Volume 2, Issue 3 March 2016 ISSN NO: 2454 - 2326

North Asian International Research Journal Consortium

North Asian International Research Journal Of Multidisciplinary

IRJIF IMPACT FACTOR: 3.52

NAIRJC JOURNAL PUBLICATION

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ISSN NO: 2454 - 2326

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North Asian International Research Journal of Multidisciplinary ISSN: 2454 - 2326 Vol. 2, Issue 3 March 2016

IRJIF IMPACT FACTOR: 3.52

A PROJECT ON CONSUMERS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS MALLS IN MANGALURU (KARNATAKA STATE)

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ABSTRACT

The malls in India developed mainly because of rapid economic growth, increase in disposable income, and increasing number of High net worth individuals, low cost operations and government support. In India mall culture was started in 1990 in the form of Spencer Plaza, Cross Roads, Ansal Plaza, etc. This study primarily focuses on the consumers ***buying behaviour*** *in a mall. It helps us to understand the mind-set up the consumers by which we can develop more products according to their needs. Majority of the respondents visit Malls on a regular basis, so the Malls should introduce discounts, coupons, loyalty points since customers always* ***hunt for better bargains****. The Malls must strengthen their* ***brand image****,* ***store charisma*** *and* ***Mall loyalty*** *through Social Medias like Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp, YouTube, etc. They must offer incentives to all those who recommend others to become members of the Malls. The Malls should improve upon the safety and parking facilities.*

Key Words: ***Buying behaviour, store charisma, mall loyalty, customer delight.***

INTRODUCTION

For the past few years researches have been working to establish a relationship between shopping malls and income level of people. The reason for conducting such a research is to find out which sections of the society do a lot of shopping in malls. This study is conducted with the aim to develop between shopping in malls and the income level of the people. This study primarily focuses on the consumers buying behaviour in a mall. It helps us to understand the mind-set up the consumers by which we can develop more products according to their needs.

The concept of shopping malls in India is largely gaining popularity as it attracts customers by way of excellent ambience, style, elegance, having the potential to make one shop and enjoy the experience as well. Spencer's Plaza, Big Bazar, City Centre are the big players today. The reason why shopping malls are so popular lies in their international appeal. It seems to be a thing of history when shopping malls had their presence in places like Singapore, Dubai, etc. In fact, now they are everywhere around us.

People find these malls to be the best place to shop or hang out in the summer heat as they offer free entry to a completely air conditioned complex with good music playing all around all lots of window shopping opportunities which is appreciated by all. Though malls are equally popular among all ages, the true lovers of multiplexes are the youngsters for whom malls are the "ultimate place to be". These malls serve their various purposes like shopping, watching movies, dating, or just to hang out though they really don't need a purpose for being there.

These malls have changed the trends to an extend that glamour that could be seen only on the silver screen as now come to our city and we can actually see it in our neighbourhood. "Performance beyond expectation is all the more significant in the back drop of adverse report and predictions on this sector", said **Amitabh Taneja**, Director (India) of international Council of Shopping Centres.

Retail is one of the oldest business in India that came into existence when people started producing surplus goods. The concept of malls was originally conceived as a community centre where people would gather for shopping culture and social interactions. Mall attract consumers through the promise of making available a wide range of different categories of goods made available at a single location. The malls in India develop mainly because of rapid economic growth, increase in disposable income, and increasing number of High net worth individuals, low cost operations and government support. In India mall culture was started in 1990 in the form of Spencer Plaza, Cross Roads, Ansal Plaza, etc.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Baltas, Argouslidis and **Skarmeas** (2010) demonstrated that shopper characteristics are related to dispersion of patronage among more stores. Shopping behaviour appears to be partly driven by cost–benefit trade-offs, suggesting differential responsiveness to incentives by customers. **Ranjan** (2010) in his research examined the impact of retail outlets and malls on the purchase behaviour of middle class consumers. He comments that the successful organised retail chains and also the malls in the country, today operate at regional segments and are not aiming at the nationwide presence, at least for the time being. According to the author, in order to reach all classes of the society in India, organised retail formats should design a comprehensive and prospective business model which offers the quality product / services at affordable prices and generate more socially balanced business. **Devgan** and **Kaur** (2010) in their paper have mentioned six factors, upon whose adaptability the success of any shopping mall would largely depend. These were value for money, customer delight, information security, credibility, and **store charisma** and product excellence. The authors explicated that the modern day customers lay more emphasis on value for money; however, almost equal weightage is given to comfort and enjoyment while shopping from malls. **Chebat, Sirgy** and **Grzeskowiak**, (2010) opined that one way to generate more traffic in a mall is to build a strong mall image perceived by shoppers as delivering a unique bundle of benefits. Such effort has to be guided by a performance metric, namely a comprehensive measure of mall image. They hypothesized that mall image could best be conceptualized in terms of five major retail branding dimensions: access, store atmosphere, price and promotion, cross–category assortment and within–category assortment. **Bhupta** and **Vaish** (2010) in their study stated that developers and retailers need to plan the merchandising by the customer needs. Just the way a store has to choose appropriate merchandise, so does a mall needs to have an excellent mix of good retailers. To get couple of anchor tenants is not enough to make a mall successful. **Chebat, Hedhlia** and **Sirgy** (2009) expressed that understanding the antecedents of shopping **mall loyalty** remains one of the crucial issues for both mall managers and retailing researchers. They proposed a conceptual model that explained the psychological process by which shopper–based mall equity (e.g., the perceived mall value) generated **mall**

