

Emotional States and Consumer Purchase Behavior in Shopping Malls: An Explanatory Model

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Abstract

Today's shopping centers are real venues for leisure where consumers amuse themselves while shopping. 'Shopping' has become nowadays a leisure alternative and, therefore, new orientations to understand this phenomenon must study variables related to the excitement, entertainment and satisfaction provided by the shopping experience.

Nevertheless, despite the great importance achieved by shopping malls in the retail structure worldwide and the increasing need of further research to define efficient business strategies, there is still scarce literature which explains consumers' purchase behavior in shopping malls from a global perspective.

The purpose of this study is, therefore, twofold. From a conceptual viewpoint, it proposes an explanatory model to analyze consumer purchase behavior in shopping malls by means of the study of consumer perceived excitement as a variable which influences consumers' emotional state during their stay at a shopping mall.

From an empirical perspective, it attempts to identify the expected purchase behavior as a consequence of experiencing such emotional state.

Methodology/approach

Our study makes use of structural equation model analysis to validate its research hypotheses. The control variable used is perceived excitement.

Findings

The results obtained confirm that most visitors to the mall fall into the ‘*recreational*’ segment; in other words, they ‘go shopping’ for amusement, considering it as a way of entertainment. We can state that the phenomenon of consumption can no longer be satisfactorily explained within the classic perspective of information processing and decision making, according to rational or functional criteria exclusively. The concept of ‘leisure-consumption’ is associated to pleasant feelings generated by excitement and, therefore, shopping malls have become strong generators of experiences for consumers with great influence on their purchase behavior.

Research limitations/implications

This study is limited since we only observed consumer reactions within the Spanish market. Undoubtedly, it would be interesting to compare the results obtained with those obtained in other population contexts.

Originality/value of paper

To our knowledge, no other study has approached consumer behavior in shopping malls from a leisure perspective by modeling the relationship among the three previously-mentioned factors (tenant variety, physical environment and involvement with shopping), perceived excitement and extended stay, and consumer responses (intention to return, cover longer distances and expenditure increase) integrated into a single model.

Practical implications

Our results provide some guidelines to allocate resources and undertake organizational actions in shopping malls with the aim of increasing economic performance as well as consumer satisfaction. Our model allows more accurate detection of areas in which shopping malls can react with better response; consequently, the model could be useful for mall managers as an agenda to set performance objectives and organizational aims to make their offer be more competitive.

Keywords: Shopping Malls, Shopping centers, Consumer Behavior, Leisure, Entertainment, Customer Satisfaction, Experiential Marketing

Introduction

Commercial structures in Europe have undergone considerable transformation in the last three decades. Such transformation stands out due to the increase of the number of shopping centers, which proliferate throughout the European geography. New malls add a wide series of leisure alternatives to their range of products and services as their most outstanding element, to give rise to entertainment supply, thus becoming true spaces for leisure consumption visited by consumers who 'go shopping'.

The activity of 'going shopping' is then opposed, to some extent, to the traditional concept of 'doing the shopping'. The latter may be defined as the activity of purchasing products to cover necessities or due to convenience reasons, a reason for which it had traditionally been considered as a fundamentally rational activity. Consequently, a person purchased the products he/she needed, adjusting the activity to a limited budget.

This functional viewpoint of shopping has remained quite limited if we bear in mind the characteristics of new tenants, where products and services are purchased. 'Going shopping' has become part of our leisure time and, therefore, a new orientation to understand this phenomenon should study variables related to the excitement, entertainment and satisfaction provided by the shopping experience.

Nowadays, 'going shopping' is understood as an activity to purchase goods and services involving such varied concepts as entertainment, an activity to fill spare or free time, a way to enjoy spending money without a limited budget, a satisfactory emotional experience, a way to experience pleasant sensations while shopping, etc. Therefore, it is a different kind of consumption.

In spite of the importance gathered by malls and the usefulness of research aimed at defining efficient business strategies, literature focused on explaining consumers' purchase behavior in malls in an integrate or global manner is still scarce.

