



RETAIL RENAISSANCE: LULU MALL'S IMPACT ON KOCHI'S SHOPPER BEHAVIOUR

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the impact of Lulu International Shopping Mall on Kochi's changing retail landscape. The objectives are to understand consumer motivations, identify key factors influencing their decisions, and assess overall satisfaction. Data was collected through a structured questionnaire from randomly selected respondents. Findings reveal Lulu Mall significantly shapes shopping habits, attracting diverse consumers. Its all-in-one offerings and comfortable ambiance contribute to widespread appeal and high customer satisfaction. Implications can assist management in enhancing customer experience and tailoring offerings to meet preferences in the evolving retail landscape.

KEYWORDS: Retail Landscape, Consumer Behaviour, Shopping Habits, Overall Satisfaction, All-In-One Offerings, Comfortable Ambiance, Customer Experience, Retail Sector

I. INTRODUCTION

In the present generation, shopping malls have become a fashionable and lifestyle choice. The retail shopping trends in Kochi are undergoing significant changes, and shopping malls play a crucial role in meeting people's needs and desires all in one place. Kochi already boasts Bay Pride Mall near Marine Drive, Gold Souk at Vyttila, Nucleus Mall at Maradu, and Oberon Mall at Edappally, all of which have influenced and shaped the city's new shopping habits. However, LULU INTERNATIONAL SHOPPING MALL, situated in Edappally and being the largest shopping mall in India, has had an unparalleled impact, transforming the city's face and lifestyle. It's important to distinguish between customers and consumers. A customer is a buyer or purchaser, while a consumer is the end user of the product. Shopping typically involves the act of purchasing products, which may include food, clothing, and more. For some, shopping is an entertaining activity, with window shopping being a popular pastime at malls. Shopping malls provide a convenient space where a wide range of retail outlets are located under one roof, often featuring discount stores that attract a large number of consumers. The allure of shopping malls lies in the availability of diverse products, entertainment options like theaters, amusement parks, games, food, and various services, all within a comfortable, fully air-conditioned environment. These advantages entice more people to visit malls, allowing them to save time and avoid the hassle of traffic, parking, and security concerns.

II. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study of changes in consumer shopping habits holds immense importance due to the pivotal role that shopping malls play in people's lives. In contemporary society, lifestyles have undergone significant transformations, with shopping malls becoming central to leisure and recreational activities. Previously, shopping malls were primarily frequented by the upper class, but this paradigm has shifted dramatically. Today, people from all walks of life, regardless of age, gender, education, or occupation, are increasingly drawn to shopping malls.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To understand the purpose of people visiting Lulu Mall
2. To identify the factors driving people to shop at Lulu Mall
3. To assess consumer satisfaction with shopping at Lulu Mall

IV. SCOPE OF THE STUDY:

The study is limited in its scope to the city of Kochi. It focuses on changes in consumers' shopping habits specifically influenced by Lulu International Shopping Mall. The respondents surveyed are randomly selected customers of Lulu International Shopping Mall. This approach aims to capture insights into how the presence of Lulu Mall impacts consumer behavior and preferences in the local area. The study does not encompass other malls or factors unrelated to Lulu Mall's influence on shopping habits in Kochi city.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

- **Source of Data:** The study utilized both primary and secondary data for analysis.
- **Primary Data:** This data is collected first-hand and is original in nature. The primary data for this study were collected through surveys using a questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to gather information directly from the respondents, who are the customers of Lulu International Shopping Mall in Kochi.
- **Secondary Data:** Secondary data refers to information that has already been processed or published by other sources. In this study, secondary data were collected from journals, books, and the internet. These sources may provide background information, past research findings, or relevant statistics related to the study.
- **Population:** The population of the study consists of the customers of Lulu International Shopping Mall in Kochi. These are the individuals who visit and shop at the mall.
- **Sampling Technique:** The study employed convenience sampling as the sampling technique. Convenience sampling means that the researcher selects respondents based on their accessibility and ease of inclusion in the study. In this case, the convenience of the researcher determined the selection of the respondents.
- **Sample Size:** The sample size for this study is 50 customers of Lulu International Shopping Mall in Kochi. These 50 individuals were chosen as representatives of the larger population of customers.
- **Tools of Data Collection:** The primary tool of data collection used in this study was a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire contained 16 questions and was distributed among the customers of Lulu Mall. The respondents answered the questions, providing their insights and opinions on changes in their shopping habits influenced by the presence of Lulu Mall.
- **Tools for Analysis:** The data collected through the questionnaire were analysed using tables and charts. These visual representations of data allow for a clearer understanding of trends, patterns, and conclusions drawn from the survey responses. The analysis aimed to provide insights into how Lulu Mall influences consumers' shopping habits in Kochi.

