

Is shopping a necessity or fun? A study of Durbanites' shopping behaviour

Dr. A Katrodia

Lecturer
School of Management Sciences
North West University

ankit.katrodia@nwu.ac.za
ankitkatrodia@gmail.com



<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4087-9753>

ABSTRACT

The study of individuals' attitude toward certain behaviour is imperative in the formulation of strategies in business. A marketer strives to assess consumer behaviour and factors that motivate individuals to shop from various places, and this information is helpful in the development of marketing approaches. Researchers are interested in diverse aspects of decisions and motives that drive individuals towards certain conduct, as well as the choices of shopping methods. There is no doubt that modern technology has contributed to significant changes in the manner in which people shop. Online shopping and the introduction of malls are the most recent developments that have transformed both the pattern and motivation for shopping among the modern generations. However, an overarching question that often arises in the assessment of shopping behaviour relates to whether it is fun or a necessity. The study attempts to unveil the rationale for shopping based on key motivating factors to determine whether individuals shop because it is necessary or it is due to the entertainment involved. The understanding of the reasons for different shopping behaviour will help investors to develop effective strategies for attracting customers as well as creating favourable experiences to optimise the satisfaction. To understand the dominant motives for shopping, the study evaluates the shopping behaviour of people from Durban in South Africa, focusing on the contribution of the extent of fun and necessity on individual attitudes towards shopping. A comprehensive theoretical review will be conducted to identify the findings of previous studies about the relationship between the perception of necessity and entertainment and shopping behaviour. The value that customers derive from their shopping activities is often classified as economic or hedonic, to facilitate the analysis of the effect of introduction of recreational facilities on the frequency of purchase as well as market share. In this paper, income, education and age are used as independent variables to study the influence of entertainment on shopping behaviour.

Keywords: Shopping, shopping behaviour, Durban, South Africa

INTRODUCTION

The question of whether shopping is done because it is a necessity or fun is fundamental in developing effective business strategies for the retail sector. Individuals differ in their motives for selecting specific locations as their shopping sites, and they consider both the hedonic and economic value obtained from their shopping behaviour. South Africa's retailing sector has experienced tremendous growth over the last few decades, with the GNI (gross national income) for South Africa for 2019 being \$353.53B, a 6.38% increase from 2018 (World bank 2019). The growing population of the country, together with joining the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), has offered an excellent platform for the flourishing of various business activities, including the mushrooming of shopping malls and the establishment of different multinational companies. The retailing sector in South Africa is

characterised by an upsurge in the number of shopping malls, which have been established to satisfy the huge demand created by the growing population. Additionally, the increase in GNI (gross national income), per capita trends in rapid economic prosperity, high disposable income, and increased rates of urbanisation are other factors that have played a contributory role in this development.

As the business environment becomes continually competitive, analysis of consumer behaviour has gained significance as its outcomes are useful in guiding decision formulation in business organisations. Durban is among the urban areas in South Africa that are highly targeted by investors. For this reason, assessing shopping behaviour among Durbanites is an essential prerequisite in developing excellent business strategies. Retailers have increased their interests in understanding and distinguishing between necessity and fun as critical motives for shopping, and how they can leverage this knowledge to maximise their success. The city offers customers exciting shopping experiences with different products that range from foodstuffs, domestic appliances, and a variety of services. Therefore, studying consumer behaviour in this area, the outcomes of this investigation will be useful in creating a clear picture of what business organisations should expect when conducting their market research.

The millennial generation has been identified (Christopher & Rento, 2019) as an essential consideration for the effective formulation of marketing strategies in firms. Gender is another important demographic factor that marketers take into account, depending on the nature of the products or services they are offering, since masculinity and femininity are critical attributes in shopping behaviour. Considering the essential role that entertainment plays in influencing consumer attitude towards products or services, this research will focus on the fun aspect of shoppers by investigating of shopping behaviour of people in Durban.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The research is aimed at investigating shoppers from Durban who are visiting shopping malls. The effects of individuals' demographic characteristics on customers' attitudes towards shopping activities will be determined.

