MEASURING EMOTIONAL RESPONSE FROM THE MALL EXPERIENCES: A CASE OF TIER II AND III CITY MALLS IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

A mall has a holistic solution for a variety of consumer needs. Malls have aggressively spread in small cities too. The presence of malls in tier II & III cities of India may have provided diversified experiences of mall culture to its residents. Malls offer an abundance of retail offerings with entertainment and leisure. Previous studies focused upon metro city malls and provided results towards mall attributes, consumer experiences, evoked emotional responses, and patronage intentions. Hence, it is indeed necessary to examine the behavioral aspects associated with visitors of small (non-metro/tier II & III) city malls to assess the change in consumption patterns of small city consumers. The present study attempts to investigate linkages among mall attractive dimensions, visitors' experiences, and visitors' emotions. A sample size of 613 (from malls of tier II & III cities, India) was analyzed using SEM through SmartPLS 3. Finding suggests significant relationships with few exceptions. Responders' emotions (pleasure and arousal) are predicted when they are interacted with mall attractive dimensions due to experiences. The results may benefit mall management, mall tenants, consumers, and society at large.

KEY WORDS

mall shopping, retail, shopping behavior, mall attractiveness, experience economy, pleasure, arousal

JEL CODES

M10, M21, L81, D91

1 INTRODUCTION

India is the 4th largest retail market on the globe has only 22% organized format (Goyal, 2021). The rural market and consumption patterns are not affected by the economic slowdown, which has completely changed the mindset of marketers (Kashyap, 2012). The organized retail market of India is at its peak and leading amongst other emerging countries.

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According to data, in 2020, the Indian retail industry is estimated at USD 883 billion, of which grocery retail sales are the USD 608 billion. Industry expert's expectations are very high and they anticipate a USD 1.3 trillion industry by 2024 (IBEF, 2021). Healthy economic development, changing demographics, greater disposable income, urbanization, and changing customer tastes and preferences are all propelling the organized retail industry in India forward. In particular, the spread of modern Kirana stores (modern grocery stores) has increased due to the desire for new experiences by small city Indian consumers (Goyal, 2021). The mall is an excellent investment opportunity for organized retail. The shopping malls, one of the largest rising organized retail formats, influenced industrialists and promoters to invest in such facilities in almost all the metro cities of India and further extended mall experiences to many emerging cities of India as an upcoming trend influenced by global business environment and multicultural behaviour (Priya, 2009; Ghosh et al., 2010), providing ample opportunities to the new urbanized Indian consumers with developed preferences towards hypermarket and supermarket to exploit their hedonic and utilitarian desires at one destination (Kiran and Jhamb, 2011). By 2030, India's growing prosperity would have transformed the country, dominated by the middle-class group. Consumers in India are adopting new retailing formats at an increasing rate, indicating that they have developed new purchasing preferences. Malls have become a part of the lifestyle of people in emerging – "Tier II and Tier III" cities already. Also, the expected surge in discretionary expenses is predicted to climb up due to the increment in the female workforce. Their participation would increase by 40% in the next five years, reaching 10 million (Goyal, 2021). The growth of shopping mall activities has reached its peak. Active participation in-mall activities by small city residents have also been noticed, though there is a lack of exposure in small city mall compared to metro city malls. Hence, it is necessary to identify the attitude and behavior of residents of a small city, as they may perhaps not behave similarly, as residents of metro cities do. The findings of such research would give information that might be utilized to make a mall the ideal location for their desired shopping experiences and expectations. Several studies applied the perspective of experience economy to tourism and retail, but the experience view of tier II and III level consumers is scarce in empirical studies. Therefore, using the experience perspective of consumer behavior to conduct empirical testing on shopping mall experience in India, especially in emerging cities, is still an unexplored research area.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Mall Attractive Dimensions

In recent years, the rise of organized retail business in India has brought a lot of sweeping changes, resulting in the nation's operation of numerous sorts of modern shops. A shopping mall consists of a collection of several retail stores in a complex with an attractive ambiance, facilities, options, and services. Visitors at shopping destinations are sensitive, space seekers, and sensuous (Prashar et al., 2015). Shopping mall has been created, owned, and administered as a holistic product by organized retail business group to increase sales (Kotler et al., 2002; Khan and Ahmad, 2020). Levy et al. (2017) mentioned malls as enclosed facilities having lobbies and walking areas alongside showrooms, shops, and outlets, providing a view to the center body and access through various junctions like pathways, escalators, and lifts, maintaining well-lit and soothing climatic conditions, specifically designed for shopping. The retail malls have a unique and favorable image due to the severe competition and by merging several features in one area (Singh and Dash, 2012). Booms and Bitner (1981) expanded the 4P's of marketing mix given by McCarthy (1964) into 7P's. Patel and Sharma

