

Effect Of Consumer Occupation And Shopping Frequency On Shopper's Satisfaction And Behavioural Intention In Shopping Malls

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate how shoppers' occupations and shopping frequency affect customer satisfaction and behavioural intentions in shopping malls. The study adopted a purposive sampling technique to select the potential respondents from four leading selected shopping malls in Ghana. The study utilised the quantitative method and self-administered questionnaires to collect the primary data. The final data analysis was done based on a total of 500 usable questionnaires. The data collected after cleaning were captured in a spreadsheet. Consequently, the IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26 and AMOS computer software were the analytical tools used for the statistical data analysis. The results were that no significant differences were found between the shoppers' occupations as well as the shopping frequency in the perspective of the selected Ghanaian shopping malls. It is therefore recommended to the operators of the shopping malls based on the empirical results that they should not segment their malls' activities based on the shoppers' occupation as well as shopping frequency, but rather maintain the quality of service and value offered.

Keywords: Behavioural intention, Ghana, Satisfaction, Occupation, Shopping frequency, Shopping mall

1. Introduction and problem statement

Within shopping malls, the provision of quality products and services are important for the survival of organisations. Besides this customer satisfaction has become an aspect of managerial strategies (Felix 2017; Sao et al 2017). Customer satisfaction is the ultimate consequence of obtaining and usage of a product as a result of the purchaser's assessment of the cost and rewards of the acquisition. According to Sulphey and George (2017), customer satisfaction is an “abstract concept” since the exact pointers of the state of satisfaction vary from customer to customer, and also from one product or service to another. This study defines customer satisfaction as shoppers’ accomplishment of their desires built on before - and after-purchase involvements in the activities of the shopping mall. Customer satisfaction translates to positive behavioural intentions.

Behavioural intention is a deliberate act of a customer to either do or not to do future purchases (Ahn et al 2019). Behavioural intentions and customer satisfaction are closely correlated for reason the result of customer satisfaction may support the customers' choice to use a specific product or service (Kim et al 2019; Kusumawardani & Aruan 2019; Namkung & Jang 2007; Oliver 1980). As to whether a satisfied customer will continue to stay with a particular service provider or switch to other competitors can be indicated through the behavioural intentions outcomes (Qadir 2018; Wu et al 2018; Zeithaml et al 1996). An organisational in-depth knowledge of the behavioural intentions of their customers is important since the connection linking the customer to the service provider will continue to exist in the future which in effect will contribute to the organisational profitability (Foroughi et al 2019). Every organisation desires to respond and act reasonably to delight their potential and loyal customers. The reinforcement of the customer's decisions as to whether to use or not to use a particular product or service solely depends on the outcome of customer satisfaction (Namkung & Jang 2007). To ascertain whether a customer is satisfied or dissatisfied will reflect on the customer; response when is either favourable or unfavourable towards a product or service in question. Positive customer satisfaction will impact positive behavioural intentions (Awoke 2015; Vannarajah & Medis 2020).

The literature emphasises different motivators that drive consumers’ decisions to buy within shopping malls (Jamali 2007). However, the effect of shoppers’ occupation and shopping frequency on satisfaction and behavioural intention in the context of shopping malls in Ghana has received little attention. The occupation of shoppers influences buying decision-making. The kind of occupation of the shoppers also determines their purchasing power. Ghana’s

shopping malls are unique and experience similar problems such as fewer consumers patronise products and services in the shopping malls, an opinion that items on sale at the shopping malls are of a higher price than those in the open market (Deloitte 2016; Standard Bank 2020). It is not yet empirically tested to ascertain whether the shoppers' occupation and shopping frequency of consumers have any significant influence on satisfaction and behavioural intention within Ghanaian shopping malls.

Hence, the objective of this study was to examine how the shoppers' occupation and shopping frequency affect the shopper's satisfaction and behavioural intention in Ghanaian shopping malls. The study adds to the body of knowledge on shopping malls specifically on customer satisfaction and behavioural intention taking into consideration the shoppers' profile variables such as occupation and shopping frequency. The recommendations, therefore, offer valuable information that can assist shopping mall managers to better serve the customers based on their demographic variables and remain competitive in the retail sector.

