

Introduction of malls has not been able to replace traditional markets which are still popular among the pocket conscious people, but has definitely added a new adventure to the shopping experience. The mall culture has stolen the minds of Indian buyers and they seem to love every bit of it. Crowded streets, traffic jam and mob of people are popularly visible scenario in every Sunday. This brings to light that the perception of people has completely changed towards shopping. Good atmosphere, world class entertainment, international brands, basic amenities and exotic cuisines is what the malls aspires to provide under one roof. People are welcoming this new trend with open arms, unaware of what just be its consequences. Moreover, attractive prices and new schemes are the most successful formulas which the shop keepers offer to motivate buyers. This has made

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malls a mega hit amongst the metro crowd, putting fuel to their ever increasing demand for a better living. This is a result of the expanding Indian market and disposable incomes by the service class. Apart from being the shopper's paradise, malls are also acting as good alternative, for the people to escape from the otherwise poor living conditions. This brings the mall culture into sight which enforces that though shopping is the modern mantra, people are looking for something more. Malls act as place of relief from the scorching heat of the sun, in summers, as all the malls are centrally air conditioned for the purpose. Another reason for the malls being so crowded is quite a number of people move there freely. Their purpose can be anything from a get together with friends to simply window shopping from buying popcorns to buying cards. This explains that hot weather, frequent and prolonged electricity and water cuts are some of the strong reasons why the common man is attracted towards the escalating shrines of consumerism.

The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines a shopping mall 'as a large building or covered area that has many shops / stores, restaurants, etc. inside it'. The shopping mall concept is a big hit with the sole purpose to provide everything under one roof or in one big complex. Customers believe that malls, supermarkets and hypermarkets

are well organized and there are no such issues relating to the bad quality of the products, the range of choices and value-for-money deals make them more happy, the ambience is very good, there are wide variety of products with more choice options and they get everything under one roof with attractive offers on bulk purchases. Organized retail chain and mall stores are mushrooming in all major cities and towns of India. Apart from private players in the organized retail chain business like, 'Food Bazar', 'Pantaloons', 'Kolkata Bazar', 'Big Bazar' and so on, major industrial houses like Tata, Birla, Reliance, Bharti, etc. have entered the retail business and have announced very ambitious future expansion plans. Multinational retailers are also coming to India to set up retail chains in collaboration with big Indian companies. Modern retail formats such as hypermarkets, superstores, discount stores, convenience stores are widely present in major cities of India.

## Data Analysis and Interpretation

### Demographic Profile

Demographic profile is very essential to study the preference of customers visiting shopping malls in Cuttack city. A total number of 50 customers were interviewed with the help of structured questionnaires. The classification and demographical details of the respondents are as follows:

**Table No 1**  
**Demographic Profile of Customers**

Particulars		Gender		Total	
		Male	Female	Number	(%)
Age	Up To 21	7(31%)	12(43%)	19	38
	22-40	5(22%)	12(43%)	17	34
	Above 40	10(45%)	4(14%)	14	28
Marital Status	Married	12(54%)	15(54%)	27	54
	Unmarried	10(46%)	13(46%)	23	46
Occupation	Business	2(9%)	2(7%)	4	8
	Professional	2(9%)	1(4%)	3	6
	Service	8(36%)	7(25%)	15	30
	Housewife	0(0%)	17(60%)	17	34
	Study	7(32%)	1(4%)	8	16
	Others	3(14%)	0(0%)	3	6
Monthly Family Income (In Rupees)	<10,000	3(14%)	4(14%)	7	14
	10,000-30,000	11(50%)	9(32%)	20	40
	30,000-60,000	7(32%)	10(36%)	17	34
	>60,000	1(4%)	5(18%)	6	12
<b>Total</b>		22(44%)	28(56%)	50	100

Source: Collected and Compiled from Field Study

Table 1 show that the total number of respondents is 50 which include 44 percent men and 56 per cent women. Among them 54 per cent are married and 46 per cent are unmarried. In case of service holders 36 percent are men and 25 percent are women. 60 percent housewives are visiting shopping malls regularly. It is also observed that 32 per cent male students are visiting shopping malls. 50 per cent men and 32 percent women having monthly income between Rs.10,000-30,000 are visiting shopping malls while 36% women and 32 per cent men with a monthly income between Rs.30,000-60,000 are visiting shopping malls regularly.