(2009) surveyed to evaluate Indian customers' purchase motivations and discovered nine components split into utilitarian and hedonic. These two encompassed several sectors, such as economics, pleasure, satisfaction, shopping ideas, etc., which affect Indian customers' incentive to purchase at malls. Customer-based retail equity is derived from the features and attributes of a shopping center (Das, 2015). Blend of factors like ambiance, infrastructure – design, marketing activities, convenience, and safety influence positively towards shopping experiences (Singh and Sahay, 2012). In the Indian context, Mittal and Jhamb (2016) evaluated four constructs (merchandising, variety & selection, milieu & facilities, and convenience). Kesari and Atulkar (2016) drew attention to the changing preferences associated with shopping i.e. the amount of contentment of Indian shoppers depends on the utilitarian and hedonic benefits provided by convenient access to all necessities under a single roof. Kushwaha et al. (2017) incorporated the mall presentation features viz service experience factors, internal environment factors, convenience factors, utilitarian factors, acoustic factors, demonstration factors, and proximity factors. Music, sound effects, retail music, advertising music, and songs contribute (acoustics) has considerable potential to attract visitors for longevity in the shopping environment (Krause and North, 2016; Raja et al., 2019). These factors influence consumers to choose or select a mall or a shopping complex to visit specifically in Indian conditions. Furthermore, Prashar et al. (2017) highlighted the significant positive relevance of the convenience factor while selecting a mall for a visit. For shoppers, proximity is an indispensable factor and forms a part of convenience (Gahinet and Cliquet, 2018). People are attracted due to certain factors. Mall Attractive Dimensions (MADs) were an outcome of a study conducted in Tier-II cities. MADs are comprised of six indicators – mall environment, convenience, mall staff, mall hygiene, entertainment, and security (Kumar et al., 2021). From the literature review at was found that MADs identified by Kumar et al. (2021) could fulfill the parameters for the present study under tier II and tier III conditions.

2.2 Visitors' Experience

The four realms of experience (i.e., 4E's) are educational, entertainment, escapist, and esthetic experiences (Pine and Gilmore, 1998, 2013). In the study of tourism, researchers have demonstrated the importance of different permutations of the 4Es in evoking consumer reactions (Bærenholdt and Haldrup, 2006; Oh et al., 2007; Hosany and Witham, 2009; Lee and Chang, 2012; Sinclair-Maragh, 2016; Liasidou, 2018), online retailing (Jeong et al., 2009), mobile applications – user interface (Mathwick et al., 2001; Hsu et al., 2021), theme parks (Milman and Tasci, 2018), food outlets at shopping malls (Koronaki and Theodoridis, 2020) and malls and its in-house retail offerings (Sadachar, 2014; Sadachar and Fiore, 2018).

2.3 Visitors' Emotions

Mehrabian and Russell's (1974) environmental psychology technique is a popular methodology for assessing and describing environmental experiences, characterizing human perceptions of physical surroundings using three facets of emotions. Also, to give greater clarity, Bakker et al. (2014) connected pleasure, arousal, and dominance with Affect, Cognition, and Behavior (ABC). Still, several researchers emphasized these three dimensions, giving more preference to pleasure and arousal in their studies related to social psychology. Emotional behavior of shoppers is affected by color and its combinations of a retail store, its display and merchandise (Bellizzi et al., 1983), hunters observe pleasure as a predictor to satisfaction (Floyd, 1997), satisfaction measurement study on "target-arousal level" provided knowledge regarding the key role of hedonic aspects (Wirtz et al., 2000) and supported the previous study by Berlyne (1970) on hedonic values and relationships between pleasantness, interestingness, and novelty. Pleasure and arousal are significant predictors when music is played at a location (Krause and North, 2016), effects of lighting color on emotional states (Lee and Lee, 2021). Research on online booking sites reveals the positive impact of e-atmospherics like portal design, music, and colorful effects on emotions that please hotel customers (Essawy, 2017).

