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RESEARCH ARTICLE

A STUDY ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS SHOPPING MALLS IN ANDHRA PRADESH (WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO VISAKHAPATNAM CITY)

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Abstract

Indian retail industry has emerged as one of the most dynamic and fast-paced industries due to the entry of several new players. It accounts for over 10% of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) and around 8% of the employment. India is the world's fifth-largest global destination in the retail space. The sizeable middle class and nearly unexplored retail market in India are the main attractive factors for international retail behemoths seeking to move into newer markets, which will help the Indian Retail Industry, grow more quickly. The urban Indian consumer's purchasing power is increasing, and branded goods in categories like apparel, cosmetics, footwear, watches, beverages, food, and even jewellery are gradually evolving into business and leisure that are well-liked by the urban Indian consumer. India has the third-highest number of e-retail shoppers (only behind China, the US). The phenomenon called shopping centre or shopping mall is rocking India - metros and now even the smaller towns are buzzing with the mall mania. Modern retail format i.e. shopping malls are characterized by professionally managed large format stores, providing goods and services that appeal to consumers, in an ambience that is conducive for shopping. The recent surge in the growth of shopping malls is changing the way people shop. Mall culture in India and especially in Andhra Pradesh has been growing with an incredible pace. Just a few years back, people had to make a choice among shopping, movies or hanging out on a holiday but thanks to our malls, all these jobs can be performed at the same time, under the same roof and that too with a wonderful experience. The possibility of shopping for clothes, shoes and grocery, while simultaneously having provision for eating and entertainment in the form of movies or video game parlors, has been a convenient experience for the consumers. This paper aims to study the key factors that influence consumer behaviour towards shopping malls. The specific objective of this paper is to study consumers buying tactic, shopping priority during shopping at mall in Chennai city. The main aim of this study is to analyze different attributes of layouts, accessibility and availability of services in malls in Visakhapatnam City and to examine the attributes offered

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by the shopping malls which influence the customers in Visakhapatnam.

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Introduction:-

Retail Industry in India which has become modern can be seen from the fact that there is an increase in the number of malls. Drove of middle-class Indians have broken off their love of traditional stand-alone Indian stores that have no air conditioning, organized parking and other public amenities. Malls throughout the country are getting bigger as they are now being positioned as a one-stop-shop for shopping, entertainment, leisure and eating-out needs rather than a place only for shopping for fashion products. As a consumer we are all unique and this uniqueness is reflected in the consumption pattern and purchase behaviour. The study of consumer behaviour provides us with reasons why consumers differ from one another in buying and using products and services. We receive stimuli from the environment and respond to these stimuli in terms of either buying or not buying product.

Shopping in India has witnessed a revolution with the change in consumer behaviour and the whole format of shopping is also altering. Today consumers look for facilities like cost, comfort, convenience, in-house parking, entertainment, coffee shops, food courts and children play area when they step into the malls and they demand the best of everything. It's not about shopping, dining or watching a movie, it's an experience in itself, a lifestyle activity, and providing this experience is what these malls are building up as their Unique Selling Proposition. The emergence of the mall culture in India is a sign of positive development. The availability of key real estate space in future will determine the faster growth of retailing companies that want to expand at a rapid space. Rapid urbanization coupled with a plethora of infrastructural developments has put many Indian cities on the global market. Retailers now look up to the developing malls for filling their expansion plans. Pollution free, air conditioned shopping ambience in the malls is preferable to the heat, humidity, noise associated with roadside shopping. The mall culture has become a sensation in terms of changing the lifestyle of Indians – the way they are shopping and socializing. The changing lifestyles of consumers, strong income growth and favorable demographic patterns have provided various opportunities as well as set more challenges for retailers. Increase in the number of nuclear families with double –income groups and tight working schedules have left consumers with less time for leisure and entertainment. This has urged the demand for one-stop destinations that may help the people to fully utilize their scant time.

Shopping and shopping behaviour have been interesting subjects for academicians over the decades. There is a gradual shift in shopping environments, significance of shopping in different social/cultural contexts, and individuals' shopping motives and behaviours. However, although shopping malls represent the main consumer habitats in most Western cultures within which all individual, social, or cultural aspects of shopping can be examined at the same time and are the basic shopping contexts with highest customer drawing power; they are rarely used as the unit of analysis in most retailing studies. Specifically, consumers' perceptions of shopping mall attributes are found to have greatest influence on their level of mall satisfaction and patronage likelihood, while personal characteristics are shown to have greater impacts on mall visit frequencies and the amount of time and money spent in malls. On the other hand, although emotional experiences at a mall is proved to be unrelated to shoppers' patronage behaviours, cognitive responses to the mall environment is reported to increase the total amount of mall spending and future mall visits significantly and activity patterns in a mall is found to be positively associated with the time spent in the mall.