**Table No2**  
**Reason for Visiting Shopping Malls**

Age (in years)	Reason for visiting shopping malls			Total
	Shopping	Meeting friends	Window shopping	
Up to 21	5	8	6	19
22-40	11	2	5	17
Above 40	8	1	5	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>50</b>

Source: Collected and compiled from field study

$\chi^2 = 9.5658$  Table value = 9.4 df = 4

From the Chi-square table we see that tabulated value is less than the calculated value at 4

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degree of freedom. Hence, the Null Hypothesis is rejected. It signifies that there is significant relationship between two variables i.e. Age and reason for visiting shopping malls.

**Table No 3**  
**Frequency of Visiting Shopping Malls**

Age (in years)	Frequency of visiting shopping malls in last three months (in Times)			
	<10	11-20	>20	Total
Up to 21	7	8	4	19
22-40	13	2	2	17
Above 40	12	1	1	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>50</b>

Source: Collected and Compiled from Field Study  
 $\chi^2 = 11.2089$  Table value=9.4 df=4

From the Chi-square table we see that the tabulated value is less than the calculated value at 4 degree of freedom. Hence, the Null Hypothesis is rejected. It signifies that there is significant relationship between two variables i.e. Age and frequency of visiting shopping malls in the last three months.

**Table No 4**  
**Time Preference for Visiting Shopping Malls**

Age (in years)	Time Preference for Visiting Shopping Malls			
	Morning	Afternoon	Evening	Total
Up to 21	2	2	15	19
22-40	1	1	15	17
Above 40	5	4	5	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>50</b>

Source: Collected and Compiled from Field Study  
 $\chi^2 = 11.3067$  Table value=9.4 df=4

From the Chi-square table we see that the calculated value is less than the tabulated value at 4 degree of freedom. Hence, the Null Hypothesis is rejected. It signifies that there is significant relationship between two variables i.e. Age and preferred time for visiting shopping mall.

**Table No 5**  
**Time Spent in Shopping Malls**

Age (in years)	Time Spent in Shopping Malls			
	<1Hour	1-2 Hours	>2 Hours	Total
Up to 21	5	6	8	19
22-40	7	6	4	17
Above 40	8	4	2	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>50</b>

Source: Collected and Compiled from Field Study  
 $\chi^2 = 4.6179$  Table Value=9.4 df=4

From the Chi-square table we see that the calculated value is less than the tabulated value at 4 degree of freedom. Hence, the Null Hypothesis is rejected. It signifies that there is no significant relationship between two variables i.e. Age and time spent in shopping malls.

**Table No 6**  
**Frequency of Buying in Shopping Malls**

Age (in years)	Frequency of buying in shopping malls			
	Seldom Buy	Often Buy	Always Buy	Total
Up to 21	2	7	10	19
22-40	1	4	12	17
Above 40	0	8	6	14
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>50</b>

Source: Collected and Compiled from Field Study  
 $\chi^2 = 4.8986$  Table value=9.4 df=4

From the Chi-square table we see that the calculated value is less than the tabulated value at 4 degree of freedom. Hence, the Null Hypothesis is accepted. It signifies that there is no significant relationship between two variables i.e. Age and general frequency of buying in shopping malls.

**Table No 7**  
**Preferred Mode of Payment**

Age (in years)	Preferred Mode of Payment			
	Debit/Credit Card	Cash	Shopping mall	Total
Up to 21	3	12	4	19
22-40	5	10	2	17
Above 40	3	9	2	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>50</b>

Source: Collected and compiled from field study  
 $\chi^2 = 1.3224$  Table value=9.4 df=4

From the Chi-square table we see that the calculated value is less than the tabulated value at 4 degree of freedom. Hence, the Null Hypothesis is accepted. It signifies that there is no significant relationship between two variables i.e. Age and preferred mode of payment in shopping malls.