3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

The environment has certain stimuli "S" which provide impact to an organism's internal states "O" and these influenced internal states examines his / her future behavior in the form of response "R" (Mehrabian and Russell, 1974). This S-O-R framework was adopted by Donovan and Rossiter (1982) in a retail context and afterward used and adopted by many researchers to examine the impact of showroom atmosphere and environment on the reactions and responses of consumers' and visitors' (Bitner, 1992; Donovan et al., 1994; Eroglu et al., 2001; Baker et al., 2002; Menon and Kahn, 2002; Das, 2013). The S-O-R Framework is adapted for the conceptual framework for the present study (refer Fig. 1). Exploration of interrelationships among (1) mall attractive dimensions (MADs), (2) Pine and Gilmore's (1998) experience economy (4E's), and (3) affective aspects of consumer (i.e. pleasure and Arousal) at Tier-II and Tier-III cities in India is based on S-O-R model, which is an unexplored topic to my knowledge.

3.1 MADs and Visitors' Experience

Tauber (1972) revealed interesting facts about peoples' behavior while planning a visit to a shopping destination. In his study, he provides ample information to managers to attract visitors not just by product information, but through other means and features, which may fulfill their needs for not only buying products but also exploring and browsing new trends and fashion. The exploring and browsing for updating one's knowledge may be categorized in educational experiences. Malls are just another habitat for visitors, where they forget to come out of it, because of engagements in various attributes and facilities at malls (Bloch et al., 1994). A study carried out in India revealed that there is an influence of features like architecture, design, service consistency, variety of options availability under one roof on consumers' experiences (Khare, 2011). Also, escapist behavior is noticed due to visitors' engagement in various in-house activity options like a movie screen, dining courts, fun, and gaming zones, where visitors relax with companions, fantasize, and feel freedom from daily routine work (Bloch and Richins, 1983; Khare, 2011; Singh and Sahay, 2012). Mall ambiance, internal and external environment, design, and architecture are prominent contributors for providing esthetic experiences to visitors (Phillips and Sternthal, 1977; Michon et al., 2008; Singh and Sahay, 2012). Kushwaha et al. (2017) found that seven important aspects – experiences from the services of a mall, mall interiors, and atmospherics, visitor's convenience, utilities from the mall, and presentations by mall and retail store staff – significantly affect visitor's emotions and experiences. The features of showrooms, shops, and outlets based in the mall and features of the mall as a whole provide experiences to visitors in the form of increment in visitor's information, fun, and aesthetics (Vilnai-Yavetz et al., 2021). People in tier II and tier III cities are attracted to a mall from six attributes (Kumar et al., 2021). Mall attractive dimensions (MADs: mall environment, convenience, mall staff, mall hygiene, entertainment, and security) may impact upon four experiential realms in context to the second-tier and third-tier cities of India. This is an unexplored study.

Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed as follows:

- H_1: Mall attractive dimensions positively influence educational experience.
- H_2: Mall attractive dimensions positively influence the entertainment experience.
- H_3: Mall attractive dimensions positively influence escapist experience.
- H_4: Mall attractive dimensions positively influence esthetic experience.

3.2 Visitors' Experience and Visitors' Emotions

Pine and Gilmore (1998) came up with the theory of the four realms of an experience

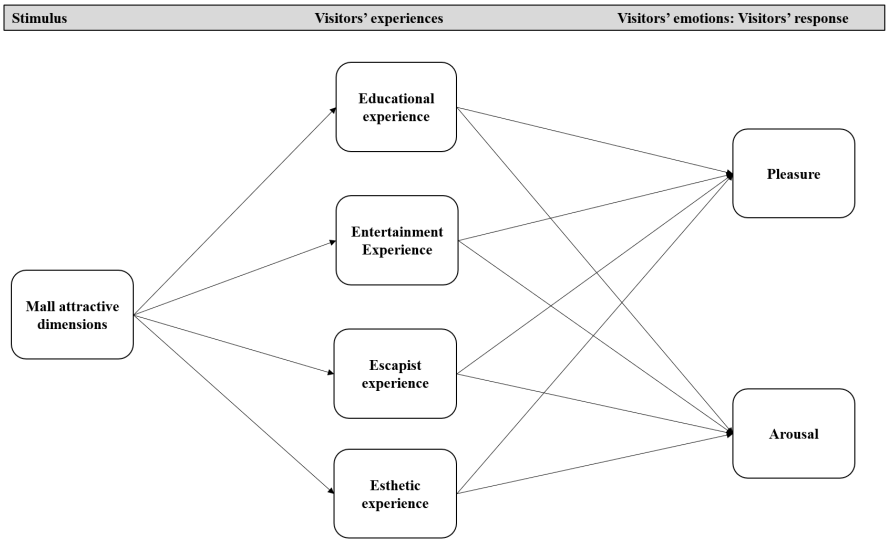

Fig. 1: Hypothesized Research Model adapted, based on Mehrabian and Russell (1974)

