

**IMPACT OF SITUATIONAL FACTORS ON BUYING AND PATRONAGE
BEHAVIOR IN SHOPPING MALL**

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ABSTRACT

Situational factors are the external and exterior factors approaching from the shopping surroundings when buyer comes into contact with particular events, situation and visual stimuli (product or promotion) that influence shopper for unplanned purchase. In this study tried to investigate the impact of situational factors on buying behaviour and patronage behaviour. The situational variables were divided into three factors like physical surrounding indicators – store design, skilled staff, music, aroma, store location. Social surrounding indicators – the influence of companions and collateral situational factors – time, promotional aspects, and festival offers. Results revealed that some of the situation factors had positive and strong influence or triggered shoppers to spend more in shopping mall further results described out of three situational factors only one factor physical surrounding had significant relationship with the mall patronage behaviour in terms of intention to revisit, buy from the mall in near future and recommend the mall to family and friends.

Key words: situational, patronage, shopping behaviour, collateral factors.

INTRODUCTION

Several researchers explored the concept of situational factors and its impact on buying behaviour (Amos et al., 2002). However, situational factors and its impact on buying behaviour researches in retailing were very new and concentrated on individual store, not on the mall itself (Iyer, 1989; Hart & Davies, 1996; Abratt & Goodey, 1990). In shopping mall context a study by Zhuang et al., (2006) investigated the situational factors impact on mall shoppers buying decision. Results showed that out of 13 situational factors, nine situational factors have impact on shoppers purchase decision. In Indian context none of the study conducted to explore this variable and its impact on buying behaviour and mall patronage thrust to take this variable for the research.

Few researchers paid attention towards situational factors and its impact on shopping mall behaviour. Situational factor may be sensory cues in a retail environment, an individual's current mood state, or the presence of others during a shopping situation. Situational variables are usually not under the direct control of the consumer but have a direct impact on the likelihood of buying behaviour (Amos et al., 2014). Situational variables are usually not under the direct

control of the consumer but have a direct impact on the likelihood of impulse buying behaviour. Common situational factors examined in the impulse buying literature are affective states (mood), marketing stimuli (external cues), retail environment (store layout), hedonic versus utilitarian purchase motives, time or financial constraints, and social factors (**Dholakia, 2000; Kacen et al., 2012; Sharma et al., 2010**). However, situational factors and its impact on buying behaviour researches in retailing were very trendy and concentrated on individual store, not on the mall itself (**Iyer, 1989; Hart & Davies, 1996; Abratt & Goodey, 1990**). In shopping mall context a study by **Zhuang et al., (2006)** investigate the situational factors impact on mall shoppers buying food and non food buying behaviour in multination context. And study results showed that out of 13 situational factors nine situational factors have impact on shoppers purchase decision. However, situational influence on purchase varied according to the types of products bought.

SITUATIONAL FACTOR AND SHOPPING BEHAVIOUR

Situational factors are the external factors coming from the shopping environment when buyer comes into contact with particular visual stimuli (product or promotion) that create the unplanned purchase (**Mihic & Kursan, 2010**). Previous researches investigated that situational factors have strong impact on consumer buying behaviour and conditioned a sudden need to purchase a particular product (**Belk, 1974; Mattson & Dubinsky, 1987; Youn, 2000**).

(**Belk, 1975**) categorized situational factors includes five elements (1) physical surrounding (location, décor, sound, aromas and visible arrangement) (2) Social surrounding (presence of other people and interpersonal relationship) (3) temporal perspective (specific in units ranging from time of day to season of the year) (4) antecedent states (momentary moods or conditions of buying such as acute, anxiety, cash on hand). (5) Previous conditions with which the consumer enters the shopping surrounding or which result from the shopping surrounding.

Attractive colors, aroma or music can attract the shoppers' attention by putting them in a good mood and stimulating the interaction with the store atmosphere and thus unplanned buying (**Donovan & Rossiter, 1982; Hart & Davies, 1996; Tai & Fung 1997; Oakes, 2000; Verplanken & Herabadi, 2001**).

The presence of friends, family, spouse and relatives play an important on purchasing decision (**Bearden et.al 1989**).The presence of a shopping companion reduces the risk perceived by the focal shopper and increases the shopper's confidence that a purchase decision can be wisely made (**Kiecker & Hartman 1994**). Over 75 percent of consumers using a purchase companion's assistance report risk reduction (e.g., social/psychological, financial, functional, time, or physical risk) as a primary reason for asking a companion to come along (**Kiecker & Hartman 1994**). The reduced stress makes a shopping trip more enjoyable and may enable better decision making to take place.