The mall phenomenon is changing the way people shop and the way they look for entertainment for the family in India. Malls in India are becoming the single-point destinations for food, shopping and entertainment. Malls have been revolutionizing retailing that is leading to a significant increase in the consumption spending. Customers in India are enjoying the environs of the malls as they provide opportunities for fun and entertainment besides shopping and dining. In India we have nuclear families and malls address all the needs of the family members irrespective of their demographic differences. More than 50% of India's population is less than 25 years of age currently and hence malls focus on teenage and youth segments largely with appropriate offerings in all categories. Changing demographics and psychographics have empowered modern consumer to choose from a variety of value propositions. Growing purchasing power, coupled with changing lifestyle of young customers has a major impact on choices of product categories and retail stores. Consumers are developing new tastes, preferences and buying habits. Changing perceptions and new experiences are reshaping the customers' expectations and motives for buying

decisions. Consumer behaviour is evolving in a newer direction, embracing basic structural changes brought out by the dynamic market forces. Cognitive and emotional factors play a major role, with varying degrees, in determining consumer choices for products and services.

Malls are perceived to be great places to visit, do a good deal of walking around along with shopping and dining. Many malls come with multiple screens in the multiplex format offering the movie entertainment which is very popular in India. So, malls are perceived to be a one-stop destination for family entertainment and for enjoying the fun of shopping and eating out. In the urban areas the frequency of visits to malls is almost once a week. As mall development would happen in tier 2 and tier 3 towns, we can expect to see a similar trend there too. Earlier, many were of the opinion that malls have more footfalls and fewer conversions into business, but this is being addressed by mall management teams effectively ensuring the availability of merchandise and services at the right place, time and price. The malls as a retail format have been emerging very rapidly in India. It began a long ago, with the advent of “shopping complexes”, where the entire structure assumed a ‘build and sell’ real estate model. Since the late nineties, the actual mall format has been founded- a format which only leases out spaces and manages the mall mix with a professional mall management team. This has led to many retailing companies looking at malls as a good retail destination. Over the last few years malls in India have been very successful and can be compared to those in developed economies. They have contributed to the growth of modern retailing in India, giving global brands the promise of good selling space in India.

Indian Retail Industry

Indian retail industry has emerged as one of the most dynamic and fast-paced industries due to the entry of several new players. It accounts for over 10% of the country’s gross domestic product (GDP) and around 8% of the employment. India is the world’s fifth-largest global destination in the retail space.

The sizeable middle class and nearly unexplored retail market in India are the main enticing factors for international retail behemoths seeking to move into newer markets, which will help the Indian retail business grow more quickly. The urban Indian consumer’s purchasing power is increasing, and branded goods in categories like apparel, cosmetics, footwear, watches, beverages, food, and even jewellery are gradually evolving into business and leisure that are well-liked by the urban Indian consumer. The retail sector in India is expected to reach a whopping US\$ 2 trillion in value by 2032, according to a recent analysis by the Boston Consulting Group (BCG).