(educational, entertainment, escapist and esthetic – 4E's). According to him visitors' experiential consumption style and style of participation during such engagement process were active participation – absorption (educational experience), passive participation – absorption (entertainment experience), immersion in the environment – passive participation (escapist experience), and immersion in the environment – active participation (esthetics experience). Empirical analysis taking antecedent factors from store environment and its experiences supported the predictive factors related to affective state i.e. pleasure and arousal (Babin et al., 1994; Sherman et al., 1997; Baker et al., 2002). Laroche et al. (2005) found that the consumer's emotions (pleasure and evoked mood) are influenced by consumers' experiences (cognitive – educational experience) are invariant at all destinations. The study at a mall in a metro city in India concludes with an emphasis on entertainment aspects to increase customer visits. Because a customer may not wish to purchase anything (passive participation in the buying process) but will like to watch a movie (absorption) and enjoy spending time in the mall (Anuradha and Manohar, 2011). Fun was found to successfully work in a novel study carried out on consumers visiting the shopping complex, escapism experiences like imagination of being someone else, fantasizing or imagining another environment resulting in a high level of feelings – pleasure and arousal (Babin et al., 1994). Perception of the esthetic atmosphere and retaliation due to such atmosphere in a mall affect the behavioral intentions of its visitors (Ortegón-Cortázar and Royo-Vela, 2019). Modern marketplace and regime of experiential consumption from it equate sensual pleasure (Jantzen et al., 2012). Extended experiences had higher prominence towards the emotional aspects like fun (Pelletier and Collier, 2018). Hence, four realms of an experience (educational, entertainment, escapist, and esthetic experiences) may perform a crucial part in explicating the visitors' emotions after interaction with mall attractive dimensions and should be assessed in the context of Indian Tier II and Tier III cities with the following four hypotheses:

- H_5: There is an impact of educational experience on pleasure.
- H_6: There is an impact of the entertainment experience on pleasure.
- H_7: There is an impact of escapist experience on pleasure.
- H_8: There is an impact of esthetic experience on pleasure.

- H_9: There is an impact of educational experience on arousal.
- H_{10}: There is an impact of the entertainment experience on arousal.
- H_{11}: There is an impact of escapist experience on arousal.
- H_{12}: There is an impact of esthetic experience on arousal.

Thus, hypothesized research model (Fig. 1) is proposed after the comprehensive study of previous distinguished findings.

4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The majority of the measuring items utilized in this study were derived from the literature. A list of the measuring items utilized in this study for survey purposes is given in Tab. 5 and Tab. 6 in the Annex. To obtain primary data, a mall-intercept survey approach with a structured close-ended questionnaire was employed. The questionnaire comprised of four survey sections. All the questions in the instrument were based on a 7-point Likert scale (1 represent Lowest/Strongly disagree and 7 represent Highest/Strongly agree). In this study, a convenience sampling methodology was adopted. The study's population was comprised of adult (age above 18 years) respondents from Western Utter Pradesh, India's Tier II and Tier III. All the malls of three cities (Moradabad, Bareilly, and Mathura) of Uttar Pradesh were identified. Moradabad and Bareilly (Tier-II cities) and Mathura (Tier III city) are not categorized in metropolitan cities list by Govt. of India (Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, 2011; Maps of India, 2019). These three cities were selected because of some common factors like demographics, language and anthropologic similarities in sociocultural behaviour. Responders were intercepted in the malls for their time to provide responses. The sample size for this study was 700 people. Questionnaires with abounding missing values were repudiated. Six hundred thirteen (613) responses were found to be complete and analyzed.

5 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

5.1 Demographic Data Analysis

The respondent's demographic data is shown in Tab. 1.

5.2 Data Analysis Procedure

To achieve the research objectives, the present study employed SmartPLS 3 to facilitate data analysis. Partial least square-structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) was used for data analysis, due to fact that its appropriateness with good results in analyzing composite models (Dash and Paul, 2021). Moreover, if the model includes both reflecting and formative modeling, PLS-SEM in SmartPLS 3 provides greater flexibility in such complicated models, making it a widely recognized multivariate analytical approach (Hair et al., 2017).