Buying behaviour of the consumer also depends to whom them he/ she going to buy. Researches indicated that the presence of peers can increase the urge to purchase and enjoy the shopping trip (**Mangleburg et al., 2004**) married couple generally disagrees with each other during the buying process (**Spiro, 1983**). While both spouse originally expressed a strong preference for a different option (**Ward, 2006**) and the presence of family members activates normative values and decreases the urge to purchase. Moreover, the more time is available, the higher is the chance for unplanned buying (**Iyer, 1989; Iyer et al., 1989; Herrington and Capella, 1995; Nicholls et al., 1997; Underhill, 1999, Anić & Radas, 2006(a)**), other additional buying motivators are the price discounts or sales (**Parsons, 2003; Virvilaite et al., 2009**).

Therefore, current study proposed that situational factors have strong influence shopping behaviour. The ultimate goal of the study is better understanding of the influence of situational factors on the shoppers' amount spending behavior and their patronage behavior in the shopping mall environment. To do so, we borrow the situational variables from the study (**Mihic & Kursan, 2010**).

This would help retailers to develop effective strategies to attract more beneficial type of shoppers and widens retailing research horizons.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To discover the impact of situational factors (physical surrounding, collateral situation variables and social surrounding) impact on amount spending behavior.

2. Identify out of three situational factors (physical surrounding, collateral situation variables and social surrounding) which one have more impact on amount spending behavior
3. To discover the impact of situational factors (physical surrounding, collateral situation variables and social surrounding) impact on mall patronage behavior.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

H₀₁: Situational factors have no influence on amount spending behavior.

H₀₂: Physical surrounding situational factors have less impact on amount spending behaviour than social and collateral situational factors.

H₀₃: Social surrounding situational factors have less impact on amount spending behavior than physical and collateral situational factors.

H₀₄: Collateral situational factors have less impact on amount spending behavior than physical and social situational factors.

H₀₅: Situational factor have no influence on mall patronage behavior.

RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design lays the foundation for conducting the research. It is a frame work or blue print for conducting the marketing research. It is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure. The present study adopts a Descriptive Research Design to study the shopper and mall related variables/constructs and their impact on shopping behavior and mall patronage behavior. Descriptive Research is a type of conclusive research that has as its major objectives the description of something. Descriptive research assumes that the researcher has much prior knowledge about the problem. This research is preplanned and structured and it typically based on large repetitive sample (**Malhotra, 2008**).

SAMPLING PROCEDURE

The sample for the main survey of this study comprised of mall shoppers residing in Delhi and NCR region, India. The mall-intercept survey technique was adopted for data collection; data was collected from shoppers visiting the six above mentioned mall situated in Delhi and NCR

region. A mall-intercept survey is a face-to-face or personal interviewing method (**Gates & Solomon, 1982**). Although mall-intercept surveys are criticized as being demographically skewed and not representative, this technique of data collection fits well in the present study because one of the objectives was to study the impact of **situational variables** on shopping & patronage, data regarding the situational variables can only be ascertained soon after the mall visit (to have the necessary effect) further in Indian context because many older consumers (50 and above) in India are not all technologically savvy. It may be hard to generate response through online surveys as many older people may not have email addresses. Thus random sampling of shoppers on the basis of email database was not found to be appropriate or feasible. In order to reduce biasness a systematic sampling technique was adopted and every 10th shopper coming out of the mall was approached and given the questionnaire. The mall-intercept survey instrument was accompanied by a cover letter explaining the nomination process and the purpose of this study. The goal was to obtain a minimum of 1000 useable surveys for the analysis.

In this study we found the impact of the situational variables affecting the shopping behaviour of the customers. In order to study the impact mall intercept survey was the finest way to carry out this research. Shoppers' information regarding their shopping experience could have also been collected from the mall management data base and also through e- mail. But to find out the impact of situational variables it's necessary to know how exactly shoppers behave in the shopping mall and how they were affected by the shopping environment. The second reason to carry out the mall intercept survey was that older shoppers were not techno friendly. They were not comfortable with e- mails and social networking sites. For mall intercept survey a self-administered survey instrument that would assess variables associated with the purpose of this study were developed. To capture responses of Indian consumers in the mall shopping context, the survey instrument included items adapted from established scales in the literature. This survey consisted of seven sections, all containing items designed to capture shoppers' attributes, mall attributes and situational variables. Prior to the beginning of each section, a short description of terms related to the purpose of this study (e.g., shopping motives, attitude towards mall attributes) was provided to ensure that all respondents understand how terms were used in the survey instrument.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Situational factors