Due to all the previous reasons, the objective we pursue in the present research is to deepen into the knowledge of consumer purchase behavior in malls through the approach of an explanatory model in which the following items will be analyzed in depth:

1. The previous variables exerting influence on the emotional state experienced by an individual while at the mall, more precisely on perceived excitement. The wide variety of tenants, mall physical environment and the involvement of the individual in the activity of 'going shopping' are analyzed
2. Expected behavior responses as a consequence of experiencing such emotional state. The consumer's will to extend the stay at the mall, the intention to return in the future, tendency to cover longer distances and expenditure increase are tested

Background and Model Development

The first studies on modeling consumer purchase behavior attempted to explain the variables and steps followed by shoppers along the purchase process. These global models (which nowadays remain far in time) contributed an explanation to consumer behavior in all kinds of commercial outlets, without differentiating the characteristics of different sorts of situations.

However, 'doing the shopping' in a discounter widely differs from 'going shopping' at a mall. Besides, those studies considered that individuals are essentially rational and look for maximizing purchase utility through their purchase actions (Engel *et al.*, 1968; Howard & Sheth, 1969). A rational and functional viewpoint would not be capable of explaining nowadays the purchase behavior of a consumer who enjoys 'going shopping'.

The concept of marketing experiences is currently on full effect. Under this standpoint, the purchase action is explained from its consideration as an experience in which emotional and hedonistic aspects acquire importance against simply utilitarian benefits. According to the foregoing, marketing action consists on providing the individual full experiences through stimuli aimed at his/her senses and mind, so that they may become memorable experiences as long as the individual's involvement is achieved (Pine & Gilmore, 1998; Schmitt, 2006). Malls are clear examples of this increased tendency to apply this kind of marketing.

For that reason, one is likely to wonder about the variables which may contribute to the generation of positive emotional states and memorable experiences in consumers. The present study analyzes some of them separately and, making use of them, gives shape to the explanatory model presented here.

Variables in the model

The first variable considered is tenant variety (supply variety), which represents one of the main appeals of malls. The possibility of buying in different shops without moving from one place to another is attractive and comfortable.

However, literature considers the study of tenant variety from varied viewpoints. For some authors, supply shapes the individual's image of the mall, thus becoming an important variable for differentiation (Nevin & Houston, 1980; McGoldrick, 1992; Wee, 1986). For other authors, supply is an important variable when choosing the outlet to visit and the frequency in which it is visited. In fact, for individuals with high purchase involvement, the fact of exploring new shops/tenants is perceived as an appeal which conditions their choice of a mall among a series of available alternatives (Bellenger *et al.*, 1977; Bloch *et al.*, 1986; Berman & Evans, 1995).

Bellenger & Korgaonkar (1980) state that mall's tenant variety is an incentive for the 'recreational' consumer (Bellenger *et al.*, 1977), who enjoys 'going shopping', perceiving it as a leisure activity. According to this, malls are more appealing, since they count on a wide range of shops, restaurants and leisure tenants. As a consequence, an increase of time staying in the tenant is ascertained, together with a resulting increase in the probability to keep on purchasing or collecting information which may be used in that very visit or subsequent ones (Brown, 1991).

On the other hand, supply variety has been related to a greater sensation of excitement or entertainment (Wakefield & Baker, 1998), which turns out to be an aspect of huge appeal for teenagers, who also especially value the availability of fashionable brands among people of their age (Baker & Hayto, 2000).

Based on the foregoing, we raise that:

H1: The variety of tenants exerts a positive influence on consumer perceived excitement

H2: The variety of tenants exerts a positive influence on the consumer's desire to extend the stay at the mall

The second variable regarding emotional states taken into consideration is the physical environment of the mall. Such environment has substantially changed in the last few years from comfortable, small and mediocre tenants to luxurious and avant-garde spaces of sophisticated architectural design. Many variables have been analyzed in previous researches regarding the physical environment of malls, from background music to temperature, colors, odors, etc. Turley & Milliman (2000) counted up to 57 different background variables. The conclusions drawn have also been very varied.

As it is revealed by literature, the physical environment of the mall acts as a mediator in experienced emotional states, since environment stimuli may induce exaltation experiences and joy, or —on the contrary— sadness and dejection (Donovan & Rossiter, 1982; Sheman *et al.*, 1997; Wakefield & Baker, 1998; Bigné *et al.*, 2006).