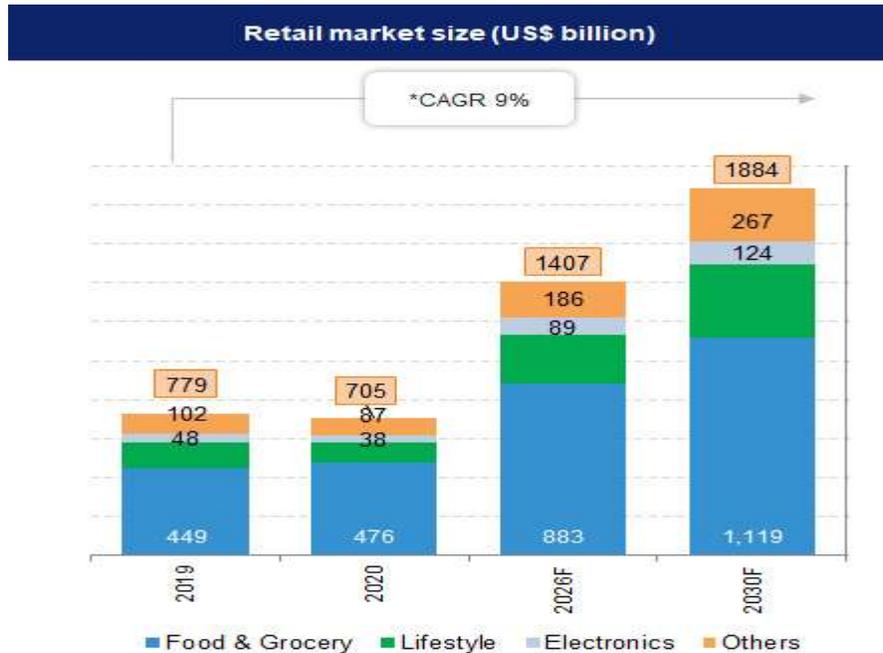


Source: www.ibef.org/industry/retail-india

Retail Market Size

India’s Retail Industry (Kearney Research) is projected to grow at 9% over 2019-2030, from US\$ 779 billion in 2019 to US\$ 1,407 billion by 2026 and more than US\$ 1.8 trillion by 2030. Revenue of India’s offline retailers, also

known as brick and mortar (B&M) retailers, is expected to increase by Rs. 10,000-12,000 crore (US\$ 1.39-2.77 billion) in FY20. India's direct selling industry is expected to be valued at US\$ 2.14 billion by the end of 2021. E-Retail has been a boon during the pandemic and according to a report by Bain & Company in association with Flipkart 'How India Shops Online 2021' the e-retail market is expected to grow to US\$ 120-140 billion by FY26, increasing at approximately 25-30% p.a. over the next 5 years. Despite unprecedented challenges, the India consumption story is still robust. Driven by affluence, accessibility, awareness and attitude, household consumption stood at Rs. 130-140 trillion (US\$ 1.63-1.75 trillion) in 2021.



Source: www.ibef.org/industry/retail-india

Literature Review:-

Narahari & Kuvad (2017) examined customer behaviour towards shopping malls. The main objective of their study is to understand the purchasing behaviour of customers who visit shopping malls and identify gender differences, if any, in terms of purchasing behaviour. The study predominantly proves that the customers belonging to Durgapur and Asansol are quite happy with the overall shopping mall experience and absolutely comfortable as they consider it as "One-Stop Shop" for a wide range of products and brands. However, regarding the safety measure, there is a huge dearth of awareness among customers. Overall, the study finds that there are no predominant differences between men and women in their shopping experiences, choices and purchasing decisions. This is a healthy sign for the enhanced role of women. The research also proves that shopping malls are the best locations for socialization, especially for the younger generation to hangout, spend quality time with family, dine out other than shopping.

Rashmi, Poojary and Deepak (2016) analyze the factors influencing customer behaviour and its impact on loyalty towards shopping malls. The purpose of this paper is to study customer behaviour towards shopping malls with six important dimensions using structural equation modeling. The study concluded that the shoppers' shopping behaviour is having a positive impact on shoppers' satisfaction and loyalty. This implies that improving the factors that affect shoppers' shopping behaviour, will lead to increase in shoppers' satisfaction and loyalty towards the retail shops in selected shopping malls.

Shekar et al., (2016) studied the overall customer satisfaction, response of customers with regard to the availability and quality of products and services offered at shopping malls and the comfort level of the respondents towards shopping in the shopping malls. Sharma (2012) research carried in Mumbai also assessed the overall customer satisfaction. The researcher analyzed the response of customers with regard to the availability and quality of products and services offered at shopping malls and the comfort level of the respondents towards shopping in the shopping malls. On the other hand, research study carried out by Yaaminidevi (2013) in Madurai city, Tamilnadu

with a sample of 100 respondents focused on Facility Management like ambience, infrastructure and traffic were analyzed particularly. She suggested that malls not only cater to the product needs of the customers, but also a source of entertainment, recreation. Khare (2010) on a different note researched the mall shopping behaviour of Indian small town consumers. She focused on how these malls bring functional and experiential benefits and affect the shopping behaviour among small town people, though they are unfamiliar with the concept of malls. The findings show that men and women differ in their perception towards malls on the issue of social interaction and the role of cultural restriction is clearly visible here.

Ahmed and Mayya (2015) conducted a study to examine and analyze the buying behaviour and the perceptions of the customers of shopping malls. Results of their study indicate that consumers have gained a lot of benefits from organized retail on multiple counts like wider choice of products and well-known brands, one stop shopping, new market arrivals, festive offers, huge discounts, and other benefits. The survey results revealed that almost all income groups get benefited through organized retail purchases. Thus, from the consumers' perspective, expansion of organized retailing is more preferred as different malls and corporate retailers compete with each other resulting in reduced prices with reasonable quality products.