Situational factors are “all those factors particular to a time and place of observation which do not follow from a knowledge of a personal and stimulus attributes and which have a demonstrable and systematic effect on current behaviour’ (Belk,1975). To understand the situational factor impact on shopping and patronage behaviour ten statement were used from (Mihic & Kursan, 2010) on five point likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

Demographic Information

Respondents’ personal information was obtained from various items concerning demographic characteristics. Respondents were asked to check self-descriptive categories about gender, age, marital status, level of education, household income, occupation, No. of earning members and No. of kids

ANALYSIS & RESULT

Demographics

Demographic data were analysed using frequencies and percentages to develop a profile to describe participants in this study. The variables used for purposes of participant description included information regarding age, gender, marital status, family size, no. of kids, education status, employment status, income, earning members. All participants (n = 869) were survey at mall intercept survey.

4.1.1(1) Gender

An equal distribution of responses was received from female and male participants with (n = 444) female (51.1%), and (n = 425) male (48.9 %). (see table1)

4.1.1(2) Ages

Participant ages ranged from less than 16 years to above 55 years. Based on the responses, 381, participants were age 16-25 yrs.(43.8%),180 were age 26-35yrs. (20.7%), 149 were age 36-45yrs. (17. 1%), 110 were age 46-55 yrs. (19.3%),46 respondents were age above 55 yrs. (5.37%) and 3 were age falling in the age of less than 16 years (.3%).(see table 4.1)

4.1.1(3) marital statuses

An equal distribution of response received about the marital status of the respondents with (n=440) unmarried (50.6%) and (n=429) were married (49.4%).

4.1.1(4) Family Sizes

Out of the total respondents (62.5%) were have four members in the family, and (n=250) respondents (28.8%) have three members in the family. Six per cent respondents (6.7%) reported two persons having in their family and only (2.1%) respondents reported that they are single and had no members in the family.

4.1.1(5) No. Of Kids

Based on the responses, (n=487) participants had no kids (56%), (n=207) respondents were had two kids (23.8%) and (n=149) respondents reported that had only one kid (17.1%). Only three per cent respondents reported that they had more than two kids.(see table 1)

4.1.1(6) Educational statuses

The majority of participants (72.3%) were having graduate and post graduate degree, 19% respondents were under graduate and 9.4% of participants were having high school and diploma degree. Only 3.2% of the participants were having PhD degree. (see table 1)

4.1.1(7) Occupations

The majority of the respondents (40.4%) were salaried employees, while (30.7%) respondents were students were doing their school, colleges. Seventeen per cent (17.1%) respondents were business man and had own business. Six percent (6.2%) respondents were professional while only (4.4%) respondents were home maker. On the bases of survey found that only (.3%) were unemployed and only (.2%) were retired.(see table 1)

4.1.1(8) Earning Members

Out of the total respondents (45.3%) were reported that they were two earning members in the family and (43.6%) had only one earning member in the family. Survey results reviled that (9%) respondents were reported that they were three earning members in the family, while only (1.6) respondents reported that they have four earning members in the family.(see table 1)

4.1.1(9) Household incomes

Participant household income ranged from 20k to above one lakh. Based on the responses, (37.5%) respondents were reported that they were having 60k to 1 lakh house hold income, (25.9%) participants were having more than one lakh household income, (22.3%) respondents were having 40k to 60k household income and (14.3%) respondents reported that they were having 20k to 40 household incomes.(see table 1)

Table no. 1: Sample Descriptions

Socio-demographic profile	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
Male	444	51.1
Female	425	48.9
Age Group		
Less than 16 years	3	.3
16-25 years	381	43.8
26-35 years	180	20.7
36-45 years	149	17.2
46-55 years	110	12.7
Above 55 years	46	5.3
Marital Status		
Married	429	49.4
Unmarried	440	50.6
Family size		
1 member	18	2.1
2 members	58	6.7
3 members	250	28.8
4 members	543	62.4
No. Of Kids		
No kids	487	56.0
1 kid	149	17.1
2 kids	207	23.8