On the other hand, mall environment also takes part in the formation of the image that consumers build about the mall, since it is through mall environment that consumers project their expected quality, services or excitement (Sharma & Stafford, 2000). For those reasons, decoration, pleasant atmosphere, lighting, etc. influence the choice of the mall where shopping is carried out, as well as visit repetition. This means that mall atmosphere constitutes an important mediator in consumer fidelization (Bellenger *et al.*, 1997) and global satisfaction in the shopping experience (Bigné *et al.*, 2006).

Therefore, we propose that:

H3: Mall physical environment exerts a positive influence on consumer perceived excitement

H4: Mall physical environment exerts a positive influence on the consumer's desire to extend the stay at the mall

These two analyzed variables (tenant variety and mall environment) are completely under control of shopping-mall managers. However, there is another kind of variables, depending on individuals, which may condition their emotional state and the results of their purchases to an important extent —it is the case of involvement and motivation toward the purchase experience.

Involvement is an inner variable of motivational nature which reflects the degree of importance entailed by the decision of an individual in terms of his/her objectives and values. Experience demonstrates that some individuals enjoy 'going shopping' and, therefore, plan going on their own or accompanied; on the other hand, some others only set such a plan to buy something they need. The former group shows high involvement in the purchase activity, while the latter not.

Regarding different kinds of involvement, literature reveals that consumers may show involvement toward the product or message and that, in some cases, such involvement may be situational or enduring according to its temporal extension. This work focuses on *enduring involvement*, since it gives rise to interest in the undertaken activity in consumers, thus not

being related to the purchase of any particular product (Zaichowski, 1985; Solomon, 1997), denoting involvement of general nature in the activity of ‘going shopping’.

Literature shows many researches referred to the individuals’ motivations and involvement within the commercial field. Bellenger *et al.* (1977) classified consumers of malls into two well-differentiated typologies according to the kind of motivations to go shopping. ‘Rational consumer’ values comfort, the practical aspect of the visit and prices first, while the ‘recreational consumer’ values brand quality and service availability. The latter is an individual who enjoys going shopping and considers it as an entertainment. This study is supplemented with that developed by Burns & Warren (1995), who analyzed originality motivation by analyzing the consumer who moves long distances looking for supplies which are not within reach of everyone.

Other researches have found that individuals with high enduring involvement in purchases experience higher excitement and pleasure sensations (Wakefield & Baker, 1998; Jones, 1999). In the case of teenagers, the age group with higher involvement in purchases, socialization is their first motivation to visit malls (Baker & Hayto, 2000; Bryce & Mottner, 2005).

Therefore, it can be assumed that:

H5: Involvement with shopping exerts a positive influence on consumer perceived excitement at a mall

H6: Involvement with shopping exerts a positive influence on the consumer’s desire to extend the stay at the mall

Behavior derived from positive emotional states

The three variables described (tenant variety, environment and involvement) are, to a great extent, responsible for the emotional states experienced by consumers at a shopping mall. Satisfaction, joy and excitement, on one hand, or annoyance, frustration or sadness, on the other, are some of the emotions which an individual may experience through his/her purchase actions.

The importance of living positive experiences in a commercial environment mainly lies in the influence which these experiences exert on consumer purchase responses.

In this sense, Mehrabian & Russell (1974) propose a model which states that every environment—including shopping environments— produces certain emotional states in the individuals which result in attraction or repulsion responses. In general terms, the model predicts that individuals tend to extend their stay in shopping environments in which they experience more pleasant sensations and to reduce their stay if perceived sensations are unpleasant.

Literature affirms that consumers who experience positive sensations at a mall show a clear desire to stay in it and tend to spend more time than that initially planned. The foregoing results in increased time devoted to buy or browse in shops, independently from the need to purchase any particular item (Donovan & Rossiter, 1982; Wakefield & Baker, 1998; Bigné *et al.*, 2006).

Therefore, we raise that:

H7: Consumer perceived excitement exerts a positive effect on the consumer's desire to extend the stay at the mall

The previous variables allow understanding the factors which influence consumer excitement at a mall. From such excitement sensation, which expresses itself as a positive state of mind, purchase behaviors desirable for shopping-mall managers are derived, so that their business figures increase insofar as the frequency of this kind of reactions increases (Bellenger & Korgaonkar, 1980; Burns & Warren, 1995; Kang *et al.*, 2003; Sherman *et al.*, 1997; Bigné *et al.*, 2006).