2. Theoretical literature review

2.1 Satisfaction and Behavioural intention

Satisfied customers inject significant revenue into organisations and aid in business survival. Customer satisfaction can be understood from two perspectives, according to Churchill and Suprenant (1982), namely conceptual and operational levels of satisfaction. The outcomes of the customer purchase and the usage of the product by comparing the cost of the product to the rewards attained from the purchases is termed as the conceptual level of satisfaction. On the other hand, when customer satisfaction is connected to the customer's attitude which is measurable to the amount of the procedures and characteristics of the product or service is termed as the operational level of satisfaction. The procedures that encourage the answers to customer satisfaction is a psychologically multifaceted process (Churchill & Suprenant 1982). Several scholars are of the view that customer satisfaction not intrinsic to the product but relatively it is the person's awareness of the products or service characteristics that are well-suited to that individual customer (Gray & Boshoff 2004; Wang, Lu, & Tan 2018) Therefore, the idea of customer satisfaction appears to be idiosyncratic and as a concept, is moulded through the communication of perceptual understandings of the product or service and customer anticipations towards the product or service (Gray & Boshoff 2004).

Behavioural intention on the other hand measures in what way customers achieve their purchasing behaviour or make a purchase decision (Majeed 2019; Ogbeide 2015; Stankevich 2017). Scholars are of the view that behavioural intentions and customer satisfaction are

thoroughly connected since the consequence of customer satisfaction may support the decision of the customer to reuse the product or service once more (Kim, Cho & Kim 2019; Kusumawardani & Aruan 2019; Oliver 1980). Numerous studies in different contexts have investigated the customers' behavioural intentions theory (Clemes, Dean & Thitiya 2020; Foroughi, Iranmanesh, Gholipour & Hyun 2019; Huang, Chang & Backman 2019; Nusairat, Hammouri, Al-Ghadir, Ahmad & Eid 2020) and have established the significance of the concept.

2.2 Shoppers' demographic variables

Shoppers' demographic variables are key factors which can be used to enhance shoppers' satisfaction and behavioural intentions (Botschen & Wegerer 2017). In this study, the demographic variable considered is the shopper's occupation and frequency of the mall in the Ghanaian context. Since shoppers' occupation differs (Jamali 2007) it is necessary to determine how this can influence their satisfaction and behavioural intention within the Ghanaian context. Jamali (2007) conducted a study in the Lebanese postal sector on customer satisfaction in the background of a public-private organisation. The research tested the influence of customer occupation on their satisfaction in the postal sector and found that occupation correlates per the expert service scale and that the respondents who were the youth were found to be much less satisfied with Liban Post's professional service than the older respondents. This study also offers an understanding of the effect of shoppers' occupation and shopping frequency, on shoppers' satisfaction and behavioural intentions in shopping malls. The findings will assist in understanding the shopper's satisfaction and behavioural intention activities and contribute to the literature on shopping malls.

3. Research Methodology

The research followed a quantitative research methodology where multi-item scale items were used to measure the study constructs. using a 5-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree and 5= strongly agree) the target respondents were requested to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with the questions asked. A pretest was conducted with a total number of 50 respondents of shoppers of the selected shopping malls to ascertain whether the instrument could be easily understood and to safeguard the reliability of the instrument. After the pretest was conducted there was no need for further amendment of the measurement instrument. The research utilised a non-probability sample method, precisely the purposive sampling technique to select the target population (Johnson & Christensen 2014; Neuman 2014; Wilson 2014). To ensure the inclusion criteria, the target population involved all consumers who had shopped or visited the designated shopping malls or partaken in any other activities

such as entertainment, and first-time shoppers. Only potential respondents who were 18 years of age or above entering or exiting the shopping mall were included for the completion of the questionnaires. Only respondents who consented and were willing to participate voluntarily were allowed to participate in the study. The participants were allowed to pull out during the data collection when they wished without any penalties. The researcher also engaged a trained research agency to assist in the questionnaires administered when the data was being collected due to the large size of the target population sampled. The researcher presented all the necessary protocols and guidelines to be followed for the data collection to the hired agency. The researcher and the trained field researchers surveyed those respondents who met the screening criteria.

