

# Determinants of Shopping Experience for Mall Shoppers: Empirical Investigation in an Emerging City of Raipur (India)

Harvinder Singh<sup>1</sup>  
Sanjeev Prashar<sup>2</sup>  
Rashmi Agarwal<sup>3</sup>  
Tarun Kumar Sharma<sup>4</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

*Shopping malls have become key players in the Indian retail space. Even in upcoming Indian towns, malls have been mushrooming. Raipur, the capital city of the Indian state of Chhattisgarh has witnessed the growth over the last few years. However, this unplanned growth of malls in cities is expected to lead to oversupply of mall space in the near future, making things difficult for mall developers. The study is an attempt to identify appropriate strategies for mall developers to iron out such kinks. This paper presents 'shopping experience' as a tool to compete, succeed and explore its composition in terms of its constituent factors. The paper uses Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) on a non-probability sample of 350 respondents. It condenses a set of twenty-two mall variables into five factors that directly influence the shopping experience. These factors included ambience, infrastructure, marketing focus, convenience and safety and security. In terms of significance, shoppers assigned different weightage to each of these factors. The study shed light on interesting insights regarding the expectations of mall shoppers in the city of Raipur. The results though interesting, may be extended to different social, economic and geographic*

*contexts to check the universality. While strategizing, mall developers must assign proportionate effort on the factors based on the respective contribution to shopping experience. In light of intensifying competition in Raipur, the study is significant for future prospects of malls. In the absence of a scientific and objective basis, the developers run risk of making wrong investment and management decisions. This paper is a useful addition to the body of knowledge on management of shopping malls in India and is unique in terms of its focus on mall shoppers in the smaller Indian cities like Raipur.*

## KEYWORDS

*Shopping Malls • Shopping Experience • Indian Shopper • Confirmatory Factor Analysis*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Shopping malls are rapidly gaining acceptance in urban India. The country had practically no shopping malls till 1997. However, it had 570 malls offering a total retail space of 180 million square feet by May 2013 (Sharma and Dhamija, 2013). Despite signs of recession in Indian economy since 2008, number of shopping malls had doubled in last 5 years (as against just 225 malls in 2008). It reflected increased patronization of malls by Indian shoppers. In the initial days of mall development, shopping malls emanated in the bigger metropolitan cities like Delhi NCR, Mumbai, Pune, Hyderabad, Chennai and Kolkata. However, high real estate cost and intense competition due to clustering of malls made these cities less attractive. This compelled the mall developers to focus on the immediate lower level of towns (state capitals like Chandigarh, Jaipur, Raipur and Lucknow) where the price of real state was relatively low.

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding author: Associate Professor · Marketing, Institute of Management Technology (IMT) · Raj Nagar, Hapur Road, Ghaziabad - 201001, U. P. (India) · E-mail: hsingh@imt.edu · Ph: +91-0120-3004369, +91-9810280586

<sup>2</sup> Professor · Marketing, Indian Institute of Management (IIM) · Raipur, Chhattisgarh, (India) · E-mail: dr.sanjeev.prashar@gmail.com · Ph: +91-9039039499

<sup>3</sup> Associate Professor · Law, Institute of Management Technology (IMT) · Raj Nagar, Hapur Road, Ghaziabad - 201001, U. P. (India) · E-mail: arashmi@imt.edu · Ph: +91-0120-3003263

<sup>4</sup> Student · Executive Program, Indian Institute of Management (IIM) · Raipur, Chhattisgarh, (India) · E-mail: tarunkumarsharma13@gmail.com

These cities had expanding middle class, increasing income levels and an accommodative mindset towards modern shopping formats.

Raipur is the capital city of the central Indian state of Chhattisgarh, founded in the year 2000. Being a new state, government invested heavily in sprucing up infrastructure in the city and encouraged private entrepreneurs in various sectors. First mall of the city came up in 2008. In next five years, it had five operational malls whereas two more were ready to commence business. All these malls were identical to each other in terms of size, aesthetics, facilities and tenant-mix, leading to shopper-boredom and eventually out-shopping (Roy and Masih, 2007; Singh and Bose, 2008). Distribution of mall space within Raipur was also uneven. Two malls were situated too close to each other and had overlapping catchment area. The upcoming malls were much larger and the city was small (population of just over one million), it is bound to experience an oversupply of mall space in near future.