Previous researches have concluded that pleasure and activating emotions influence positively the quantity of money spent as a consequence of unplanned expenditures, shop appeal, number of purchased products or visit time-duration (Sherman *et al.*, 1997). On the other hand, excitement or enthusiasm sensation also influences the consumer's intention to return in the future (Wakefield & Baker, 1998).

The choice of a particular shopping mall, among all available possibilities, also requires making a decision regarding the distance one is willing to cover. It is known that moving bears a cost which can be expressed in time, money and/or effort, but the consumer does not always act driven by functionality, but may opt for covering long distances to go to a mall which offers him/her more complete excitement alternatives (Bellenger & Korgaonkar, 1980) and measuring the distance to the mall by subjective time (Kang *et al.*, 2003).

Therefore, based on the previous premises, we raise that:

H8: Mall consumer perceived excitement exerts a positive influence on the consumer's intention to return in the future

H9: Mall consumer perceived excitement exerts a positive influence on the consumer's tendency to cover longer distances, among different available possibilities

H10: Mall consumer perceived excitement exerts a positive effect on expenditure increases due to unplanned purchases

H11: The consumer's desire to extend the stay at the mall exerts a positive effect on the consumer's intention to return in the future

H12: The consumer's desire to extend the stay at the mall exerts a positive effect on the consumer's tendency to cover longer distances, among different available possibilities

H13: The consumer's desire to extend the stay at the mall exerts a positive effect on expenditure increases due to unplanned purchases

Once the previous hypotheses have been raised, the proposed model is put forward next.

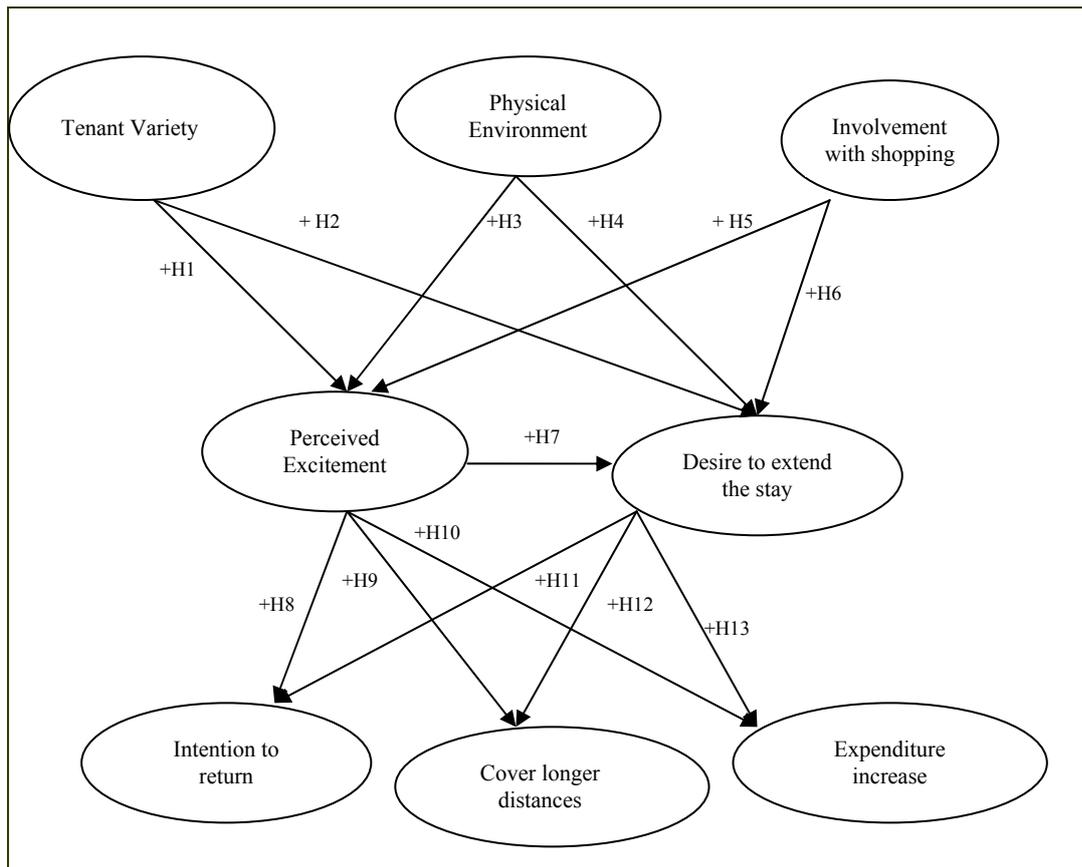


Figure 1: Hypothesized Model

Methods

Sample description

The sample was selected following a quote procedure in which 70 % were women and the remainder 30 % were men. These percentages correspond to the purchase actions undertaken by both genders in malls. The information was provided by researchers from AECC (Asociación Española de Centros Comerciales / Spanish Association of Shopping Malls).