- To identify the role of entertainment in shopping behaviour among different age groups.
- To determine relatedness of entertainment to shopping attitude of individuals and income.
- To assess the effect of educational level, entertainment level and impact on shopping behaviour.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Every study must be guided by a particular question, which becomes the foundation for the conceptual and theoretical framework to be used. The research question forms the basis of data collection, the sources to be used in theoretical review, and the analysis to be conducted. In this study, the guiding question is: "Is shopping a necessity or fun?", and it will be answered by studying the shopping behaviour of consumers in Durban, South Africa.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Relationship between shopping behaviour and entertainment among different age groups

Age is one of the demographic factors that firms consider when designing their marketing strategies. Cachero and Vázquez (2018) indicated that this factor has a considerable impact on changes in tastes and preferences, which influence the demand and, consequently, the shopping behaviour. The fashion industry has been found to leverage the relationship between age and the tendency to purchase specific products to enhance their competitiveness in the industry. As Varadaraj and Charumathi (2019) postulated, young people are easily influenced by new fashions, and they frequently shift their preferences toward new products that are perceived to offer greater satisfaction to the current generations. Additionally, Yu, Zhang and Liu (2018) revealed that the entertainment aspect of the service impacts the shopping behaviour of various age groups in diverse ways. For example, an empirical study conducted in Saudi Arabia to investigate the effectiveness of malls in promoting sales revealed that a significant number of shoppers are attracted by the fun associated with buying from the malls. The research study was conducted by Steen

(2016) of online panel research firm to evaluate the shopping behaviour of millennials and how it is linked to the level of entertainment in places where goods and services are offered. Notably, this empirical assessment was geared toward establishing the major cause of loyalty towards certain brands among this demographic, and the findings indicated that entertainment has a considerable influence on changing the attitude and preference toward products and markets.

Individuals gradually become loyal to certain products or services that give them more fun, and they are likely to influence their colleagues to embrace their behaviour (Akram, 2017). Furthermore, it was noted that research related individual shopping behaviour in entertainment facilities in malls contributes to drawing traffic (Sapna & Arpita, 2011). In this empirical analysis, men and women were compared in terms of their relative affinity for shopping in products and marketplaces that offer varying degrees of entertainment. The findings indicated no significant difference between men and women of the same age in becoming more attracted to shopping areas with greater entertainment, although young men were found to have a relatively higher tendency to make return purchases or frequent visits to markets with great fun (Radojka & Filipović, 2017; Avcilar & Tufan, 2015).

The idea of the patronage motive has been used intensively to study shopping behaviour among various demographics. Giampino, Marco and Filippo (2017) argued that the value derived from different shopping activities varies on the basis of consumers' perception of the environment in which the services are offered. Dobre and Milovan (2015) identified economic and recreational shoppers as the two major categories of individuals through the assessment of the shopping behaviour on the dimension of patronage. According to an empirical study conducted by Anushree et al. (2016), buyers aged between 16 and 35 years have greater motivation for shopping in malls and other locations with recreational facilities, mainly because of the sense of enjoyment involved. Business organisations often take advantage of their capacity to offer entertaining services to maximise their profits through pricing strategies, since entertainment reduces the price elasticity of demand for their products. Consumers may choose to patronise a particular entity because it is more fun to make purchases in this enterprise than others. The frequency with which individuals visit organisations for shopping purposes has also been analysed as a major factor in the assessment of the tendency to shop in specific organisations whose service delivery is associated with some degree of entertainment (Park, Im & Kim, 2018). The outcomes of studies investigating this aspect have indicated that young shoppers make frequent visits to enterprises with fun, and they often ignore small price differences to enjoy the entertainment involved.

Association between entertainment and various income categories

The shopping behaviour is affected significantly by the socioeconomic status of an individual. Income or wealth determines the purchasing power of consumers, resulting in the development of shopping behaviour differentials. However, Mihić and KursanMilaković (2017) revealed that people with relatively low income may shop together with high-income earners depending on individual perception of the shopping experience. Due to the growing competition in the market, marketers have been compelled to research new techniques to identify different personal attributes that affect shopping behaviour among individuals. Mishra and Radhika (2019) linked personality with purchasing behaviour and identified different instances where people formulate their purchasing decisions based on their social and economic status. Christoph et al. (2008) noted that hedonists were higher among females, earn lower individual incomes and are less educated compared to utilitarians. Marketing managers utilise the knowledge of lifestyles and social relations to attach various forms of entertainment to their products and services. Consumers of luxuries are generally high-income earners, who would increase their frequency of visits to shopping malls and other places depending on the level of fun they enjoy from these places. On the other hand, low-income earners would be more reluctant to spend their money on expensive products, meaning that they would forfeit entertainment to save their earnings. However, the general finding of studies assessing the behaviour change in shopping as enticed by entertainment is that more consumers would prefer goods and services offered in environments with additional recreation (Hami, Fazle & Emami, 2016). Hedonic shoppers' motivation affects purchases in a utilitarian-shopping environment, the superstore selling predominantly utilitarian product categories (Yim et al., 2014). High-income earners are less sensitive to spending compared to low-income ones. Consequently, income disparity is an important factor in analysing the impact of entertainment on individual shopping behaviour. Utilitarian shoppers showed the highest convenience-seeking orientation (Yun-Hee et al., 2011).