To counter this emergent situation it was imperative for shopping malls to identify attributes other than availability of products/ brands and pricing, for differentiating them. It is believed that in highly competitive situations softer issues like shopping experience can differentiate and extend unique identity to shopping malls.

The study is a replication of past studies carried out in cities of Delhi NCR (Singh & Sahay, 2012) having a different socio-economic context. Present studies addresses the following issues:

- I. What are the factors defining shopping experience of mall shoppers in the city of Raipur;
- II. What is the relative significance of each of these factors;
- III. How do mall shoppers of Raipur differ from shoppers in bigger cities in terms of composition of shopping experience;
- IV. What could be the possible strategies for enhancing shopping experience in Raipur malls?

## 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Management aspects of shopping malls are discussed in many studies worldwide. Though concept of shopping malls is more than a decade old in India, very few Indian studies have been conducted on this theme. A few studies conducted so far are very generic in nature and scope. Prominent among these studies included the study by Kuruvilla and Ganguli (2008) on an overview of mall development and mall operations in India; a study by Singh and Bose (2008) on comparative analysis of malls in India and the USA; Kuruvilla and Joshi's study (2010) on profiling of

mall shoppers and study on measurement of consumer attitude towards malls by Swaminathan and Vani (2008). Some diagnostic studies included Tripathi and Siddiqui's work on patronage intentions using Analytical Hierarchy Process (2008) and the determinants of shopping experience (Singh and Sahay, 2012). However, no noteworthy study had been undertaken on the theme reflecting the constitution of shopping experience among consumers in towns and cities other than the metropolitan cities of India.

Researchers have opined that shopping goes beyond purchase of a product. Shopping for experiential and emotional reasons are also the key antecedents in buying process (Jones, 1999). Role of recreation has been empirically established to be a dominant motives for retail shoppers (Bellenger and Korgaonkar, 1980). There is a very high correlation between positive shopping experience and store liking. Consumer's positive perception of experience in the store increases time spent in store, ticket-size and incidence of unplanned purchase (Babin et al, 1994). Few researches have posited that mall developers must endeavour to bring entertaining experience within the overall mall management philosophy. This integration may be used to create a differentiation by the mall-owners vis-à-vis competitors (Talmadge, 1995; Kim et al, 2005).

Various researches have attempted to identify factors defining shopping experience. The significance of experiential aspects of shopping was first highlighted by Holbrook & Hirschman (1982). They appended the traditional information processing model with symbolic, hedonic and aesthetic nature of consumption. Another study postulated that store shopping experience is more critical in shaping a shopper's value perception, than price of a product (Kerin et al.1992). Customer's mood and involvement level also had an impact on shopping intentions (Swinyard, 1993). Another classification of shopping factors as utilitarian and hedonic was proposed by Kim et al (2005).

### 2.1 MALL ATTRIBUTES AND SHOPPING EXPERIENCE

Studies like Stoltman (1991) and LeHew and Fairhurst (2000) have confirmed that mall shopping is a relative choice phenomenon. In order to improve experience quotient of shopping, malls must create avenues of engaging customers in a pleasant manner. Besides traditional options for entertainment like movie-halls and mini-theme parks, mall developers must identify the elements that add to shopping experience.

Different studies have suggested different sets of attributes as constituents of shopping experience. Donovan and Rossiter (1982) initiated studies on impact of store atmospherics. In their effort to identify antecedents leading to the

excitement among shoppers and factors influencing their desire to stay in a mall, Wakefield and Baker (1998) paneled a group of four constructs - ambient factors, design factors, layout and variety. Architecture and overall design of the mall, ease in locating stores, temperature control, music, lighting and variety of stores were important attributes encompassing these factors and hence impacted customers' desire to stay at a mall. Physical and tangible elements like decoration, furnishing also impacted consumer's perception of shopping malls (Oppewal and Timmermans, 1999). Similarly, music and scent were found to be correlating factors (Matilla and Wirtz, 2001).