5.3 Measurement Model Evaluation

For examining the measurement model internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity were analyzed. Convergent validity shows "the extent to which different measures refer to the same conceptual construct" (Dinev and Hart, 2004).

From Tab. 2 it is evident that the values of Cronbach's Alpha (α) and Composite Reliability (CR) for all the constructs are greater than 0.60 and 0.70 respectively. This indicates the reliability of the study instrument (Hair et al., 2011; Ali et al., 2018). Next, to measure convergent validity, average variance extracted (AVE) for all the dimensions were found greater than 0.50, supporting Hair et al. (2011) acceptance boundary of > 0.50.

Tab. 1: Summary of the Demographic Characteristics of the respondents

Variable		$n = 613$	%
Gender	Male	431	70.31
	Female	182	29.69
Age	18–24 years	221	36.05
	25–34 years	171	27.90
	35–44 years	111	18.11
	45–54 years	73	11.91
	Above 55 years	37	6.04
Marital status	Single	242	39.48
	Married	371	60.52
Education	School-level	31	5.06
	Bachelor's degree	429	69.98
	Post-graduate degree	153	24.96
Employment profile	Student	180	29.36
	Business	137	22.35
	Govt. job	31	5.06
	Private job	148	24.14
	Homemaker	83	13.54
	Professional	23	3.75
	Other	11	1.79
Household income	Rs. 30,000 and less	316	51.55
	Rs. 30,001 to 60,000	149	24.31
	Rs. 60,001 to 100,000	76	12.40
	Rs. 100,001 and above	72	11.75

To examine the discriminant validity, the Fornell-Larcker and Heterotrait-Monotrait criteria were employed. The square roots of average variance extracted of the constructs were found higher than the correlation values between each construct as well as other constructs. Thus, discriminant validity was established as per the Fornell-Larcker criterion. A comparatively non-traditional concept of Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT) is employed in addition to the usual approach of assessing the discriminant validity of the constructs. According to the most recent criterion, all HTMT values must be less than one as recommended by the HTMT Monte Carlo technique (Clark and Watson, 1995), however, it is debatable, Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) Ratio of correlations with a maximum ratio of 0.85 and 0.9 acceptable value (Gold et al., 2001; Teo et al., 2008; Henseler et al., 2016). In this study, the HTMT values exceeded 0.90 for esthetic experience and escapist experience, for which HTMT was used to establish discriminant validity on the liberal side. Refer Tab. 7 in the Annex for Fornell-Larcker Criteria values and Tab. 8 in the Annex for Heterotrait-Monotrait criteria values.

5.4 Model Fit Estimates and Evaluation

SEM performed with SmartPLS can also be estimated for its fitness. The most common and accepted parameter is to assess it based on standard root square residual (SRMS) values which are a result of bootstrapping (Browne and Cudeck, 1992; Hu and Bentler, 1998). A value not exceeding the 0.08 limit is accepted to confirm a model as fit and to reject any inconsistencies with pragmatic relationships (Hu and Bentler, 1999; Henseler et al., 2016). In present analysis SRMR = 0.047 < 0.08 hence, model is found

Tab. 2: Model evaluation

Constructs	Indicator	Outer Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Mall Attractive Dimensions (MADs)	MAD1	0.897	0.956	0.965	0.819
	MAD2	0.905			
	MAD3	0.892			
	MAD4	0.919			
	MAD5	0.915			
	MAD6	0.904			
Educational Experience (EDUE)	EDU1	0.871	0.930	0.947	0.782
	EDU2	0.858			
	EDU3	0.880			
	EDU4	0.905			
	EDU5	0.905			
Entertainment Experience (ENTE)	ENT1	0.859	0.909	0.932	0.732
	ENT2	0.890			
	ENT3	0.862			
	ENT4	0.853			
	ENT5	0.812			
Escapist Experience (ESCE)	ESC1	0.909	0.948	0.960	0.827
	ESC2	0.913			
	ESC3	0.905			
	ESC4	0.898			
	ESC5	0.922			
Esthetic Experience (ESTE)	EST1	0.912	0.948	0.960	0.828
	EST2	0.920			
	EST3	0.890			
	EST4	0.922			
	EST5	0.907			
Pleasure (PLE)	PLE1	0.886	0.943	0.954	0.777
	PLE2	0.881			
	PLE3	0.890			
	PLE4	0.877			
	PLE5	0.875			
	PLE6	0.882			
Arousal (ARO)	ARO1	0.869	0.936	0.950	0.758
	ARO2	0.903			
	ARO3	0.864			
	ARO4	0.822			
	ARO5	0.879			
	ARO6	0.885			