Education level and its effect on shopping experience

Education is a wider concept in the analysis of consumer spending behaviour. Undoubtedly, the level of educational attainment is one of the main factors that influence individual employability. People with advanced educational qualifications often manage to secure well-paying occupations, meaning that education is positively correlated with earnings. Researchers (Foxall et al., 2011) evaluate the effect of education on shopping behaviour from various perspectives. Individuals living in cities generally earn higher incomes than those in rural areas. As a result, empirical findings have revealed a significant difference in the level of spending between the two categories of consumers (Wahyuddin, Setyawan & Nugroho, 2017). Besides, the majority of people living in cities have a greater literacy level than rural residents.

Empirical studies have presented different findings concerning variations in the perception of quality and shopping experience. One of these analyses, conducted by Mittal and Jhamb (2016), revealed that the degree of literacy is directly proportional to the understanding of different attributes of the product offerings, including the shopping experience. Hazari, Bergiel and Sethna (2017) contended that shopping experience differs according to the mode of service delivery adopted by an organisation. In most cases, shopping experience increases when individuals are able to access services more conveniently. An analysis conducted by Makgopa (2016) found that educated people have a greater perception of different attributes of products and services, which impacts their shopping experience considerably.

With the current development in modernisation and digitalisation, marketers have been able to incorporate their marketing strategies into various digital platforms, and one of the main objectives of this development is to improve convenience in shopping, which contributes to greater consumer experience. Additionally, greater entertainment or fun is acquired through online shopping. However, Kushwaha, Rao and Ahmad (2015) postulated that education plays a considerable role in determining how shoppers are entertained, depending on their relative capacity to interact with the technologies used. Consumers with a high degree of web experience are more comfortable with online shopping, which does not only offer greater convenience, but is also more entertaining.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used the mall intercept method as a data collection method. Data were gathered from shopping malls located in Durban city. The target population for this study consisted of active mall shoppers.

Target population

Seven malls across Durban city were selected on the basis of geographical presence and footfall noted by these malls. These malls were chosen by considering available transportation options to easily access.

Sample size

A total of 840 shoppers were approached at seven shopping malls of Durban city. Out of all approached respondents, 140 questionnaires were not filled properly, and therefore those questionnaires were eliminated, and finally 700 respondents were considered for final analysis, which represents an 83% response rate.

Sampling method

The respondents were selected through the non-probability quota sampling method in the study. The quotas were filled on the basis of convenience and personal judgement of researchers at each shopping mall of Durban city. Convenience sampling happens through the selection of readily available respondents (Cooper & Schindler, 2011). It is also a method that is less expensive and less time-consuming.

Data collection tool

The tool employed to generate responses was a structured questionnaire; the first part was framed to gather the demographic and personal profile of the respondents; and the second part of the questionnaire was framed to understand factors that lead to shopping from different malls and behavioural attitudes of shoppers across Durban city. The shoppers were asked to fill out questionnaires regarding their shopping experience at shopping malls and factors affecting it. The questionnaires took no more than 20 minutes to complete. No incentives were given to respondents to participate in this study.

For the purpose of data analysis, all variables were coded properly and data entered into SPSS. SPSS 17 and advanced Excel applications were used for data analysis.

Reliability and validity

The first draft of the questionnaire was reviewed by two professional scholars in related fields. The contents of the draft were reviewed and revisions were suggested. The questionnaire used in the study therefore qualified for expert validity. The results of the pilot test were incorporated and expert validity ensured. The pilot test for the questionnaire was conducted on a sample of 70 respondents. Reliability analysis was conducted on 70 responses, and was included in the final sample. The present study had adopted internal consistency analysis to conduct reliability testing. We prepared a set of six statements reflecting various attributes pertaining to shopping as necessity or fun. The respondents are requested to rank the statements on a five-point Likert scale basis (5 = strongly agree, 3 = not known or neutral, 1 = strongly disagree). The scale of measurement's significance was ensured by using Cronbach's α .