In their path breaking study, Huff and Rust (1984) included two major factors of convenience - distance and travel time. Retail gravity model proposed by them suggested that store patronage was a function of trade-off between cost (distance from the consumer) and utility (store size). Spatial aspects like a proportion of a shopping area indoors, proportion of an area reserved for pedestrians and compactness were studied by Oppewal and Timmermans (1999). In a study conducted in Australia, Reimers and Clulow (2009) established the criticality of convenience across all formats of shopping. Factors like spatial convenience, temporal convenience, car convenience and shopping services were included in the purview of convenience.

Many studies focused on tenant-mix as another factor contributing to consumers' excitement. In their study conducted in the UK, Kirkup and Rafiq (1994) established that strong, distinctive and consistent tenant-mix was crucial for success of a shopping centre. Some studies have pointed out a high positive relationship between the extent of diversity in tenant-mix and sense of excitement in a mall. Brito (2009) posited that store selection and retail-mix were instrumental in shaping a mall's image and influencing patronage decisions.

In their exhaustive study, Kim et al, (2005) listed thirty-eight attributes impacting shoppers' experience. These attributes were categorized in nine groups. These groups included layout, design and architecture, extra facilities, mood, courtesy, getting out, exhibition, music and hanging around. From the shopper's perspective, a study conducted in Dubai identified comfort, entertainment, diversity, mall essence, convenience and luxury as factors instilling attractiveness for any store (El-Adly, 2007). On the other hand, study by Venkateswarulu and Uniyal (2007) found that attractiveness of a mall depends on appeal, convenience, amenities, ambience, personnel, parking and seating. Attributes like restrooms (utilities), odour, parking, security and size of a store were included in their study. Safety and security were also important issues in defining shopping experience (Frasquet et al, 2001; Overstreet and Clodfelter, 1995)

According to Chattopadhyaya and Sengupta (2006),

distinctive marketing strategies aimed at creating unique positioning for shopping malls result in increased customer patronage.

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive study based on primary data collected from shoppers in Raipur. A validated research instrument for this study was borrowed from a similar study conducted in Delhi NCR (Singh & Sahay, 2012). Besides, questions seeking key demographic attributes of respondents, the instrument comprised of twenty two statements relating to different aspects of mall management. A five-point Likert's scale was used to record responses on these statements. On the scale, a score of '1' reflected 'strong disagreement' with the given statement, while a score of '5' represented 'strong agreement.' Research instrument was test-run on a small sample of 30 respondents who could relate to all the statements and also understood each in an appropriate sense. Also, the instrument was shared with two academicians who have published extensively in the field of retailing and mall management. This step led to deletion of two statements resulting in twenty statements in final research instrument.

Respondents for this study were mall shoppers in city of Raipur. A sample size of 400 was planned for this research. After discounting incomplete questionnaires, actual sample size happened to be 350. Sampling unit for this research comprised of four shopping malls from where the responses were collected. These malls were City Mall 36, City Centre, Magneto Mall and R. K. Mall. Since these were the only operational malls in Raipur at the time of this research, these represented universe of this study. Vital facts related to these malls are presented below:

**TABLE 1:** Shopping Mall in Raipur – Basic Information

Particulars	City Mall 36	City Centre	Magneto Mall	R K Mall	Colours Mall
Year of Commencement	2008	2010	2010	2012	2012
Promoter / Developer	City Mall Developers	Gupta Infrastructure	Avinash Developers	R. K. Jain Construction Pvt. Ltd.	Patwa Builders
Site Location	GE Road	Devendra Nagar	GE Road	GE Road, Mohaba Bazaar	Panchpedi Naka
Gross Leased Area (in Sq. ft.)	350,000	650,000	1,035,000	250,000	200,000
Prominent Tenants	Globus, DLF Brands, Lotus Electronics, Fab India, Food Court, Amoeba Gaming Zone Inox Cinemas	Central, Reliance, Big Bazaar, Food Court, Café Coffee Day Gaming Zone, Cinemax	Easyday (Hyper Market), Westside, Hyatt Hotel, Time Zone (Gaming Zone), Food Court, PVR Cinemas	Glitz Multiplex, Max, Gitanjali Jewels, UCB, Café Coffee Day	Glitz Multiplex, Crossword Book Shop, Sankalp

**SOURCE:** Primary information gathered by authors

Price range of merchandise offered by all four malls was identical and none was positioned distinctly in terms of pricing of products and services offered. Respondents were contacted using mall intercept method. Responses were taken when shoppers were leaving the mall after shopping. Since the study was aimed at measuring responses of actual mall shoppers and not the casual visitors, a criterion was adopted to qualify shoppers as respondents. Any individual walking out of the mall with at least one shopping bag was approached for a response. Questionnaire was administered personally. Questions were read out and explained so that all the respondents interpreted questions in the same way. Since a lot of subjectivity and judgment was involved in this, it was clearly a non-probability method of sampling.