VI. FINDINGS

- ❖ The study shows that the age group above 55 years appears to be less interested in shopping and entertainment activities compared to younger age groups. This indicates that Lulu Mall may need to consider targeted marketing strategies to cater to different age demographics.
- ❖ Lulu Mall's ability to offer shopping, entertainment, and dining options all under one roof is a significant attraction for most respondents. This concept of a one-stop destination appeals to consumers and encourages them to visit the mall.
- ❖ The majority of respondents in the study express satisfaction with the facilities at Lulu Mall. This suggests that the mall is meeting the expectations and needs of its customers, which is crucial for retaining loyalty and encouraging repeat visits.
- ❖ The study indicates that good customer relations and promotions during holidays are effective in attracting people to shop at Lulu Mall. Such initiatives foster positive perceptions and increase footfall during peak periods.
- ❖ Most respondents prefer spending 1 to 3 hours inside the mall and are willing to spend a considerable amount (1000 to 5000) on a single shopping trip. This data is valuable for understanding consumer behaviour and sales potential.
- ❖ Brand image plays a significant role in the buying decisions of the respondents. A positive brand image contributes to customer trust and influences their choices.
- ❖ Respondents perceive Lulu Mall as different from general stores due to its vast variety of products, price discounts, and convenience. These unique selling propositions set the mall apart from other retail options.
- ❖ The variety of stores within Lulu Mall and special discounts offered attract consumers, indicating the importance of a diverse retail mix and promotional strategies.
- ❖ The ambience of Lulu Mall is identified as the most attractive feature by the respondents. A pleasing and comfortable shopping environment enhances the overall experience and encourages longer stays.
- ❖ The study reveals that advertisements may not convey all the information about Lulu Mall, emphasizing the significance of other communication channels. Nonetheless, Lulu Mall enjoys a good public image in Kochi, contributing to its strong brand value.

VII. SUGGESTIONS

- Free Parking: Considering that charging parking fees might deter some visitors, the management could consider offering free parking to enhance convenience and encourage more footfall.
- Extended Operating Hours: Expanding the mall's operating hours to 24x7 could cater to the needs of different types of customers, including night shoppers and those with busy schedules during regular hours.
- Environmental Initiatives: Undertaking proper maintenance of the Edappally canal and drainages on the mall premises would not only contribute to the mall's aesthetics but also demonstrate environmental responsibility, which can be attractive to customers who value sustainability.
- Medical Unit: Establishing a medical unit or first-aid station inside the mall could be a valuable service to customers. It would offer assistance in case of emergencies or minor medical issues, promoting the overall well-being and safety of visitors.

Implementing these suggestions can help create a more consumer-friendly and attractive environment at Lulu Mall, leading to increased customer satisfaction, loyalty, and footfall. Additionally, taking into account the evolving needs and preferences of shoppers can ensure the mall remains competitive in the retail industry.

VIII. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the presence of Lulu Mall in Kochi has had a significant impact on the retail industry, leading to changes in customers' shopping interests and preferences. The shift from unorganized retail to organized retail is evident, as Lulu Mall offers customers an international shopping experience that attracts them to the mall. One of the key reasons customers are drawn to Lulu Mall is its comprehensive offerings, providing everything under one roof, including shopping, entertainment, and dining options. The convenience and variety offered by the mall appeal to shoppers, leading to increased footfall and spending. Customers' trust in big malls like Lulu is reflected in their preference for purchasing from such organized retail establishments. The absence of a bargaining system in large malls fosters a sense of confidence among families that they won't be cheated or subjected to unfair practices. The mall's efforts in maintaining good customer relations, providing special discounts, and offering unique products contribute to customer satisfaction and positive perceptions of the mall. Moreover, the ambience and overall experience at Lulu Mall stand out as attractive features for shoppers, encouraging them to spend more time in the mall. As Lulu Mall continues to adapt and cater to the changing needs and preferences of consumers, it remains an influential player in the retail landscape of Kochi. By considering the suggestions provided and maintaining its position as an organized retail destination, Lulu Mall can continue to drive consumer interest and shape the retail industry in the region.

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