Age was adjusted to population data of individuals over 18. In spite of the fact that in literature we have found researches referring to teenagers, we opted for not including them since some variables such as ‘expenditure increase’ or ‘cover longer distances’ could not be measured appropriately in minors who count on a limited budget and do not dispose of driving licenses.

Regarding the day of the week, it was assumed that 60 % of purchases are undertaken from Monday through Friday and 40 % are undertaken on weekends, according to data provided by AECC. Data collection was carried out from 4th through 10th May 2007.

350 personal surveys were developed for information collection at the exit of the 8 shopping malls selected, which are representative of the Madrid metropolitan area, among people who had undertaken any expenditure.

Questionnaire

Constructs were elaborated by taking measurement scales already validated in previous researches (Wakefield & Baker, 1998; Zaichowsky, 1985; Russell & Prat, 1980; Wakefield & Blodget, 1994; Oliver & Swan, 1989). In the cases in which we found that the number of indicators was not enough, we opted for elaborating our own scale. This was necessary for the scales ‘Expenditure Increase’ and ‘cover longer distances’.

The ‘cover longer distances’ scale was assessed through indicators which measure the importance of distance when deciding upon the mall the consumer is going to visit. In order to measure “expenditure increase”, the consumers were asked whether they had undertaken higher-than-expected expenditures or if —on the contrary— they had spent the expected amount of money.

The process of elaboration of the definitive questionnaire was carried out in two stages in order to guarantee content validity of the afore-mentioned scales. In the first stage we developed a pre-test with 75 habitual consumers in shopping malls through a self-administered questionnaire sent through the Web and various Marketing experts were consulted. In the second stage, once the conclusions of the first stage had been collected, the definitive questionnaire was elaborated.

7-point Likert scales and semantic differential scales were used to assess the items contained in measurement scales. Both turned out to be appropriate to measure consumer attitudes and perceptions. All the constructs remained shaped by four to eleven indicators.

Results

Statistical analysis

In order to contrast the proposed model and, once the basic assumptions of multivariate analysis had been verified (normality, homoscedasticity and linearity), a principal component factor analysis with varimax rotation was undertaken. This allowed analyzing the underlying structure of data and determining the structure of a latent variable from the observed variables, valuing the nature of its dimension and the convenience of selected variables.

Table 1: Exploratory Factor Analysis

	Number of items	Variance (%)	Coefficient Alpha
Tenant variety	4	63.2	0.805
Shopping-mall physical environment	11	66.0	0.867
Purchase involvement	5	70.8	0.897
Perceived excitement	5	71.0	0.897
Desire to extend the stay	3	74.2	0.825
Intention to return	5	67.4	0.625
Cover longer distances	4	56.4	0.719
Expenditure increase	4	57.6	0.697

Subsequently, we carried out a confirming factor analysis with the aim of determining if the specified measurement model was consistent with reality. The specified model, which initially counted on 41 indicators and 8 dimensions, turned out to be an over-identified model with 751 degrees of freedom.

For parameter estimation, we used the maximum likelihood estimation method, since it is the most widely used method in covariance structure models and provides proper estimations with correct model re-specification (Levy & Varela, 2006).

In view of the fact that the values taken by the model's fit indicators are very discrete, we proceeded to its re-specification by eliminating indicators with low R^2 and those presenting cross saturations among them or significantly charged over other factors of the model.

The re-specified model obtains substantially better fit levels, so that it enabled us raising the causal model from the previously-raised hypotheses and the conclusions drawn from both exploratory and confirming factor analysis.

The casual model —with 23 indicators, 8 latent dimensions and 212 degrees of freedom— achieves a more than acceptable fit. The following table shows the results.