Present study is an extension of the benchmark study (Singh & Sahay, 2012). Whereas benchmark study ended at exploring the determinants of shopping experience using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) this study tried to validate the results using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA).

### 3.1. DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

Data thus collected was subjected to statistical treatment using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). It began with developing a demographic profile of respondents which is shown in Table 2:

Nearly 85% of the people comprising this sample were in economically productive age-group of 20-50 years. It goes in line with the fact that urban centers in India have a higher proportion of this age group than the national

**TABLE 2:** Profile of Respondents

Demographic Variable	Demographic Class	Number	Percentage
AGE GROUP	13-19 years	30	8.6
	20-35 years	200	57.1
	36-50 years	97	27.7
	51-65 years	23	6.6
GENDER	Male	180	51.43
	Female	170	48.57
MARITAL STATUS	Unmarried	172	49.1
	Married	172	49.1
	Widow(er) /Divorcee	6	1.8
EDUCATION LEVEL	Schooling	37	10.6
	Graduation	151	43.1
	PG & above	132	37.7
	Professional	30	8.6
OCCUPATION	Government Service	91	26.0
	Private Service	84	24.0
	Professional	34	9.7
	Business	63	18.0
	Student	78	22.3
MONTHLY INCOME	Less than Rs. 10,000	73	20.9

MONTHLY INCOME	Rs. 10,000- 25,000	111	31.7
	Rs. 25,000- 40,000	98	28.0
	More than Rs. 40,000	68	19.4
ALL DATA		350	350

SOURCE: Primary information gathered by authors

average. Moreover, people in this age-group have a higher level of awareness, willingness and ability to visit malls for shopping. More than 80% of respondents were either graduates or post-graduates. This is partly due to the fact that cities like Raipur have a much higher concentration of educated people as compared to other parts of the state. Also, shopping malls are usually patronized by educated people. More than half of the respondents (52%) fell under two lower income brackets because Raipur has a comparatively lower level of income than other metropolitan cities of India.

Before subjecting the collected data to Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using SPSS, its suitability was checked by subjecting it to Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure for sampling adequacy was also noted. Outcome of these tests is presented in Table 3:

TABLE 3: KMO and Bartlett’s Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.872
Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	8285.508
	Degrees of Freedom	190
	Sig.	.000