loyalty. They collected data from shoppers in two urban North-American shopping malls and the empirical results generally supported the model: **Mall loyalty** was significantly predicted by the commitment that shoppers held toward the mall; and that commitment, in turn, was significantly predicted by shoppers' positive awareness of the mall's characteristics, and shoppers' self–congruity. The latter construct, in turn, was significantly predicted by mall image dimensions such as the mall's environment and the quality of the products and services found in the mall. They also found the model to be invariant between female and male shoppers. **Rajagopal** (2009) said that the shopping malls contribute to business more significantly than traditional markets, which were viewed as simple convergence of supply and demand. Shopping malls attract buyers and sellers and induce customers providing enough time to make choices as well as a recreational means of shopping. However, competition between malls, congestion of markets and traditional shopping centres has led mall developers and management to consider alternative methods to build excitement with customers. **Sinha** and **Krishnaswamy** (2009) stated that customers show clear preferences in choosing a store. In most cases, they tend to set their expectations based on the positioning of store. They tend to associate store with the value propositions promised by the stores and respective formats. Store formats stand for their own mix of values that helps customers maximise the benefit. **Bhattacharjee** (2009) highlighted the attraction points of shopping food and groceries in hypermarkets. He identified seven attraction points to visit a store and a retail format: price, promotions, hangout place, product range, product mix, ease of travel and parking comfort. He further said that the tolerance to commute is lowering. The people are willing to go 4 km or even more for hypermarkets / shopping malls, while for small format modern stores not more than half a kilometre. Expectation for a kirana store is less than 500 metres.

Hemalathaa and **Ravichandran** (2009) in their study established the motivational factors that influence mall visit by older generation consumers. The motivational factor, social shopping was seen as the most dominating factor. Most of the older generation consumers go shopping with friends and family for the purpose of socializing. They enjoy socializing with others when they do their shopping. For them shopping with friends and family is a social occasion. Idea shopping is the second significant motivational factor for visiting malls by generation consumer. They go shopping to keep up with trends, to keep up with new fashions, to see what new products are available and to experience new things. Role shopping is the third significant factor, that reflects the enjoyment that shoppers derive from shopping for others, the influence that this activity has on the shoppers' feelings and moods, and the excitement and intrinsic joy felt by shoppers when finding the perfect gift for others. Many respondents talked about the enjoyment they obtained from shopping for other people, explaining that shopping for their friends and family is very important to them and that it makes them feel good. Some respondents described the positive feelings they got from finding the perfect gift for someone. In essence, people seek ego enhancement to their self–concepts through the addition of satisfying roles and 'acting out' the role's responsibilities. Fourth important factor is the adventure shopping. Adventure shopping refers to shopping for stimulation, adventure and the feeling of being in another world. A significant number of respondents reported that they go shopping for the sheer excitement and adventure of the shopping trip. These informants often described the shopping experience in terms of adventure, thrills, stimulation, excitement and entering a different universe of exciting sights, smells and sounds. Fifth important factor is the value shopping. Value shopping refers to shopping for sales, looking for discounts and hunting for bargains. **Trivedi** (2008) stated that where the organized sector poses a cut–throat competition for the kiranas, the fact still remains that India being a country with diversified social classes, there is a scope for both to survive. The emergence of a developed retail sector will pose a competition rather than a threat to the traditional stores which would help these stores change their outlook and ways of working. Looking at the situation from a different perspective 'Kirana' stores target the masses whereas organized retail services cater to a specific class of people. The mall going consumers are more or less global, that is, they have moved from price to value. This section is more value conscious, as they will buy the most exclusive item and concurrently, will want to acquire the finest price for it. A price conscious consumer, alternatively, will look at price alone and choose a product which is the cheapest.