Profile of respondents

The study was conducted with 700 visitors for shopping behaviour at shopping malls in Durban, South Africa. Research carried out by Makgopa (2016) was carried out on 101 adult shopping mall visitors in South Africa. In this research, male respondents were 334 and female were 336. The male-to-female ratio of respondents was 48% to 52%. A majority of the respondents (49.5%) was aged younger than 35 years, whereas only 12.6% were older than 55 years. Most of the respondents (44.5%) have attained matric and below matric level education, whereas the rest of respondents were graduates or postgraduates. About 78% of respondents were serving in private or public sectors. 21.9% of respondents had a monthly income of less than R5 000, 30% had between R5 000 and R10 000, whereas only 9.4% earned more than R30 000.

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATIONS

(A) Identification of entertainment associated with shopping among various age groups

A test of independence is a chi-square technique used to check the research objective. In this research, as stated, it was about visitors' purpose for visiting the mall. For the purpose of the test, the null hypothesis stated that there is no relationship between the variables; the chi-square test merely evaluates the probability that observed relationship results from chance.

One of the objectives is to identify entertainment associated with shopping among various age groups. A result for the same is presented in the table below.

A chi-square test was performed to determine whether all the age groups have the same purpose for visiting malls or not. The results indicate that the purpose of visiting shopping mall was dependent ($df = 16$; $\chi^2 = 38.380$; $p < 0.05$) on age of respondents.

TABLE 1
CHI-SQUARE TEST FOR AGE AND RESPONDENT'S PURPOSE FOR VISITING MALL

Course	Pearson chi-square	df	P-value	Result
Age and purpose for visiting mall	38.380	16	0.001	Significant

(B) Identification of entertainment associated with shopping among different income categories

The results, pertaining to the objective of identifying entertainment associated with shopping among different income groups, are presented in the below table. The results of Table 2 indicate that the purpose of visiting shopping mall was not dependent ($df = 16$; $\chi^2 = 20.818$; $p > 0.05$) on income level of respondents.

TABLE 2
CHI-SQUARE TEST FOR INCOME AND RESPONDENT'S PURPOSE FOR VISITING MALL

Course	Pearson chi-square	df	P-value	Result
Income and purpose for visiting mall	20.818	16	0.186	Non-significant

(C) Examine education level affecting shopping experience of Durbanites

How education affects entertainment level while shopping was examined. The results in Table 3 below indicate that the purpose of visiting shopping mall was dependent on different educational groups ($df = 16$; $\chi^2 = 32.227$; $p < 0.009$).

Respondents were asked to rate various statements on a Likert scale to determine whether shopping in malls is considered as a necessity or fun. Analyses of responses are presented below.

To test whether age group, education, occupation and income group-wise differences exist for considering shopping as necessities or fun, a one-way analysis of variance test was conducted.

TABLE 3
CHI-SQUARE TEST FOR EDUCATION AND RESPONDENT'S PURPOSE FOR VISITING MALL

Course	Pearson chi-square	df	P-value	Result
Education and purpose for visiting mall	32.227	16	0.009	Significant

(D) Shopping behaviour of Durbanites towards necessities or fun

The research of Cristoph et al. (2008) identified distinct patterns of the mall habitat. The six patterns captured were mall enthusiasts, out of those habitat three were similar for present study, they were I) high level of purchasing, toward mall aesthetics, e.g. physical design, appearance, and experiential consumption, II) Exploration pertaining to desires for variety or novelty and enjoyment of exploring new products or stores while in the mall; and III) Social affiliation that is related to enjoyment of communicating and socialising with others. The main purpose of this research was to check differences in demographic variables affecting two kinds of shopping intentions, i.e. necessities and fun. One-way ANOVAs, applied to two or more groups, differ from each other significantly in one or more characteristics. The results in Table 4 below show that there was a significant difference in age groups in considering shopping in malls as a necessity [$F(4.761)$, $p=0.001$]; however, there was no presence of any significant effect shopping as fun among age groups at the $p < 0.05$ level [$F(1.305)$, $p=0.267$]. This shows that the buying intentions of youngsters are positively associated with all dimensions of hedonic shopping value (Dey & Srivastava, 2017).

For income groups of respondents, there was a significant difference of income groups on considering shopping in malls as necessity [$F(4,695)=4.761$, $p=0.009$]. However, there was no significant effect of shopping as fun among income groups at the $p < 0.05$ level [$F(4,695)=0.612$, $p=0.654$]. Pertaining to education groups of respondents, there was no significant effect of shopping as a necessity or fun at the $p < 0.05$ level, and occupation groups do not show significant differences for considering shopping in malls as necessity at the $p < 0.05$ level [$F(4,695)=1.898$, $p=0.109$].