A total of five hundred and fourteen (514) completed questionnaires were received from the four designated Ghanaian shopping malls (West Hills Mall; Accra Mall; Achimota; and Kumasi Mall). However, upon cleaning and editing, 500 usable questionnaires were retained to form the sample size of the study for the data analysis. Both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were performed in the study. Descriptive statistics is an initial statistical instrument utilised in quantitative data analysis, that defines the characteristics of the data collected, offers synopses of the sample, and measures, and establishes graphical analysis for the research (Trochim 2020; Trochim & Donnelly 2001). Whiles, the inferential statistics methods allow the researcher to control data collected from a specific sample to draw significant conclusions about the population of the study (Calin-Jageman & Cumming 2019; Guetterman 2019). The data collected were cleaned and captured spreadsheet. Subsequently, IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26 was utilised for the analyses.

4. Findings and Analysis

4.1 Demographic profile

The shoppers' occupation distribution is shown in Table 1. The results indicated that 35% of the respondents were employed in the private sector. The results of the study are in line with the study of Hendriks (2017) which indicated that the majority of the employment in Ghana is made by the private sector specifically the informal sector constituting about 85%. The respondents who were students constituted 30.2% of the sample size. The 30.2% which is a third of the sample size is on the higher side which can be ascribed to the coronavirus pandemic school suspension which enables the students to frequent the shopping malls at the time of the data collection. The situation enabled many students who were predominantly the youth to hand out at the various shopping malls in Ghana for a variety of shopping

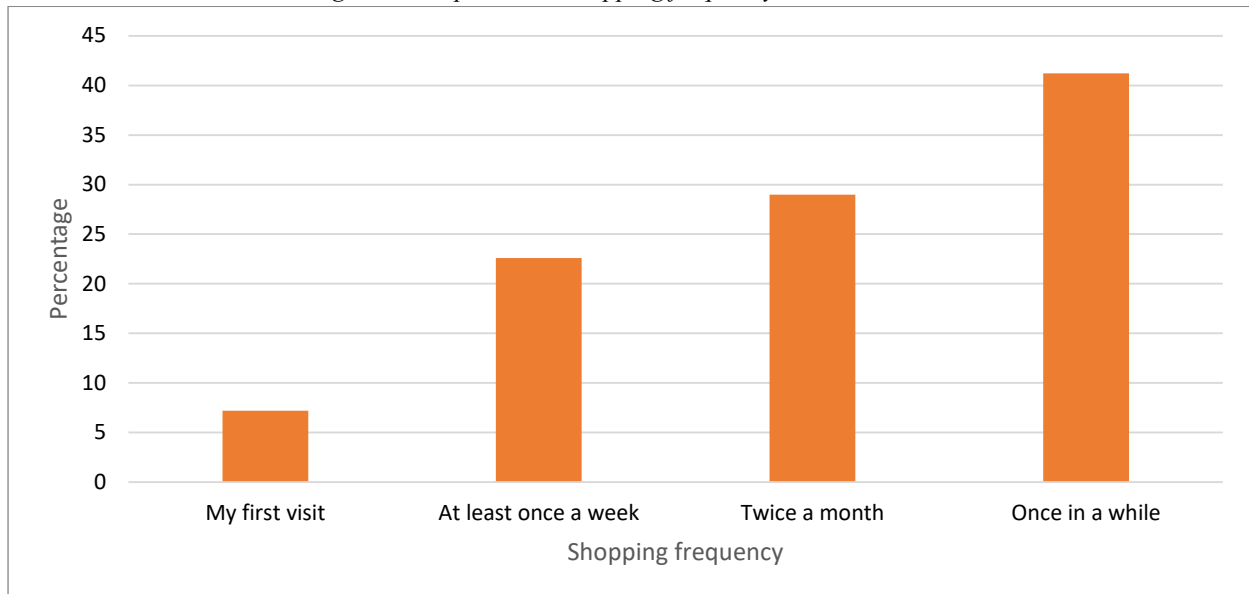
experiences. The respondents who were self-employed and those employed in the government sector constituted 19.8% and 10.8% respectively of the total sample sizes. The unemployed respondents only constituted 4.2%. This also implies that the majority of the shoppers who frequent the shopping malls were gainfully employed since only a few per cent were unemployed.