OBJECTIVES

1) To study socio-demographic profile of the consumers of the respondent malls.
2) To study the factors influencing consumers' buying behaviour.
3) To study the perception of consumers towards malls.
4) To find out the factors which attract consumers towards the malls.
5) To evaluate the future scope of malls in Mangaluru.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this study, "Consumers' Perception towards Malls in Mangaluru" have been studied by collecting and gathering data from the consumers who visit the different malls in Mangaluru namely, City Centre, Bharath Mall, Pio Mall, Forum Fiza Mall.

DATA COLLECTIONS

The data collection method used in this research is questionnaire method. The data are systematically collected from the respondents. A structured questionnaire has been prepared to get the relevant information from the respondents. The questionnaire consists of a variety of questions presented to the respondents for their response. The various types of questions used in this survey are open-ended, closed-ended, and multiple choice questions. The customers of City Centre, Bharath Mall, Pio Mall and Forum Fiza Mall are the sample units in this survey. The sample size for this study is 169.

STATISTICAL TOOLS AND METHODS USED

Percentage Analysis, Bar Diagrams, Graphs, Charts, Pie Diagrams, are used for analysing the perception of the consumers.

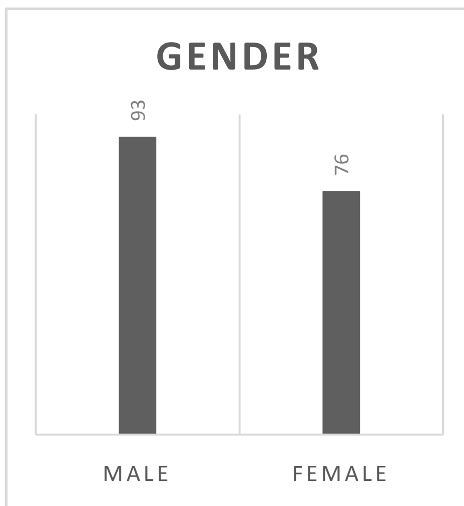
Sources of Data

Primary data was collected from the sample area by using Survey Method from the consumers of City Centre, Bharath Mall, Pio Mall, and Forum Fiza Mall of Mangaluru Taluk of Dakshina Kannada. The information on the consumers' perception at the Macro level was collected from various secondary sources like, research articles published in various journals, books, earlier studies conducted and internet articles.

Table 1: Gender wise classification of respondents.

Particulars	Number	Percentage
Male	93	55
Female	76	45
Total	169	100

Source: Survey Data



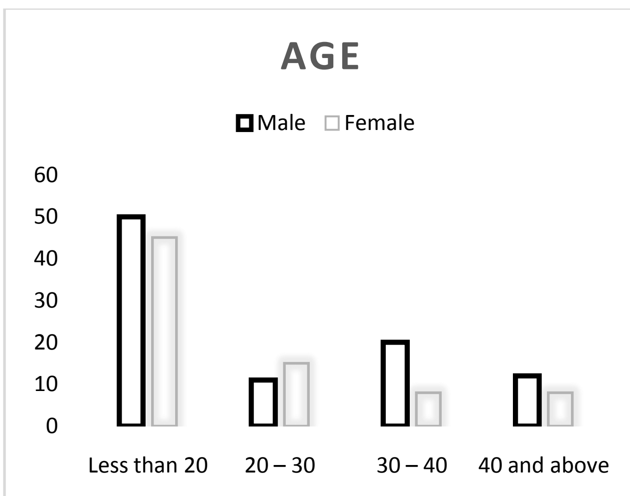
Inference – Table 1

To study the perception of consumers towards malls in Mangaluru, 169 consumers from the malls of Mangaluru were selected. Among 169 consumers selected, 55% are male and 45% are female.