SOURCE: Data output

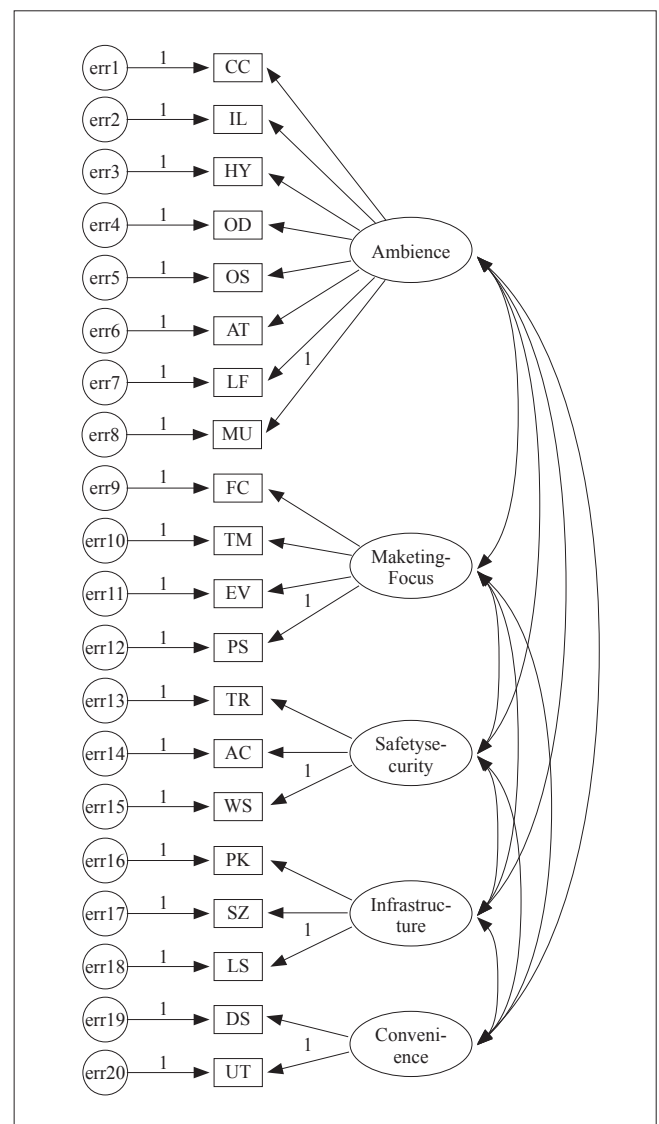
The values suggested that data was fit for performing EFA. After running the data through EFA, a series of outputs was received. First among these was communalities which depicted the percentage of variance explained by each variable (statement) included in the study. It was observed that no communality value was less than 0.5, which indicated that each variable (statement) was explaining at least 50% of the variance associated with it. The next table showed total variance explained when all the variables are taken together. Though all the variables considered together always explain 100% of the variance associated, the first 5 variables having Eigen-value higher than 1 together explained 86.9 % of the variance. This made a five factor solution highly acceptable.

Five factors were extracted from the initial component matrix. To refine the results further, data was subjected to Varimax rotation. Rotated component matrix also extracted five factors. Average scores were estimated for each variable as well as for each factor. Cronbach’s Alpha value was calculated to check reliability of each factor. For all the factors, this value was higher than 0.8 which indicated a high level of reliability.

The model was verified using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). Minimization was achieved with Chi-square value of 227.595 at 160 degrees of freedom. Proposed model was a good fit with GFI value of 0.937, AGFI = 0.917, NFI = 0.973, IFI = 0.992, RFI = 0.968, TLI = 0.990, CFI = 0.992, and RMSEA value of 0.035.

The proposed model is as follows:

FIG 1: The Proposed Model for Shopping Experience



SOURCE: Created by authors

Labels used for variables in the proposed model are given in Table IV, which also provides details of extracted factors.

**TABLE 4:** Values Arrived for Factors and Variables

Var. (in %)	Factor Label	Variables (Label)	Av. Score	Factor Loading	Av Score / Factor	Cron bach Alpha	Factor Ranking
34.66	Ambience (F1)	Climatic Control (CC)	4.09	0.956	4.11	0.978	I
		Illumination (IL)	4.21	0.924			
		General Hygiene (HY)	4.00	0.917			
		Ambient Odor (OD)	3.95	0.903			
		Open Space (OS)	4.01	0.895			
		Size of the Atrium (AT)	3.97	0.889			
		Vertical Circulation Options (LF)	4.24	0.877			
		Background Music (MU)	3.38	0.849			
17.41	Marketing Focus (F2)	Attractive Façade & Exteriors (FC)	3.41	0.951	3.63	0.948	II
		Diversity of Tenant-mix (TM)	3.64	0.921			
		Events (EV)	3.73	0.884			
		Promotional Schemes (PS)	3.72	0.879			
13.23	Safety and Security (F3)	Acts of Terrorism (TR)	1.71	0.966	1.80	0.926	V
		Safety from Accidents (AC)	1.78	0.944			
		Safety while Shopping (WS)	1.91	0.895			
11.88	Physical Infrastructure (F4)	Parking (PK)	2.59	0.931	2.67	0.861	III
		Size of Mall (SZ)	2.67	0.859			
		Landscaping (LS)	2.74	0.858			
9.75	Convenience (F5)	Distance (DS)	1.84	0.984	1.87	0.971	IV
		Utilities (UT)	1.90	0.982			

