
Editorial

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Biographical notes: Rajagopal is a Professor of Marketing at the Graduate Business School (EGADE) of Monterrey Institute of Technology and Higher Education (ITESM) in Mexico City Campus and Fellow of the Royal Society for Encouragement of Arts, Manufacture and Commerce, London. His biography is listed in various international directories including *Who's Who in the World* and International Biographic Center, Cambridge, UK, since 2008. He holds a doctoral degree from Ravishankar University, India, and has been conferred the highest recognition of National Researcher Level-III of Mexican National System of Researchers by the National Council of Science and Technology, Government of Mexico. He has several scholarly books and research papers on marketing to his credit.

Globalisation has opened various avenues for bringing consumers into the manifold retailing across the industrial sectors. The retail business environment has grown from brick and mortar stores to various routes of electronic commerce. However, still the built environment of commercial malls for shopping holds the consumer attraction against different e-routes and regarded also as a recreational retailing convention centres.

The commercial malls and retail convention centres in the 21st century have emerged as business platforms that successfully connect consumers, business-to-business groups, and other market players to converge them in to several business propositions. These platforms are known as multisided markets. In this increasingly popular business model, companies use these platforms in bringing together multiple consumers, recreational firms, and retailing groups, each of which benefits from the existence of the others while the interaction of these groups creates revenue for the shopping malls. As the demand for retailing in urban neighbourhoods is increasing precipitously, shopping conglomerations are becoming dynamic. In emerging markets such retailing phenomenon has been observed leading to the manifold growth of shopping malls and consumer facility centres. However, the success of retailing in commercial complexes largely depends on the quality of facility management therein as shopping behaviour of consumers has been shifted from need based shopping to convenience shopping today (Rajagopal, 2009).

It is evident from the existing literature on retailing that service quality and customer satisfaction are core interrelated concepts that are central to applied retailing concepts and business growth in the competitive marketplace. Service quality in urban retail clusters is commonly evaluated by the consumers in reference to the extent of efficiency in facilities management that supports the convenience of shoppers. Service quality is a long-term overall evaluation, whereas customer satisfaction is a combination of perceived value of shopping ambience and transaction-specific. Customer satisfaction could reflect the

difference between perception and expectation of quality facilities management in shopping malls (e.g., Parasuraman et al., 1988). Large shopping centre can facilitate a larger variety of retail outlets and create a more pleasant environment for the shoppers enticing shoppers to visit malls and spend more time there. This proposition leads to one of the challenges faced by the administrators of shopping malls as how to attract shoppers to patronise their malls (Ooi and Sim, 2007).

In the present race of retailers in urban markets by ways and means of expanding the retailing operations from small convenience stores to large departmental retailing stores, it is believable that the shopping mall sector has become essential and vital in urban habitats by providing space and facilities for retail transaction activities. Besides the customer centric built environment and asset management, the quality of service in shopping malls depends on both direct service provided by each shop and indirect service delivered by facilities management companies. The administration of most shopping malls tends to improve continuously the quality of facility management to create a good shopping environment, attract retailers, and satisfy consumers (Hui et al., 2013; Singh et al., 2011).

Most of the large shopping malls in emerging markets are addressing customer-oriented approach to facility management by applying the balanced score card method to measure the facilities management performance. One important component in using the balanced score card framework is consumer perspective of measuring the performance of shopping malls, which encircles evaluating the ability of facilities management service providers towards offering the quality service, effectiveness of their delivery, and overall consumer satisfaction (Amaratunga et al., 2002).

This issue of the journal contains four articles rich academic insights on the subject of built environment from structural to operational perspectives. Though existing literature on built environment and asset management in reference to shopping and leisure business provides some insights into structure of shopping complexes, service quality, and customer satisfaction, yet more research issues to be brought out through various academic outlets. This journal attempts to bring quality research studies on the shopping malls, commercial complexes, leisure resorts, amusement parks, and many related areas for guiding the future research. There has been delay in letting the second issue of this journal to roll-on in academics due to structural improvements of the journal. We encourage authors to contribute their distinguished research work to the journal to help enriching the existing literature and dissemination among peers.

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