Table 2: Age wise classification

Particulars	Male	Percentage	Female	Percentage	Total
Less than 20	50	53	45	58	95
20 – 30	11	12	15	20	26
30 – 40	20	22	8	11	28
40 and above	12	13	8	11	20
Total	93	100	76	100	169

Source: Survey Data



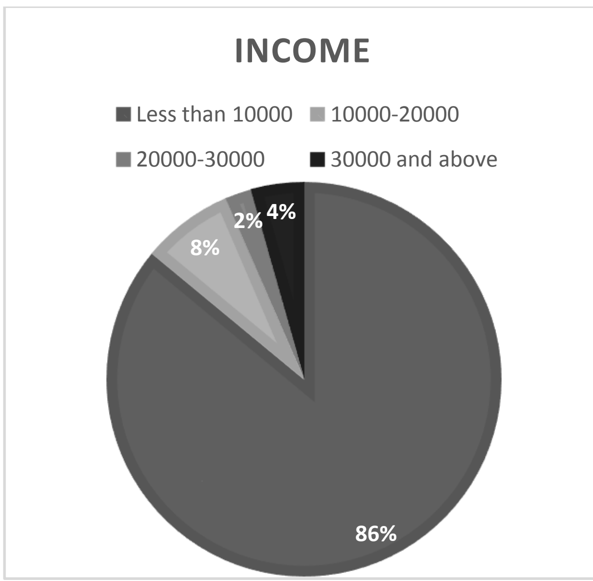
Inference – Table 2

It is evident from the survey that, out of 93 Male consumers selected and 76 Female consumers selected 26 consumers belong to an age group of 20 - 30 years (out of them 7% are Males and 9% are Females), 28 consumers belong to an age group of 30 – 40 years (out of them 12% are Males and 5% are Females), 20 consumers are 40 years and above (out of them 7% are Males and 5% are Females) and 95 consumers are lesser than 20 years of age (out of them 30% are Males and 27% are Females).

Table 3: Income wise (Monthly) classification of consumers

Particulars	Male	Percentage	Female	Percentage	Total
Less than 10000	80	86	44	58	124
10000-20000	7	7	20	26	27
20000-30000	2	2	9	12	11
30000 and above	4	5	3	4	7
Total	93	100	76	100	169

Source: Survey Data



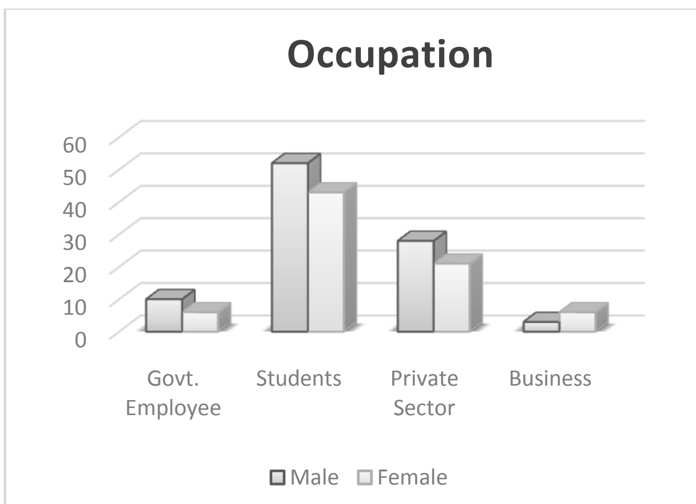
Inference – Table 3

It is observed from the Table them, 27 consumers have a monthly income of ₹ 10000 to ₹ 20000 (out of them 4% are Males and 12% are Females), 11 consumers have a monthly income of ₹20000 to ₹30000 (out of them 1% are Males and 5% are Females), 7 consumers have a monthly income of ₹30000 and above (out of them 2% are Males and 2% are Females) and 124 consumers have a monthly income of less than ₹10000 (out of them 47% are Males and 26% are Females).