Table 2: Model Fit

Goodness of fit	Fit measurements	Structural model
Absolute Fit	X ² ,	397.167
	Df (p value)	212 (.000)
	GFI	.906
	RMSEA	.050
Incremental Fit	AGFI	.878
	NFI/TLI	.912/.948
	IFI/CFI	.957/.956
Parsimonious Fit	PNFI	.764
	PGFI	.696

Measurement of theoretical constructs through empirical indicators requires ascertaining the adequacy of these indicators to latent variables (validity) and obtaining consistent results in consecutive measurements (reliability). Table 3 shows the values obtained for validity and reliability indices in the measurement model.

Both construct reliability (values over 0.7) and variance extracted (values over 0.5), as well as Cronbach's Alpha, assure model reliability and scale internal consistency (Hair et al., 2005).

Table 3: Construct Reliability

	Construct reliability	Variance extracted	Cronbach's Alpha
Tenant variety	0.80	0.59	0.79
Shopping-mall physical environment	0.88	0.72	0.88

Purchase involvement	0.88	0.65	0.88
Perceived excitement	0.90	0.69	0.87
Desire to extend the stay	0.83	0.62	0.83
Intention to return	0.83	0.71	0.83
Cover longer distances	0.78	0.62	0.76
Expenditure increase	0.83	0.71	0.80

Regarding convergent validity, we observe that most standardized factor loadings are significant and range over 0.60. Therefore, we have evidence of convergent validity of our measures. (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988)

Inter-factor correlations between the three exogenous variables, estimated by the phi coefficient, ranges from ,38 to ,53. Discrimination between the constructs is evident since the variance extracted estimates, ranging from ,59 to ,72, exceed all phi correlations between the constructs. (Bearden et al., 1989; Fornell & Larcker, 1981)

Table 4: Inter- correlation of Exogenous Factors

			Correlations
Tenant variety	————	Physical environment	0.53
Physical environment	————	Involvement with shopping	0.38
Tenant variety	————	Involvement with shopping	0.43

Table 5: Structural Model: Standardized Path Coefficients

		Coefficient	C. R.	Hypothesis
H1: Perceived excitement	← Tenant variety	.216	3.649	Supported
H2: Desire to stay	← Tenant variety	.199	3.098	Supported
H3: Perceived excitement	← Physical environment	.289	4.675	Supported
H4: Desire to stay	← Physical environment	-.042	-.635	Not supported
H5: Perceived excitement	← Involvement with shopping	.432	7.481	Supported
H6: Desire to stay	← Involvement with shopping	.384	5.604	Supported
H7: Desire to stay	← Excitement	.326	3.969	Supported
H8: Intention to return	← Excitement	.106	1.357	Not supported
H9: Longer distances	← Excitement	.207	2.376	Supported
H10: Expenditure increase	← Excitement	.101	1.225	Not supported
H11: Intention to return	← Desire to stay	.331	3.865	Supported
H12: Longer distances	← Desire to stay	.268	3.085	Supported
H13: Expenditure increase	← Desire to stay	-.186	-2.154	Not supported
Intention to return	← Tenant variety	.297	4.467	

Conclusions

Conclusions of academic interest

As a first conclusion we may state that the consumption action does no longer find a satisfactory explanation within the classical viewpoint of information processing and decision making according to only rational or functional criteria. This affirmation is consistent with the findings of previous studies, which agree in this analysis. Leisure-consumption is associated to pleasant sensations produced by hedonism, entertainment and excitement. Shopping malls constitute strong generators of experiences for the consumer and these sensations, in turn, condition consumer purchase behavior.

The variety of tenants exerts a positive influence on consumer perceived excitement and desire to extend the stay in the shopping mall, thus verifying both H1 and H2. As it is suggested by the items which measure supply variety: tenant and catering variety and leisure alternatives —the consumer will experience greater excitement or entertainment as the possibilities offered to spend his/her free time increase, independently from the number of tenants contained in it. This result agrees with those found in literature (Bellenger & Korgaonkar, 1980; Gómez *et al.*, 2000). An entertaining and memorable experience is not achieved only with a high number of shops/tenants. Above all, consumers appreciate brand variety, complementarity in supplied items and the possibility to take part in varied recreational activities.

Mall physical environment exerts a positive influence on consumer perceived excitement, but no significant relation was found with the desire to extend the stay. Therefore, H3 is verified, but not H4. However, if we consider the bivariate correlation between both variables, it can be observed that such relation is significant and positive, but gets weakened insofar as other variables are introduced into the model.