More than 2 kids	26	3.1
Education		
High school	34	3.9
Under Graduate	165	19.0
Graduate	334	38.4
Post Graduate	295	33.9
Diploma	13	1.5
PhD	28	3.3
Occupation		
Student	267	30.9
Salaried Employee	405	46.6
Own business	154	17.7
Retired	2	.2
Home maker	38	4.6
Earning Members		
1 Earning member	379	43.6
2 Earning members	394	45.3
3 Earning members	78	9
4 Earning members	19	2.1
Household Income		
20k-40k	124	14.3
41k-60k	194	22.3
61k-80k	168	18.2
81k-1lac	158	19.3
above 1lac	225	25.9
Total	869	100

Situational variables and Shopping Behaviour

Hypothesis 1 stated that situational factors will affect the shopping behaviour: frequency of visit, time spent in mall and amount spent on per visit. Correlation was computed to determine the association between situational factors and frequency of visit, time spent in mall and amount spent per visit. To assess this hypothesis, a factor analysis was computed to reduce the number of situational statements to a manageable number of variables. Bartlett’s test of sphericity and KMO employed to determine the appropriateness of the data set for factor analysis (Malhotra, 1996). The value of the Bartlett’s test of sphericity (.000) and KMO (.665) indicated that data is appropriate for factor analysis. Factor analysis (principal component) using varimax rotation yield three situational factor with eigen values than greater than 1. Three factors accounted for 27.8%, 10.5% and 16.2% respectively of the variance. In the varimax rotation factor solution, factor 1 consist of variables related the Physical surrounding. Factors 2 consist of collateral situational factors and factor 3 labelled with the social surrounding.

Table2: Factor and reliability analysis of situational attributes

Sr. No.	Factors	Variables	Variables Loading	Cronbach’s Alpha	Variance (%)
1	Physical Surrounding	Attractive store stimulate me to buy more	.472	.671	27.8%
		Attractive aroma in shopping mall influence me to buy more	.881		
		Nice music in shopping mall trigger me to buy more	.846		
		Store location influence me to buy more	.578		
		Friendly and skilled staff influence me to buy more	.707		
2	Collateral situational factors	Festival offers in shopping mall influence me to buy more	.797	.605	19.5%
		Quality of products at	.639		

		reasonable price influence me to buy more Mall promotional offer trigger me to buy more. More time in shopping mall influence me to buy more	.497. 799		
3	Social surrounding	I buy more when I am with companion	.765	.688	16.2%

Note:-- Bartlett's test of sphericity = (.000), Kaiser –Meyer-Okin Measure of sampling adequacy =.665 and total variance =63.6%

Table 3: Situational variables correlation with amount spending behaviour

Situational factors	Variables	r	Sig.
Physical surrounding	1. Friendly and skilled staff	.538**	.000
	2. Location of the store	.313 **	.000
Collateral situational factors	1. Promotional offer in the shopping mall	.188 **	.000
	2. Quality of products at reasonable price	.354 **	.000
Social surrounding	1. Companion with family and friends	.264**	.000

Correlation significance at 0.01 levels (two tailed)

Note ** shows positive association, * shows negative association, P= indicate the significance level, R= indicate the direction of the relationship

Result showed that in physical surrounding situational factor, friendly and skilled staff and location of the store in shopping mall ($r = .538, .313, P < .01$) had direct and strong positive relationship. Results indicated that in collateral situational factors, promotional offers and quality of products at reasonable price ($r = .188, .354, P < .01$) with amount spending behaviour. Social

surrounding variable (I buy more when i am with companion) had impact on spend more ($r = .264, P < .01$) in shopping mall (See table 4.31). Results indicated that situational factors had direct impact on buying behaviour or influence shoppers to spend more

Correlation was computed to determine the relationship between situational factor with visit and frequency. Result revealed insignificant relationship exists between situational factors and frequency of visit and time spent behaviour.

Situational factors and patronage behaviour

Hypothesis stated that situational factors have influence on mall patronage behaviour. To access this hypothesis correlation was computed to find out the association between situational factors and mall patronage behaviour. The correlation ($r = .163, .117, .112, P < .01$) table showed that only physical surrounding had influence on mall patronage behaviour. Result of the study designated that there is insignificant relationship exist between situational factors and mall patronage behaviour. Therefore,

Table: 4 hypothesis acceptance or rejection

Situational factors	H ₀₁₇ Situational factors not influence the shopping behaviour.	.Time spent in shopping mall 2.Amount spent in shopping mall 3.Frequency of visit	Partial rejected
	H ₀₁₈ Situational factors influence the mall patronage behaviour	1. Intention to revisit the mall. 2. Buy from the mall in near future 3. Recommend the mall to his family and friends	Partial Rejected

Three situational factors emerged through factor analysis were: Physical surrounding, social surrounding and collateral situational factors.