**Table No.8**  
**Preferred Day of Visiting Shopping Malls**

Age (in years)	Preferred day of Visiting Shopping Malls		
	Holiday	No Specific Day	Total
Up to 21	7	12	19
22-40	9	8	17
Above 40	6	8	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>50</b>

Source: Collected and compiled from field study  
 $\chi^2 = 0.9539$  Table value=5.99 df=2

From the Chi-square table we see that the calculated value is less than tabulated value at 2 degree of freedom. Hence, the Null Hypothesis is accepted. It signifies that there is no significant relationship between two variables i.e. Age and preferred day of visiting shopping malls.

**Table No.9**  
**Preferred Companion for Visiting Shopping Malls**

Age (in years)	Preferred companion for visiting shopping malls			
	Friends	Family	Single	Total
Up to 21	8	9	2	19
22-40	5	8	4	17
Above 40	1	11	2	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>50</b>

Source: Collected and compiled from field study  
 $\chi^2 = 6.2898$  Table value=9.4 df=4

From the Chi-square table we see that the calculated value is less than the tabulated value at 4 degree of freedom. Hence, the Null Hypothesis is accepted. It signifies that there is no significant relationship between two variables i.e. Age and preferred companion for visiting shopping malls.

### Findings

1. Among the total respondents 44 percent are men and 56 per cent are women. Out of them 54 per cent are married and 46 per cent are unmarried.
2. In case of service holders 36 percent are men and 25 percent are women. 60 percent housewives are visiting shopping malls regularly.
3. It is also observed that 32 per cent male students are visiting shopping malls.
4. 50 per cent men and 32 percent women having monthly income between Rs.10,000-30,000 are visiting shopping malls while 36% women and 32 per cent men with a monthly income between Rs.30,000-60,000 are visiting shopping malls regularly.
5. There exists relationship between age and reason for visiting shopping malls.
6. There exists relationship between age and frequency of visiting shopping malls in the last three months.
7. There exists relationship between age and preferred time for visiting shopping mall.
8. There exists no relationship between age and time spent in shopping malls.
9. There exists no relationship between age and general frequency of buying in shopping malls.
10. There exists no relationship between age and preferred mode of payment in shopping malls.
11. There exists no relationship between age and preferred day of visiting shopping malls.
12. There exists no relationship between age and preferred companion for visiting shopping malls.

### Conclusion

The era of liberalisation, privatisation and globalization has changed the mind set of modern man. People have become more sophisticated and complex as compared to the past days. The changing taste and preference of people lead to radical transformation in the life style and spending pattern of Indian consumers. They are searching for more value addition in terms of availability, quality, pleasant environment, financing option and competitive pricing. In the busy schedule of human life time is very much valuable. Today, super - malls are replacing 'kirana' stores all over India. A consumer's lifestyle is seen as the sum of his or her interactions with his or her environment. Many consumers make their purchases from the local 'kirana' stores. But recently; India's retail infrastructure is slowly undergoing a change with many hi-fi super - malls being constructed and operating in various cities. The mall concept has come to stay for good. The Indian consumer seems to be undergoing a shift in terms of personality, buying

motives, interests, attitudes, beliefs and values when he or she is making a shift from 'kirana' stores towards shopping malls. Thus, the mall culture is really influencing Indian consumers because of more awareness, recent trends and changing life style. The present study reveals that most of the customers prefer shopping malls except a few customers who still prefer the traditional market. It is also observed that people of Cuttack city enjoy shopping in shopping malls which include students, service holders, housewives, businessmen, professionals as well as common men. Therefore, it is the need of the hour that shopping malls should provide quality products at affordable price. Shopping malls should formulate appropriate strategy to fulfil the need and wants of consumers through more marketing research which can help them to survive in the competitive environment.

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