Richa Malik, Amman Kapoor and Neha rana (2015), studied the impact of organized retailing on unorganized sector. The objective of their study was to analyze the consumer behavior towards organized and unorganized retailing in India, their source of purchasing and the factors which influence their mall purchasing in India. The researchers concluded with their study, that India's organized and unorganized sector can co-exist and flourish. The growth in India's organized sector is due to change in consumer's behavior. This change was the result of change in income, lifestyles. But in India it is quite skeptical that organized sector will be ever able to overcome the unorganized retail completely. The values, culture and beliefs prompt them to go to shop retail shops where they can get cheap products.

Retailers can extend the consumer behavior towards shopping mall by making their outside atmosphere more charming to purchasers and to stimulate their walks into the store and enable their purchase desire (Shareef Ishar Ali Mohamed, 2015). Exterior atmospheric factors, for example, store appearance, arranging and window show has positive impact on shoppers' behavior (Shareef Ishar Ali Mohamed, 2013). According to Prashar (2013) shopping mall requires appropriate layout and design to attract higher level of customers towards shoppers. To become successful retailer, it is necessary that they will be able to differentiate from their competitors through exterior atmosphere attractiveness for consumers and to encourage them towards their purchase intention.

According to Alam(2012) factors like quality, accessibility, suitability of the product, facility to entertain, food facility and overall service affect the customer's buying attitude towards shopping mall. Unique shopping experience is important for the retailers that start with the store exterior, when customers like the exterior atmosphere of the retail store; they experienced higher pleasure and arousal, which increased purchase intentions (Sangvikar, 2012).

Shekhar M.Raj (2005) conducted a Study on The Changing retail Scenario in India. The big question that has been answered by the research was that whether the hegemony of high streets over Indian retail can continue. Glitzy malls are coming up by dozen all over the country. With their snazzy interiors, an offering that is a mix of shopping, entertainment and leisure, and facilities like packing and childcare, the malls are beginning to pull the traffic from the traditional markets. Today the retailers are threatened from these malls. They are wondering whether they should move to these malls. Quiet changes however are already taking place in the way generation of India have shopped. Today we are much more comfortable with the quality the brands are connote than the word of a shopkeeper about the quality of product. Besides as the cities grow outward and the urban lifestyles hard become hectic. More families now prefer to shop on weekends, preferably not too far from the home and away from madden crowds and even more madding parking attendants. So it is showing that now Indian consumer is ready for organized retail.

Scope of the Study:-

The study focuses on consumer behaviour towards shopping malls. The study begins with information about the mall culture and the way it has changed the behaviour of consumers' towards shopping. Further, a review of literature related to behaviour of consumers towards shopping malls has been mentioned in the study. This covers the research methodology & data collection tools used for the study. A complete analysis of data collected has been

done to reach a conclusion. Detailed information regarding the retail industry and modern retail formats (shopping malls) has also been mentioned.

The focus of this paper is on mall shoppers. Various factors affecting shopping behaviour of consumers in shopping malls have been studied. The study helps us in understanding what exactly a customer looks while shopping in malls. It gives an idea about the shopping pattern in malls and the strategies which are essential for the retailers to attract customers towards shopping malls in this competitive world.

Research Model

The study is intended to understand the changes in the consumer behaviour in their buying experience towards shopping malls. The study is to be made to identify the various factors influencing the shopping experience and buying behaviour. Various models of consumer behaviour are to be reviewed and implemented in this study. This also undertakes to study the various strategies adopted by shopping mall management to fulfil the customer needs or satisfaction.

Objectives of the Study:-

The mall phenomenon in Andhra Pradesh is changing the way people shop. While exhibiting gradual acceptance of the organized retail formats, people are moving out of their zone-based buying behaviour and have significantly increased their spending at the malls. This study covers the following objectives:

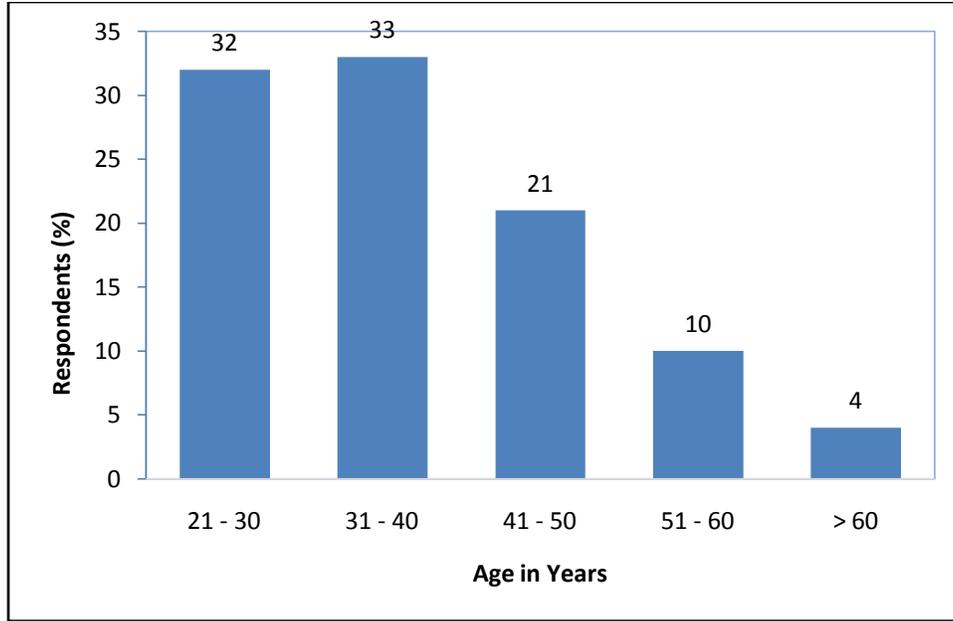
1. To determine and study the key factors that influence consumer behaviour towards shopping malls.
2. To know and analyze the level of satisfaction of customers with regard to shopping malls as one of modern retail format.
3. To analyze consumers' overall shopping experience in malls.
4. To understand the mall management strategies followed by retailers or mall developers to attract customers towards shopping malls.

Research Methodology:-

For the current study, customers were selected visiting shopping malls in Visakhapatnam City in Andhra Pradesh have been covered. It was not feasible to cover all the customers visiting shopping malls. So, for the purpose of this study Convenience sampling method used for selecting the sample. For the study, both primary and secondary data were collected. The primary data has been collected randomly from the 150 respondents those are the customers of CMR Central, CMR Shopping Mall and Chitralaya Mall in the city. To collect primary data a structured, closed-ended, multiple choice questionnaire have been prepared and administered the sample of respondents selected for the study. Questions are related to general profile of respondents, attributes of shopping malls, customer satisfaction related to shopping in malls and factors influencing shopping in malls. For secondary data, existing literature in the form of magazines, papers, reports, books, journals, web sources were consulted.

Results and Findings:-

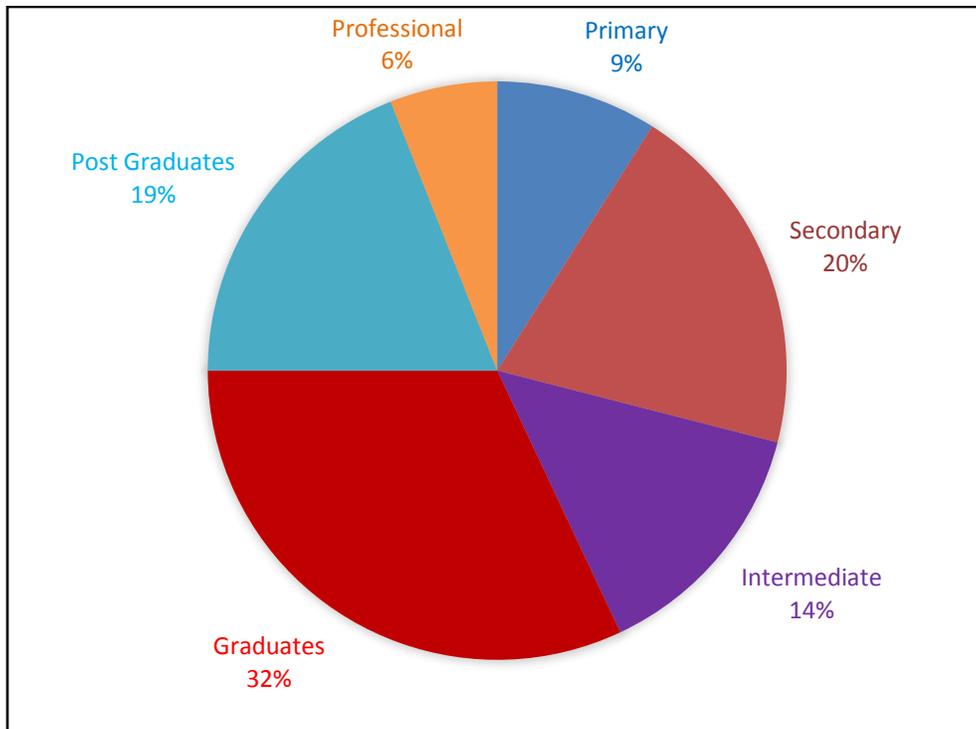
The demographic profile of the respondents presented in terms of age, education, occupation and monthly income. The age of the respondents varied between 21 years and above 60 years (Fig: 1). Out of the total about 65 per cent of the respondents are in the age group of 21-40 years. About 21 per cent of the respondents are in the age group of 41-50 years. The age of about 10 per cent of the respondents varied between 51-60 years while a little over four per cent of the respondents are of more than 60 years. This shows that most of the respondents are young age people visiting shopping malls regularly.