**SOURCE:** Data output

**FACTOR 1:** First factor extracted in this study explained more than one-third (34.7%) of total variance associated with the problem and emerged as the most distinct factor. It comprised of eight variables namely Climatic Control, Illumination, General Hygiene, Ambient Odor, Open Space, Size of Atrium, Vertical Circulation Options and Background Music. The average score for this factor was 4.11 and range for each variable was between 3.38 and 4.24 indicating a higher preference for this factor among respondents. The lowest average score (3.38) was for Background Music whereas the highest scores (4.24 and 4.21) were for Vertical Circulation Options and Illumination respectively. Comparing the results with work of Singh and Sahay (2012), the factor was labeled as ‘Ambience’ as all the variables contributed to enhance the softer, experiential aspects of shopping. Cronbach’s Alpha value of 0.98 made it the most reliable factor.

**FACTOR 2:** This factor explained 17.4% of variance associated with the problem. Four variables constituting this factor included Attractive Façade and Exteriors, Diversity of Tenant-mix, Events and Promotional Schemes. The average score for this factor was 3.63, which reflected shoppers’ preference for it; though the magnitude was lower as compared to that of the previous factor. Promotional Events was the most significant variable with the average score of 3.73, whereas Attractive Façade and Exteriors was least significant with the average score of 3.41. Comparing these results with that of benchmark research (Singh and Sahay, 2012), it was labeled as ‘Marketing Focus.’ Cronbach’s Alpha value of 0.94 established its reliability.

**FACTOR 3:** Third factor extracted out of this research explained 13.2% of the total variance. With Cronbach’s Alpha value of 0.93, this also was a highly reliable factor. An average score for this factor was only 1.8, indicating that it didn’t represent a significant requirement of mall shoppers in Raipur. Further, each of the three variables comprising it – Acts of Terrorism, Safety from Accidents, Safety while Shopping, had an average score between 1.71 and 1.91. Since all the three variables represented safety and security, the factor was labeled as ‘Safety and Security.’ This label was similar to the labeling done in other relevant researches.

**FACTOR 4:** Next factor explained 11.9% of variance. Cronbach’s Alpha value for this factor (0.86) was lower than that of the others,

but still high enough to establish its reliability in statistical terms. The average score for this factor was 2.67 and for individual statements, it ranged between 2.59 and 2.74. Since the score was quite close to the average score, it was assumed that shoppers in Raipur were nearly indifferent towards this factor. Since 'Parking' and 'Size of the Mall' essentially represented an infrastructural attribute of the mall, it was labeled as 'Physical Infrastructure.' Though 'landscaping' did not strictly represent infrastructure, it was considered to compliment it. Moreover, data related to landscaping was so well aligned with the data for other two that the label 'Infrastructure' qualified as a label for all the three variables.

**FACTOR 5:** Last factor extracted from the study explained 9.7% of variance and had Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.97. It comprised of only two variables – Distance and Utility. Average score for the factor was 1.87 and individual average scores of variables were 1.84 and 1.90 respectively. The low average score reflected lack of significance of this factor in the minds of shoppers in Raipur. The distance of the mall from home/work place was a matter of convenience in terms of access whereas availability and location of utilities was a matter of convenience while shopping. Therefore, the factor was labeled as 'Convenience'.

### 3.2. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Results of this study revealed that mall shoppers in Raipur viewed shopping experience as a resultant of five dimensions, namely ambience, marketing focus, physical infrastructure, convenience and safety & security. The listing as well as categorization is in conformity with many studies conducted in the past. While comparing these results with the benchmark study conducted by Singh & Sahay

**TABLE 5:** Component of shopping experience in the benchmark study

Factor Title	Variables included
Ambience	Illumination
	Landscaping
	Background Music
	Ambient Odour
	General Hygiene
Physical Infrastructure	Temperature Control
	Open space
	Size of the mall
	Parking space
Marketing Focus	Size of the atrium
	Promotional schemes
	Tenant-mix
	Mall façade
Convenience to shopper	Promotional events
	Utilities
	Lifts & escalators
Safety and security	Distance of mall from home
	Safety from accidents
	Safety while shopping
	Security against acts of terror

**SOURCE:** Singh & Sahay (2012)

(2012), it is observed that number and labeling of factors is the same.