Table 1: Respondents' occupation distribution

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Self-employed	99	19.8
Government sector employment	54	10.8
Private sector employment	175	35.0
Student	151	30.2
Unemployed	21	4.2
Total	500	100

The next profiles of the respondents of the study sought information on the shopping frequency of the shoppers. The results attained are depicted in Figure 1 below. It emerged from the study that a greater number of the shoppers visited the designated shopping malls once in a while which constituted 41.2% of the sample size. The shoppers who frequent the selected shopping malls twice in a month were 29%. The study also shows that 22.6% of the shoppers visited the selected shopping mall only once a week whereas those who went to the shopping mall for the first time at the time of the data collection constituted 7.2% of the total respondents.

Figure 1: Respondents' shopping frequency distribution



Source: Statistical data

4.2 Reliability of the measuring instrument

To ensure the internal consistency of the research instrument, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were determined. This study adopted the recommendation of Hulin, Netemeyer and Cudeck (2001) and Ursachi, Horodnic and Zait (2015) of a commonly established rule that a Cronbach alpha of 0.6-0.7 designates an adequate level of reliability whereas a Cronbach alpha of above 0.70 designates a very good level reliability. Both variables (Customer satisfaction and behavioural intention) had Cronbach alpha scores of above 0.60. Hence, the items measuring the various constructs (Table 2) are considered to be acceptable and have good internal consistency (Hulin et al 2001; Ursachi et al 2015). Table 2 displays the internal consistency for all the scale items.

Table 2: Internal consistency for the scale items

Factors	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Customer satisfaction	8	0.691
Behavioural intention	8	0.757

4.3 Levene test of homogeneity of variance for occupation and variables in the study

A Levene test was executed to examine the similarity of variances among the shopper's occupation and the variables in the study. The results of the Levene test are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3: Results of the Levene test of homogeneity of variances for occupation on variables

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Customer satisfaction	Based on Mean	1.974	4	495	0.097
Behavioural intentions	Based on Mean	1.423	4	495	0.225

* $p < 0.05$

It emerged from the findings in Table 3 that no significant differences exist among the respondent's occupations and the variables. The ANOVA test was further conducted on the basis of the Levene test to examine whether there exists any significant difference among the respondent's occupation and the variables (customer satisfaction and behavioural intentions). Table 4 reports on the ANOVA results of the respondents' occupation and the variables

Table 4: ANOVA results of respondents' occupation

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Customer satisfaction	Between Groups	1.612	4	0.403	1.902	0.109
	Within Groups	104.908	495	0.212		
	Total	106.52	499			
Behavioural Intentions	Between Groups	1.409	4	0.352	1.313	0.264
	Within Groups	132.791	495	0.268		
	Total	134.2	499			

* $p < 0.05$

As depicted in Table 4, the ANOVA results show no significant difference among the occupations of the respondents and customer satisfaction, as well as the behavioural intentions variables. The results suggest that the shoppers' occupation plays a slight role when it comes to the shoppers' satisfaction with their visit to the shopping malls and their behavioural intentions in the future from the shopping malls' perspective.

4.4 Levene test of homogeneity of variance for shopping frequency and variables in the study

In order to investigate the homogeneity of variances among the shopper's shopping frequency and the variables in the research the Levene test was executed. Table 5 below depicts the Levene test results for the shopping frequency.

Table 5: Results of the Levene test of homogeneity of variances for shopping frequency on variables

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Customer satisfaction	Based on Mean	0.507	3	496	0.678
Behavioural intentions	Based on Mean	3.266	3	496	0.021*

* $p < 0.05$

There exist significant differences between the respondents' shopping frequency and their behavioural intentions as indicated in Table 5. However, no significant differences were found between shopping frequency and satisfaction. This suggests that the state of homogeneity of variances is not established for the respondents' behavioural intentions. Hence, there is the need to conduct the ANOVA test on only the variables whereby the condition of homogeneity was fulfilled. The ANOVA outcomes of the shopping frequency of the respondents are displayed in Table 6 below.

Table 6: ANOVA results of respondents' shopping frequency

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Customer Satisfaction	Between Groups	0.184	3	0.061	0.286	0.835
	Within Groups	106.336	496	0.214		
	Total	106.52	499			

* $p < 0.05$

The ANOVA results as depicted in Table 6 for the shopping frequency of the responses show no significant difference existing among shoppers' frequency to the mall and the customers' satisfaction ($F=0.286$, $p=0.835$). This shows that the shopping frequency of the responses within the selected shopping malls does not play an important role in the factors of customer satisfaction. As the Levene test results of homogeneity revealed significant differences among the respondents' behavioural intentions and their shopping frequency, there was a need

to determine the overall differences utilising the Robust test of equality of the means through the Welch test. Table 7 displays the results.