Source: Primary data.

Fig 1:- Age of the Respondents.

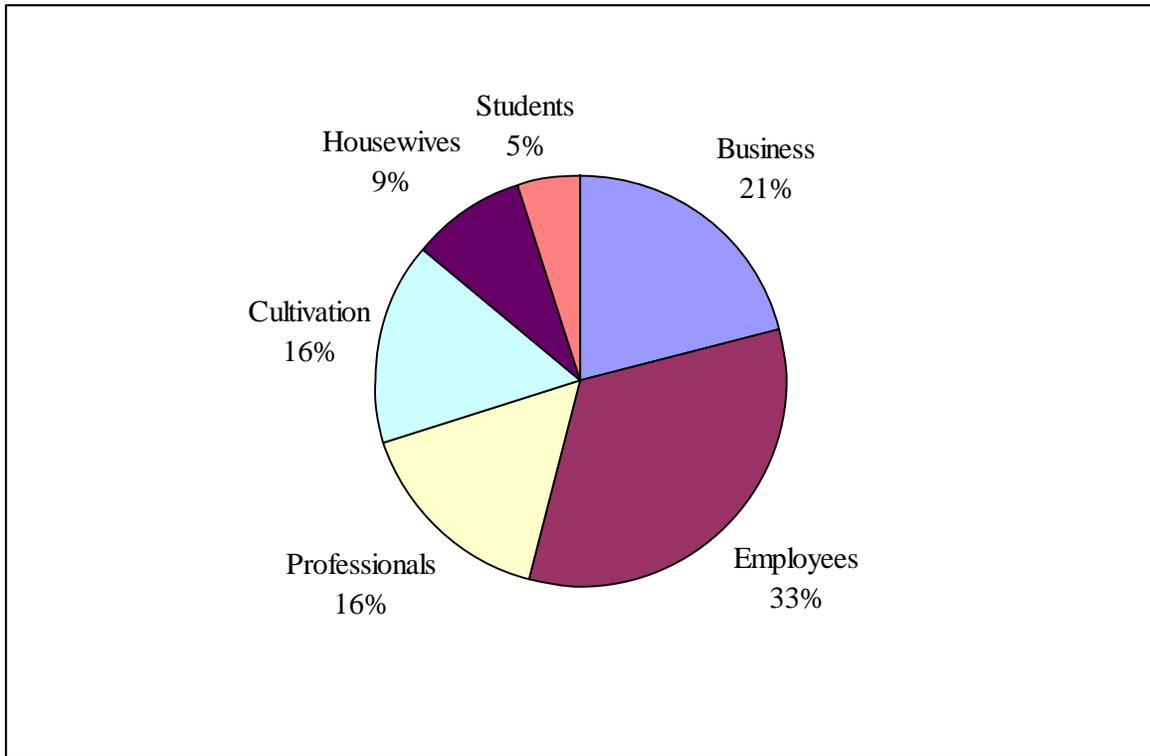
Fig-2 presents the educational background of the respondents. Out of the total 32 per cent are graduates and 19 per cent are Post Graduates. The respondents with intermediate education constitute 14 per cent of the total while 20 per cent of the respondents completed secondary education. Out of the total, nine per cent of the respondents had primary education. Only six per cent of the respondents are having professional education. Thus, all the respondents are literates.



Source: primary data

Fig 2:- Educational Background of the Respondents.