In the structural model, latent variable ‘mall physical environment’ was shaped only by indicators referred to mall design, discarding factors related to atmosphere and music, which showed low or very low R².

This conclusion agrees with those obtained in other researches, which found that variables related to lighting and cleanliness are only appreciable in extreme cases and that design-related variables are the most explanatory ones regarding consumer perceived excitement at a mall (Wakefield & Baker, 1998).

Other previous researches obtain somewhat disconcerting results in this sense (Wakefield & Baker, 1998), which forces us to consider the possibility of further deepening into this aspect in future researches.

Of the three afore-mentioned variables, ‘involvement’ is the one exerting greatest influence: its standardized regression coefficient is the highest of all relations raised in the model.

These results agree with those obtained in other researches (Wakefield & Baker, 1998) which study enduring involvement in the activity ‘going shopping’ without referring it to the purchase of any particular product. Likewise, results suggest that the commonest kind of visitors to shopping malls are ‘recreational consumers’ (Bellenger *et al.*, 1977); that is, individuals showing high interest toward ‘going shopping’ as a recreational activity, perceiving it as an entertainment. However, classification of consumers into different typologies has not been quantified in our research, thus remaining as a future research line.

Therefore, both H5 and H6 are supported.

Consumer perceived excitement exerts a positive influence on the consumer's desire to extend the stay at the mall. This conclusion allows us affirming that an individual who experiences positive emotions during his/her stay will tend to extend it, thus increasing the possibility of undertaking a higher number of purchases. The consumer may only collect further information through tenant windows, but he/she may also use it in future visits to the mall or tell other people in his/her environment about his/her findings, thus increasing the possibility to raise the shopping mall's incomes.

These results agree with those reached in previous studies which found that a positive emotional state increases consumers' intention to stay at the shopping mall for a longer time than that initially planned, and supports Mehrabian-Russell's Theory (1974) that a positive emotional state favors an approaching behavior toward the environment which generates it (Donovan & Rossiter, 1982; Bellenger *et al.*, 1980; Donovan *et al.*, 1994; Sherman *et al.*, 1997; Wakefield & Baker, 1998).

Therefore, H7 is supported.

Excitement sensation exerts a positive but non-significant influence on the consumer's intention to return. However, such relation is indirectly shown through the consumer's desire to stay at the mall for a longer time than that initially planned. That is: an individual who finds his stay in malls entertaining shows a positive tendency to extend it and is willing to return in the future. We cannot accept H8, but H11 is supported.

Consumer perceived excitement exerts a positive influence on the intention to cover longer distances. This conclusion allows us affirming that a consumer will be willing to cover longer distances to go to the mall which provides him/her exciting or entertaining purchase experiences, in spite of disposing of nearer options. This result suggests again that the consumer is not motivated by rational or functional reasons, which should lead him/her to minimize trip costs in both time and money, but makes his/her decisions according to emotional aspects, pleasant sensations and looking for memorable experiences. This relation had not been contrasted in previous researches.

Therefore, H9 is supported.

Consumer perceived excitement exerts a positive but non-significant influence on expenditure increase, so that H10 cannot be accepted. This result may be explained by the fact that, in general, the individual is unwilling to provide information about his/her incomes or expenditure intentions. The question included in the questionnaire was referred to the consumer intention to spend higher-than-expected amounts during his/her stay at the mall. It seems reasonable to think that individuals are not going to recognize openly that they behave in such an 'irrational' manner.

However, previous researches (Donovan & Rossiter, 1982) found out that excitement sensation exerted a positive influence on expenditure increase when the individual 'goes shopping'. Sherman *et al.* (1997) and Bigné *et al.* (2006) found out that the consumer's positive emotions and satisfaction influenced his/her intention to spend higher amounts, but in both works such intention was referred to the purchase of a particular product (clothes and perfumes).

This relation will be raised in further research lines, in which we will modify the question, guess if the consumer is 'going shopping' with a limited budget or look out for an alternative way to study propensity to spend more.

The higher the desire to extend the stay at the mall is, the higher the intention to return in the future is and also it is the intention to cover longer distances to go to the preferred mall or the mall chosen for any particular occasion.

Therefore, both H11 and H12 are supported.