Table 4: Classification of Consumers on the basis of occupation

Particulars	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Govt. Employee	10	6	16	9
Students	52	43	95	57
Private Sector	28	21	49	29
Business	3	6	9	5
Total	93	76	169	100

Source: Survey Data



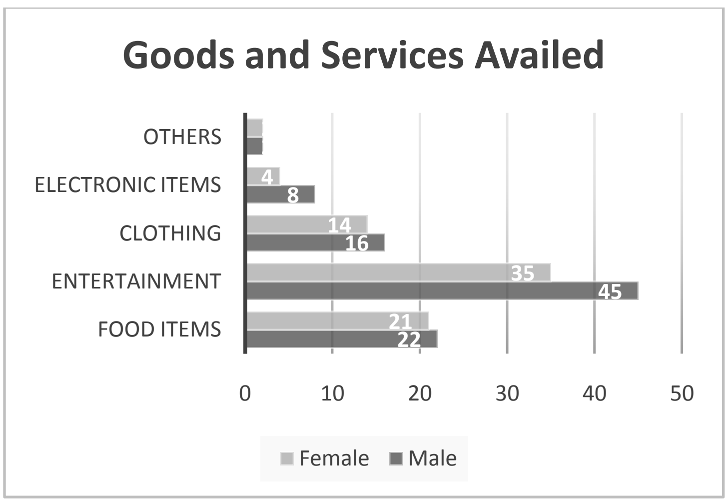
Inference – Table 4

It is found them 57% of the consumers are students (out of them 52 are Males and 43 are Females), 29% are working in the Private Sector (out of them 28 are Males and 21 are Females), 5% run their own business (out of them 3 are Males and 6 are Females) and 9% are Govt. Employees (out of them 10 are Males and 6 are Females).

Table 5: Classification of Consumers on the basis of goods and services availed at the Malls

Particulars	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Food Items	22	21	43	25
Entertainment	45	35	80	47
Clothing	16	14	30	18
Electronic items	8	4	12	7
Others	2	2	4	3
Total	93	76	169	100

Source: Survey Data



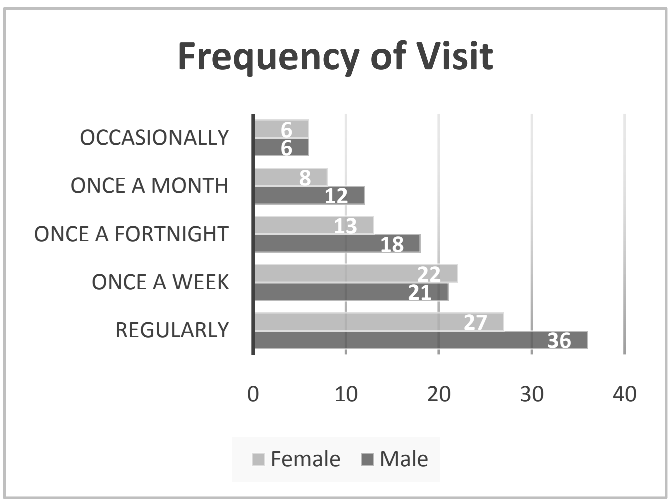
Inference – Table 5

It is clear from the Table that 47% of the consumers go to Malls for entertaining themselves (out of them 45 are Males and 35 are Females), 18% visit the Malls for buying clothes (out of them 16 are Males and 14 are Females), 7% visit the Malls for buying electronic items (out of them 8 are Males and 4 are Females), 25% visit the Malls for purchasing / consuming food items (out of them 22 are Males and 21 are Females), and 3% visit the Malls for purchasing other items.

Table 6: Frequency of the visit of Consumers to the Malls

Particulars	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Regularly	36	27	63	37
Once a week	21	22	43	25
Once a fortnight	18	13	31	18
Once a month	12	8	20	12
Occasionally	6	6	12	8
Total	93	76	169	100

Source: Survey Data



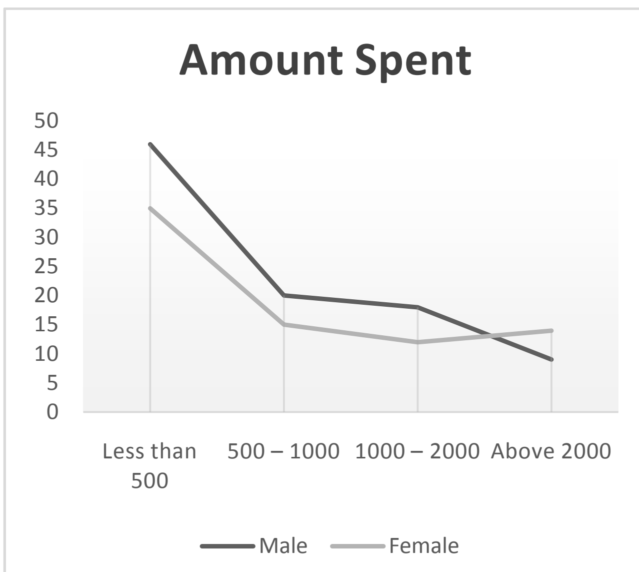
Inference – Table 6

It is clear from the above Table that 25% of the consumers visit the Mall once a week (out of them 21 are Males and 22 are Females), 18% visit Malls once a fortnight (out of them 18 are Males and 13 are Females), 12% visit the Malls once a month (out of them 12 are Males and 8 are Females), 8% visit the Malls Occasionally (out of them 6 are Males and 6 are Females) and 37% visit the Malls regularly (out of them 36 are Males and 27 are Females).