By looking at the results, for shopping in malls as fun, results indicate that occupation group-wise significant differences exist, while no significant differences exist for age, education and income groups.

TABLE 4
ONE-WAY ANOVA FOR DEMOGRAPHICS AND SHOPPING AS NECESSITIES OR FUN

One-way ANOVA			Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Age group	Shopping is necessity	Between groups	5.258	4	1.315	4.761	.001
		Within groups	191.926	695	.276		
		Total	197.184	699			
	Shopping is fun	Between groups	4.449	4	1.112	1.305	.267
		Within groups	592.549	695	.853		
		Total	596.999	699			
Education	Shopping is necessity	Between groups	2.122	4	.530	1.890	.110
		Within groups	195.062	695	.281		
		Total	197.184	699			
	Shopping is fun	Between groups	5.195	4	1.299	1.525	.193
		Within groups	591.804	695	.852		
		Total	596.999	699			
Occupation	Shopping is necessity	Between groups	2.130	4	.533	1.898	.109
		Within groups	195.054	695	.281		
		Total	197.184	699			
	Shopping is fun	Between groups	15.787	4	3.947	4.719	.001
		Within groups	581.212	695	.836		
		Total	596.999	699			
Income group	Shopping is necessity	Between Groups	3.798	4	.950	3.412	.009
		Within groups	193.386	695	.278		
		Total	197.184	699			
	Shopping is fun	Between groups	2.097	4	.524	.612	.654
		Within groups	594.902	695	.856		
		Total	596.999	699			

DISCUSSION

This research summarises the effects of individual characteristics such as gender, age group, education, occupation and income groups on shoppers' consideration towards shopping in malls as necessity or fun. It was found that significant differences exist among males and females for shopping as fun. This result shows that males and females have different opinions towards shopping in malls. Furthermore, the result of one-way ANOVA indicates significant differences among various age groups and income groups for shopping as necessity.

Hedonic shopping delivers potential entertainment and emotional worth (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003; Babin et al., 1994); utilitarian shopping delivers value by satisfying consumers with basic needs (Hartnett, 1998; Dey & Srivastava, 2017). People in different age groups and income groups have different reasons for visiting and shopping in malls. On the contrary, only occupation-wise differences were significant for shopping as fun. Therefore, visitors from different occupational groups go for shopping in malls for a variety of reasons.

The results of the present study will help managers streamline their thoughts on the factors affecting shopping behaviour of the consumers before marketing their offerings through malls. The consumers' shopping behaviour in malls is mostly influenced, at times, by the marketing communication strategies that are developed so as to draw the attention of the target group.

LIMITATIONS OF STUDY AND DIRECTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The study faced two major limitations, which include limited scope and time to collect adequate data to facilitate quantification of the effect of the independent variables on the dependent one. Although the assessment indicated that entertainment and shopping behaviour are positively correlated, it could not indicate the percentage by which the determining factors explain this relationship. The limited scope of the study led to a lack of consideration of other essential variables that influence individual shopping behaviour of online shopping. Therefore, future studies should use an expanded model to ensure that many determinants of shopping behaviour are analysed and their effects quantified to enhance the validity of the findings.

CONCLUSION

The study undertook an empirical analysis of shopping behaviour of a sample of 700 visitors of malls within Durban city to assess the main reasons for visiting these shopping sites. The participants were classified using age, income and education, and evaluated on the basis of fun or necessity as the main motives for visiting the malls. The primary objective of the research was to investigate the influence of entertainment on shopping behaviour or attitude toward certain points of sale. The study sought to determine whether the visiting purpose is independent of specific demographic characteristics and, therefore, it adopted a theoretical model that discusses various factors that impact shopping behaviour. Shoppers were classified as utilitarian or hedonic, depending on the value they derive from the entertainment associated with the shopping malls. The results indicated no significant difference between shopping as a necessity or fun for age, education and income, although the outcomes for occupational level were statistically different. The findings of this study have considerable implications for business organisations as they can be used by the managers to enhance their understanding of the major factors that affect the behaviour of shoppers, and use this knowledge for effective marketing communication and advertising strategies. Besides, the marketing managers and business owners can use the results presented in this study to design unique approaches to the management of their relationships with customers, which will have a considerable impact on the performance of their firms.

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