Table 7: Results of robust test for equality of means between shopping frequency and behavioural intentions

		Statistica	df1	df2	Sig.
Behavioural intentions	Welch	1.678	3	144.002	0.174

*p<0.05

There are no significant differences found between the behavioural intentions ($p>0.05$) and the respondent's shopping frequency as shown in Table 7. This implies that the respondents' shopping frequency is not dependent on the shopper's behavioural intentions to the shopping malls.

5. Discussions and Conclusions

The key objective of the research was to examine how the shoppers' occupation and shopping frequency affect the shopper's satisfaction and behavioural intention in shopping malls in Ghana. The Levene test was performed to examine the similarity of variances among the shoppers' occupations and the variables in the research study. It emerged from the results there are no significant differences between the respondents' occupations and the shoppers' satisfaction as well as behavioural intentions. These findings are consistent with the previous studies (Gruenberg 1980; Sun, Ye, Tang, Yang & Scott 2023); and Turkson, (2021). Therefore, the Levene test results compelled also the ANOVA test to be done to ascertain if there exist any significant differences among the respondents' occupations and the variables of customer satisfaction and behavioural intentions. The ANOVA results also revealed no significant difference among the respondents' occupation, customer satisfaction, and behavioural intentions. This suggests that the occupation of shoppers plays a less role in shoppers' satisfaction on their visit to the shopping malls as well as their behavioural intentions towards shopping malls in Ghana in the future.

Thereafter, the Levene test was performed to ascertain the homogeneity of variances between the shopper's shopping frequency and satisfaction and behavioural intentions. The results of the Levene test indicated that there exists a significant difference between the respondents' shopping frequency and their behavioural intentions. This is consistent with the previous study by Liang and Zhang (2012); Turkson, (2021). Since the results of Levene's test of homogeneity showed a significant difference in behavioural intentions and shopping frequency, the robust test of equality of means utilizing the Welch test was conducted to

ascertain the overall difference. The results also indicated, no significant differences in behavioural intentions and the respondents' shopping frequency in the Ghanaian shopping mall context. This suggests that the shopping frequency of the respondents is not based on the shoppers' behavioural intentions to the shopping malls. The results also yielded no significant difference between the respondents' shopping frequency and customer satisfaction. The findings confirmed the previous literature of Shankar, Smith & Rangaswamy (2003); and Turkson, (2021). This suggests that the overall shopping frequency of the shoppers does not play an important role in customer satisfaction in the shopping malls in Ghana.

6. Recommendations of the study

As mentioned earlier, the purpose of this research was to examine the influence of shoppers' occupation and shopping frequency on the shoppers' satisfaction and behavioural intentions in the context of shopping malls in Ghana. From the findings that emerged from the study, the following recommendations are offered. From the empirical results of the study, it seems that both the occupation and shopping frequency of the shoppers do not affect shoppers' satisfaction nor increase their shopping frequency to visit the shopping malls and that managers of the mall should take note. Therefore, it is recommended to the operators of the shopping malls that they need not to segment the activities of the shopping mall based on the occupation of the shoppers and their shopping frequencies. It is recommended that shopping mall managers strive to please shoppers in every aspect of their shopping experience. This could be achieved by enhancing the services offered, offering quality products, and maintaining an enthusiastic staff who are trained to serve the customers better.

7. Contribution, Limitations and Future Research

This present research has made a novel contribution to the body of knowledge and literature concerning shoppers' occupation and shopping frequency and its influence on customer satisfaction and behavioural intention in the context of Ghanaian shopping malls. The recommendations offered will enable the shopping mall managers to maintain and focus on their existing approaches and strategies in order to retain the existing shoppers and attract new ones. Besides the recommendations and the contributions of the study, there were some limitations to the study which can also pave the way for future research. Though the shoppers' demographics variables investigated in this study might assist the shopping malls in Ghana to overcome some of the challenges facing the retail industry, it is recommended that other variables such as nationality, income and educational background of shoppers be a researchable area for future researchers to investigate. This in turn will enable the

generalization of the results from the present study. Future researchers could consider a larger sample size, and should also consider increasing the numbers of the selected shopping malls and selecting other shopping malls located in some of the smaller regions of Ghana.

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