Table 7: Amount spent on every visit to the Mall

Particulars	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Less than 500	46	35	81	48
500 – 1000	20	15	35	21
1000 – 2000	18	12	30	18
Above 2000	9	14	23	13
Total	93	76	169	100

Source: Survey Data



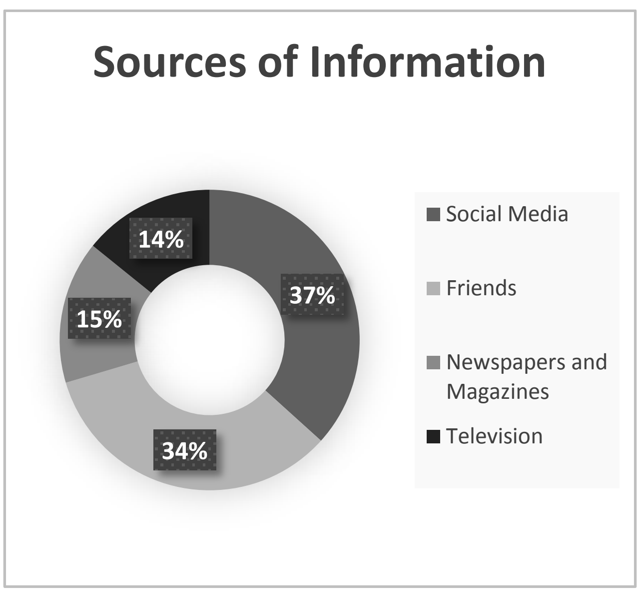
Inference – Table 7

This Table shows that 21% of the consumers spend on an average ₹ 500 - ₹1000 on every visit to the Mall (out of them 20 are Males and 15 are Females), 18% of the consumers spend ₹ 1000 - ₹2000 (out of them 18 are Males and 12 are Females), 13% of consumers spend above ₹2000 (out of them 9 are Males and 14 and Females) and 48% of the consumers spend less than ₹500(out of them 46 are Males and 35 are Females).

Table 8: Sources of Information Obtained

Particulars	Number	Percentage
Social Media	62	37
Friends	57	34
Newspapers and Magazines	26	15
Television	24	14
Total	169	100

Source: Survey Data



Inference – Table 8

It is clear from the Table that 37% of the consumers get to know about these Malls through Social Medias like (Facebook, Whatsapp, Hike, Twitter, YouTube), 34% from Friends, 15% from Newspapers and Magazines and 14% from Televisions.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Findings

- Out of 169 respondents selected for the survey, 55% are Males and 45% are Females.
- 57% of the respondents who visit Malls are students and 16% are working in Private Sectors.
- 56% of the respondents belong to the age group of less than 20 years.
- 73% of the respondents' monthly income is less than ₹10000.
- 47% of the respondents visit Malls for Entertainment purpose and 25% for purchasing and consuming food items.
- 35% of the respondents visit Malls regularly and 25% visit once a week.
- 48% of the respondents spend less than ₹500 on each visit to the Mall.
- 37% of the respondents get information about the Malls through Social Medias and 34% from their friends.

Conclusion

- Since majority of the visitors to the Malls consist of students, they should be the main target group for the Malls. Therefore, more emphasis need to be laid on the student category of visitors.
- Most of the respondents who visit Malls is for entertainment and for food. Hence, more preference should be given to cinemas, music concerts, games, and provide variety of food outlets for **customer delight**.
- Majority of the respondents visit Malls on a regular basis, so the Malls should introduce discounts, coupons, loyalty points since customers always **hunt for better bargains**.
- The Malls must strengthen their **brand image**, **store charisma** and **Mall loyalty** through Social Medias like Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp, YouTube, etc. They must offer incentives to all those who recommend others to become members of the Malls.
- The Malls should improve upon the safety and parking facilities.

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