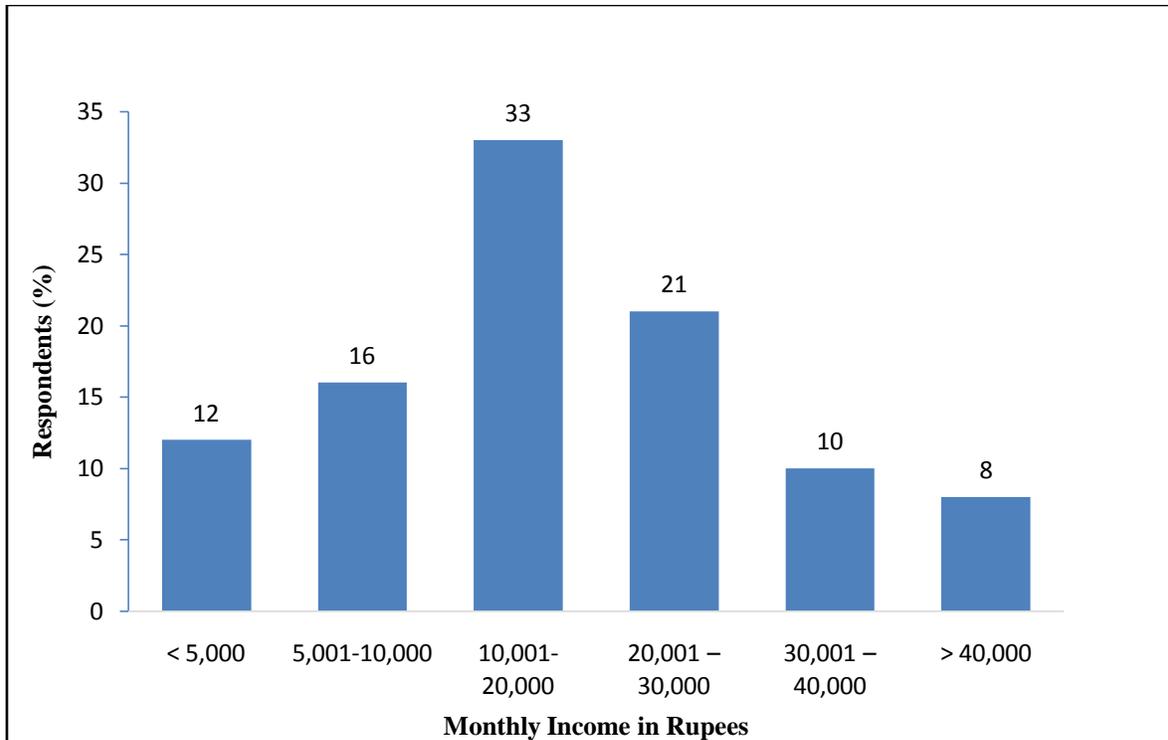
The occupational structure of the respondents was presented in Fig-3. Employees constitute the largest group (33 per cent) followed by businessmen (21 per cent) in the sample. Sixteen per cent each are professionals and cultivators while housewives and students constitute nine per cent and five per cent of the total respectively.



Source: primary data.

Fig 3:- Occupation of the Respondents.

The monthly income of the respondents varied between below Rs. 5,000 and above Rs. 40,000. Fig-4 shows the details of monthly family income of the respondents. The monthly income of majority of the respondents (33 per cent) varied between Rs. 10,001 and Rs. 20,000. The monthly income of 21 per cent of the respondents varied between Rs. 20,001 and Rs. 30,000. The monthly income 16 per cent of the respondents varied between Rs. 5001 and Rs. 10,000. There are 12 per cent of the respondents with the monthly income of less than Rs. 5,000. The monthly income of 10 per cent varied between Rs. 30,001 and Rs. 40,000 and remaining eight per cent of the respondents is more than Rs. 40,000. It can be seen from the table that the majority (54 per cent) of the respondents belongs to varied between Rs. 10,001 and 30,000 which is middle income group.



Source: Primary data.

Fig 4:- Monthly income of the Respondents.

Table 1:- Frequency of Visiting Shopping Malls (Monthly).

Visiting	No. of Respondents	Response in Percentage
Once	48	32.00
Twice	63	42.00
Thrice	32	21.33
More than Thrice	07	04.67
Total	150	100.00

Source: Primary data

Table-1 presents the data relating to frequency of visiting shopping malls in a month. It is evident from the table that 42 per cent of the respondents visit twice in a month. Out of the total 32 per cent of the respondents visit shopping malls once in a month and the respondents of about 21 per cent of respondents visit thrice in a month. The remaining respondents of about 5 per cent visit malls more than thrice in a month. It shows that the majority of the respondents visit malls twice in a month.

Table 2:- Time Spending in Shopping Malls.

Qualification	No. of Respondents	Response in Percentage
Below 1 hr.	26	17.33
1 hr. – 2 hrs.	49	32.67
2 hrs. – 3 hrs.	64	42.67
More than 3 hrs.	11	07.33
Total	150	100.00

Source: primary data.