The desire to stay at the mall exerts a negative influence on expenditure increase. Literally, this relation would involve that the greater the desire to extend the stay at the mall is, the lower the intention to increase expenditure is. As it occurred with H10, consumers' declarations about their intention to spend more than expected do not provide us conclusive data. Therefore, we cannot accept H13.

The greater tenant variety is, the greater customers' intention to return to the mall is. This relation had been proposed neither in previous researches, nor in the original model. It has turned out to be positive, significant and, furthermore, improves model fit.

Conclusions of business interest

The explanatory model proposed in the present research is suggested as a useful tool for shopping-mall managers, helping them understand better consumer behavior and make decisions aimed at generating purchase experiences in keeping with their customers' expectations. As it has been contrasted, consumers who live pleasant purchase experiences tend to reflect their perception on desirable purchase behaviors for the mall.

Regarding the supply variety, malls should provide the consumers varied brands in all product categories. It is important to know which brands are those that the customer expects to find in order to maximize supply match-effect or complementarity. It would be advisable to collect this information from customers in different age ranges, since the brands attracting young people differ from those attracting adults.

Aside from a wide supply of items, it is also necessary to count on catering and leisure alternatives. These may provide the consumers rest after shopping or provide entertainment to people not so much involved in the activity of 'going shopping' (generally men). If the mall does not dispose of these options, customers may not visit it, leave it earlier than expected or decide not to return in the future.

For malls without the necessary size to house a widely enough supply of items, catering and leisure, it would be advisable to differentiate themselves through brands which may provide the consumer added value such as quality, originality or prestige.

Giving importance to mall physical environment is another recommendation for managers, given that the consumer associates pleasant environments with greater excitement and entertainment. Malls whose designs remain obsolete should try to redesign their spaces, updating their interior architecture.

Pleasant shopping environments may also become incentives to increase the time of stay of people not showing high purchase involvement, but who visit malls as companion. Lighting, temperature and background music are easily controllable variables which are only perceived by the consumer when reaching unpleasant degrees. This recommends collecting the consumers' opinion on these variables while at the mall.

Regarding consumer perceived excitement, malls should organize sporadic events with the aim of increasing their customers' entertainment. Some illustrative examples would be the organization of entertaining events for children or the creation of thematic areas showing novelties in mobile telephony or automobiles, in which men less prone to 'go shopping' would be interested—it has been shown by other researches that men are less prone to 'go shopping' than women. This way, longer stays will be favored and more pleasant sensations will be experienced.

Regarding the location of new openings, it seems that being located in an urban center is not essential, since consumers are willing to move to visit outlets generating the purchase experience they look for. However, it is important to dispose of good and fluent accesses, given that consumers tend to measure the distance covered by time.

Limitations and Future Researches

The first limitation of the present work comes from the sample chosen, which corresponds to consumers in the Madrid metropolitan area. Although the Community of Madrid is the one with the highest number of shopping malls per inhabitant, it would be interesting to compare the results obtained with those obtained in other less populated contexts and contexts with less choice options.

The second limitation comes from the questionnaire used. The scale which measures expenditure increase did not provide significant results. This scale should be redesigned by introducing more reliable measurement indicators such as comparisons between the budget devoted to shopping (if there is such a thing) and real expenditure. The scale regarding mall physical environment is composed of design-related items, so that it has not been possible to deepen into other influences which this latent variable has allowed verifying in other previous researches.

Another limitation comes from the fact that we have not contrasted behavior results differentiating between men and women. In an intuitive manner we believe that they would turn out to be very different and this would provide the model wider perspective. Analyzing behavior differences between men and women and classifying consumers according to their purchase orientation in order to establish different customer typologies, at which supply—according to their profiles—is to be aimed, would be of huge academic and business interest.

In future researches it would be convenient to incorporate into the model other variables which shape consumer behavior. In the present research we have included those variables considered as relevant; however, it is unquestionable that consumer behavior is complex and there may be variables not considered so far.

Many of the aspects contrasted in the present study point out the importance of experience. For that reason, other contributions to entertainment and the creation of memorable

experiences should be explored, including the study of transitory effects. These are effects related to special promotions or exhibitions and have been mentioned as a tool to achieve active consumer involvement.

Finally, it would be very interesting to take into consideration the viewpoint of shopping-mall managers in order to get to know their opinions and the actions they carry out to promote entertainment with the aim of getting to know if they are working in the line appreciated by the consumer.

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