It comes as a unique observation, since the benchmark study was for mall shoppers of Delhi NCR, who had a much intense exposure and interaction with the modern retail format. It is an anti-thesis to the notion that people living in smaller towns think and behave in a radically different manner than their counterparts from big cities. Since the profile of shoppers for both the studies happened to be very similar on dominance of educated and youth, it is safe to infer that at least this segment of society evaluates and perceives things in a similar way. It calls for a higher need to adopt a standard approach to retailing and management of shopping malls.

The results of this study showed that eight out of total twenty variables describing shopping experience correspond to 'ambience.' Even the basic features like vertical circulation options (lifts & escalators), general hygiene and open space are considered to add to the ambience of the malls. This observation can be justified on the basis of economic and infrastructural context in which the shoppers live. For a long time, Raipur remained a remote and obscure city and regained prominence only during the last decade after becoming the capital city of Chhattisgarh state. Small shops and high-street markets dominated the retail landscape of the city. Features like lifts, escalators, superior hygiene and open spaces were absent. It is the contrast between traditional market places and shopping malls that possibly leads to inclusion of so many variables under 'ambience.' Since most of the traditional markets and stores were spread horizontally, the need of amenities like escalators and lifts was lacking. Highest average score for any variable under 'ambience' was secured by vertical circulation options (4.24), probably due to novelty value associated with these. Overall, the factor had been identified as highly significant with an average score of 4.11.

Till very recently, the city of Raipur did not have many national and international brands. Shopping malls brought many of these brands to this market. These brands acted as magnets for attracting customers to the malls. This led to

a high correlation of 'diversity of tenant-mix' with other modes of attracting customers like promotional events, promotional schemes and attractive exteriors. Marketing focus is important for these malls, since two-third of the sample comprised of a young populace of less than 35 years of age.

Physical infrastructure is not so important for the respondents, since its average score is 2.67. Unlike big cities where variables like parking and size of the mall are significant, mall shoppers in this city seemed almost indifferent to these variables. This observation needs to be linked with the number and penetration of vehicles in Raipur. In a smaller city, people were less likely to experience parking constraints. Though most of the malls in Raipur were smaller as compared to those in big cities, they were definitely bigger than conventional retail markets and stores, leading to a feeling of indifference towards the size of the mall.

Raipur being a smaller city and the malls being still smaller, shoppers did not consider convenience to be a major deterrent (average score 1.87), since neither distance of the mall from home/workplace nor availability/location of utilities pose any inconvenience. The novelty value of the malls, a pull of brands and impact of an ambience might have camouflaged it for the time being, but it is difficult to say if the response would remain the same once economic, social and demographic environment changes.

The strangest observation from this study is that safety & security was considered to be of least significant, with the average score of only 1.80. Though there had been no instance of terrorist violence or accident of any kind in these malls, it seems anomalous as Chhattisgarh was one of the Indian states that were facing insurgency. The trend here was the same as that of the rest of India, where none of the malls had ever witnessed any terrorist attack or major accident.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The phenomenon of shopping malls was only five years old in Raipur and most of them were expected to do well in the near future. However, with a number of mall projects already in the pipeline, they would add significantly to the existing mall space, once completed. Since the population of the city was not expected to multiply at that pace, intense competition among the malls was expected. There would be competition for footfalls as well as tenants. Due to the highly competitive scenario, one would expect these malls to differentiate themselves from each other. While strategizing, mall developers must assign proportionate effort on the factors based on the respective contribution to shopping experience. The sustenance of malls in a highly competitive

business can happen only when developers would carefully design and manage the shopping experience. However one must be careful as creation of shopping experience must be unique for Raipur, as defined by people of the city. Applying learning from bigger cities like Delhi or Mumbai could be inappropriate because shoppers in Raipur do have finer points of distinction as compared to shoppers in the bigger cities. Mall development and management decisions in any markets must be based on scientific and objective basis else the developers run risk of making wrong investment and management decisions. It is high time that mall developers of Raipur realize this since, shopping malls are capital intensive projects and are structurally inflexible once created. Since malls are created to operate for a very long period, it makes sense to manage them in a way that they remain relevant and competitive in the long run.

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