Situational factors showed significant impact on shoppers to spend more in shopping mall, while there was insignificant relationship found situational factors and time spent behaviour and frequency of visit

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

The study tried to investigate the impact of situational factors on buying behaviour. Situational variables were used to investigate the results. The situational variables were divided into three factors like physical surrounding indicators – store design, skilled staff, music, aroma, store location. Social surrounding indicators – the influence of companions and collateral situational factors – time, promotional aspects, and festival offers.

First study results revealed that some of the situation factors had positive and strong influence or triggered shoppers to spend more in shopping mall. Five out of ten situational variables had impact on buying behaviour. Result showed that the presence of companion influence shoppers to buy more. Study results consistence with the previous study (**Nicholls et al., 1997; Zhuang et al., 2006; Mihic & Kursan, 2010; Borges et al., 2010**) which explained companion presence enhance the shopping experience, shoppers tend to buy more and help to make on the spot decision.

The impact of Physical surrounding situational factor (friendly and skilled staff and location of the store) on buying behaviour also found significant in this study. Study results are consistence with the previous study which explains that skilled and friendly staff (**Mihic & Kursan, 2010**) and location of the store (**Babin & Babin, 2001**) showed impact on more spending behaviour. Promotional offers and quality products on reasonable price variables under collateral situational factors had also impact on buy more behaviour. Result of the study is supported by the previous study by **Mihic & Kursan, 2010**.

In physical surrounding situational factor, aroma, music in the store and attractive store design had no impact on spending behaviour. Study results are not consistence with the previous researches which explained aroma, music in the store, attractive design and ambiance of the store and visual decor had significant role to buy from the store (**Alpert & Alpert, 1990; Bone & Ellen, 1999**). One reason for inconsistency of the results could be because the previous studies

considered store specific studies and current study measured the shopper's behaviour in the shopping mall context.

In context of situational factors and its impact of patronage behaviour, none of the previous study in situational factor uncovered the relationship. This study tried to find out the relationship between situational factors and mall patronage behaviour. Study results described out of three situational factors only one factor physical surrounding had significant relationship with the mall patronage behaviour.

On the basis of the results, the study concluded that situational factors have significant impact on spend more behaviour. Retailers are always interested to identify the variables which influence customers to buy. So retailers should take these situational factors into thought while designing the promotional programmes for the mall shoppers. Study results also revealed that in physical surroundings, situational factors had significant impact on mall patronage behaviour in terms of intention to revisit, buy from the mall in near future and recommend the mall to family and friends. Along with promotional activities retailers should pay attention towards the location of the stores, skilled staff, design and ambiance of the store and assortments in the stores. A study by **Zhuang et al., 2006** explained that situational factors impact on non food and food buying behaviour in multination context and study results revealed that situational factors had well-built influence on food and non food buying behaviour. In retail setting, marketers should consider not only attractive promotional activities but also other entertainment oriented activities that enhance the shoppers for non food or food buying behaviour.

The study tried to investigate the impact of situational factors on buying behaviour. Situational variables were used to investigate the results. The situational variables were divided into three factors like physical surrounding indicators – store design, skilled staff, music, aroma, and store the promotional programmes for the mall shoppers. Study results also revealed that in physical surroundings, situational factors had significant impact on mall patronage behaviour in terms of intention to revisit, buy from the mall in near future and recommend the mall to family and friends. Along with promotional activities retailers should pay attention towards the location of the stores, skilled staff, design and ambiance of the store and assortments in the stores. A study by **Zhuang et al., 2006** explained that situational factors impact on non food and food buying behaviour in multination context and study results revealed that situational factors had well-built

influence on food and non food buying behaviour. In retail setting, marketers should consider not only attractive promotional activities but also other entertainment oriented activities that enhance the shoppers for non food or food buying behaviour.

Situational factors also play a significant impact on amount spending behaviour, so retailers and mall managers should pay attention towards these variables. Mall developers and managers should take an integrated view of the situations and work on multi-mall promotional strategies to improve shopping experience. It is evident that all the variables do not contribute equally to enhanced amount spending behaviour of the shoppers in shopping malls. It is necessary for mall managers and mall retailers to identify the key factors and result areas where suitable changes can yield more than proportionate revenue for the shopping malls.

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