The data presented in table 2 shows that the respondents spend time in shopping malls. The study revealed that 42.67 per cent of the respondents spending two to three hours time in a mall. 32.67 per cent of the respondents spend time one to two hours in a mall. About 17 per cent spend time below one hour and the remaining only 07.33

per cent of the respondents spend time more than three hours. It shows that the majority of the respondents spend time two to three hours.

Table 3:- Offers Preferred by the Respondents.

Offers Preferred	No. of Respondents	Response in Percentage
Discounts	47	31.33
Free gifts	41	27.33
Exchange	22	14.67
Sales Contest	12	08.00
Coupons	28	18.67
Total	150	100.00

Source: Primary data.

The data presented in table 3 shows that the factors influencing the consumers' behavior while buying in shopping malls by the respondents. The study revealed that 31.33 per cent of the respondents 'Discounts, is the most influencing factor in buying preference. 'Free Gifts' occupied the second place with 27.33 per cent of the respondents out of the total. About 19 per cent of the respondents preferred coupons and about 15 per cent of the retailers preferred 'exchange offers'. Remaining eight per cent of the respondents preferred 'sales contest'. It shows that the majority of the respondents preferred discounts as well as free gifts in shopping malls.

Table 4:- Reasons for Visiting Shopping Malls by the Respondents.

Reason	No. of Respondents	Response in Percentage
Necessity	48	32.00
Pleasure	77	51.33
Leisure	25	16.67
Total	150	100.00

Source: Primary data.

The reasons for visiting shopping malls by the respondents were presented in Table 4. The data shown in the table reveals that 51.33 per cent of the respondents do shopping for pleasure. Necessity is the reason for the respondents of 32 per cent and the remaining of the respondents of about 17 per cent visits the shopping malls for leisure. Among the three reasons the reason 'Pleasure' got the first place followed by 'Necessity' and 'Leisure'.

Table 5:- Purpose of the Respondents in Visiting Shopping Malls.

Purpose	No. of Respondents	Response in Percentage
Shopping	69	46.00
Window Shopping	21	14.00
Entertainment	32	21.33
Eat Food	09	06.00
Meet Friends	19	12.67
Total	150	100.00

Source: Primary data.

Table-5 depicts the data relating to purpose of the respondents to visit shopping malls. It is evident from the table that 46 per cent of the respondents visiting malls for 'Shopping'. The respondents of 21.33 percent coming to shopping malls for 'Entertainment' and 14 per cent of the respondents for 'Window Shopping'. There are 12.67 per cent of the respondents visit shopping malls for 'Meet Friends' and remaining six per cent of the respondents to 'Eat Food' in malls. It shows that the majority of the respondents are visiting malls for shopping.

Table 6:- Opinion on Shopping Experience of the Respondents.

Purpose	No. of Respondents	Response in Percentage
Excellent	06	04.00
Very Good	52	34.67
Good	74	49.33
Average	14	09.33

Poor	04	02.67
Total	150	100.00

Source: primary data

The opinion on satisfaction of the respondents is presented in Table 6. It can be seen from the table that about 50 per cent of the respondents opined that the shopping experience is 'Good'. Out of the total 34.67 per cent of the respondents feel the shopping experience is 'Very Good' and about 10 per cent feel 'Average'. The study revealed that the respondent of four percent says 'Excellent' and the remaining respondents of about three per cent opined 'Poor'. It shows that the majority of the respondents are satisfied with the shopping experience in shopping malls.

Conclusion:-

The study analyzed various factors influencing consumer behavior towards shopping malls. This study helps in identifying changing buying behavior patterns of various categories of customers and brings out the marketing strategies of the shopping malls to encourage more foot falls. The findings will help shop owner in understanding the service gap in their operations. The study will help consumers in getting competitive service and to help shopkeepers to bring change in shopping experience. Mall management can conduct many events to attract the public by cultural shows which help to promote local culture. They can conduct weekly and monthly cultural events so that they can attract many people as they prefer to visit on a weekly and monthly basis. Retailers can attract these consumers by pricing strategy. The retailers can also use many promotional strategies to attract the consumers. Multi shops with multiband facilities are available in the shopping mall. Availability of the products has to satisfy the consumers, which makes them to repurchase the product. Shopping malls have to focus on the consumer expectations. Buying behaviour of the customer will vary from one consumer to another. Shopping malls have to create an effective marketing and advertisement strategies to attract more customers that may influence buying behaviour of consumers. Shopping malls have become a fashion and a new lifestyle among the present generation. The mall's culture is increasingly influencing shopping behaviour and patterns of consumers. The retailers should give more attention to these changes in order to survive in the market.

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