fit. R^2 explains the variance and covariance for a given endogenous construct by exogenous variables connected to it. The magnitude of the 'coefficient of determination' i.e., R^2 assist to get the predictive accurate model (Hair et al., 2014; Hair et al., 2019) which is found medium in the present study. The predictive nature of change can be assessed by Q^2 indices also (Hair et al., 2011). Because all of the Q^2 values are larger than zero, the PLS structural model may explain predictive effects. Refer to Tab. 3 for R^2 and Q^2 values of the study.

Tab. 3: R^2 and Q^2

Constructs	R^2	Q^2	Effect
Educational Experience	0.309	0.240	medium
Entertainment Experience	0.215	0.154	medium
Escapist Experience	0.306	0.251	medium
Esthetic Experience	0.236	0.193	medium
Pleasure	0.383	0.294	medium
Arousal	0.200	0.148	small

Tab. 4: PLS-SEM Results

Hypotheses	Path	b	Standard deviation	t-static	p-value	Decision
H_1	MAD → EDUE	0.556	0.042	13.135	0.000	Supporting
H_2	MAD → ENTE	0.463	0.048	9.595	0.000	Supporting
H_3	MAD → ESCE	0.553	0.047	11.651	0.000	Supporting
H_4	MAD → ESTE	0.486	0.050	9.762	0.000	Supporting
H_5	EDUE → PLE	−0.057	0.046	1.241	0.215	Not Supporting
H_6	ENTE → PLE	0.127	0.058	2.188	0.029	Supporting
H_7	ESCE → PLE	0.206	0.086	2.403	0.016	Supporting
H_8	ESTE → PLE	0.357	0.086	4.169	0.000	Supporting
H_9	EDUE → ARO	0.061	0.046	1.317	0.188	Not Supporting
H_{10}	ENTE → ARO	0.137	0.053	2.583	0.010	Supporting
H_{11}	ESCE → ARO	0.156	0.090	1.725	0.085	Not Supporting
H_{12}	ESTE → ARO	0.144	0.084	1.717	0.086	Not Supporting

Notes: t-values for two-tailed test: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

5.5 Structural Model Evaluation

Next evaluations for the SEM path were conducted by bootstrapping method to check the significance of hypotheses (Tab. 4). Significance levels are shown with path (relationship) and respective β values. The standardized path coefficients (β) were found to be insignificant and positive at $p < 0.001$ and $p < 0.05$, which indicated that there existed strong evidence in rejection of the hypotheses H_5, H_9, H_{11}, and H_{12} except for H_1***, H_2***, H_3***, H_4***, H_6*, H_7*, H_8***, and H_{10}**.

6 DISCUSSION

This research reveals the empirical significant impact of MADs on the visitors' experiences (4E's: Educational – Entertainment – Escapist – Esthetic experience) and visitors' experience on visitors' emotions (pleasure and arousal) – refer Fig. 2. Hypothesis (H_1, H_2, H_3, and H_4) checked the relationship between MADs and visitors' experiences. These relationships are found significant and positive in the present study. The findings for H_1 found parallel with previous studies. People do not visit for buying products only, but also to explore, browse, increase knowledge about new trends and fashion (Tauber, 1972). Similarly, the present study complements the results of Khare (2011), where she stated that mall features influence exploration and examine products to avail EDUE. The results of the study concerning H_2 support previous findings, where mall attributes like movie-plexes, game zones, festive and anniversary celebrations, food courts provide significant ENTE to visitors (Bloch et al., 1994; Wakefield and Baker, 1998; Kashyap and Raghuvanshi, 2020; Kumar et al., 2021; Vilnai-Yavetz et al., 2021). The findings concerning H_3 support earlier research stating the positive impact of mall attributes on ESCE, where visitors' engagement in various in-house activity options like a movie screen, dining courts, fun, and gaming zones. Visitors relax with companions, fantasize, and feel freedom from daily routine work (Bellenger and Korgaonkar, 1980; Bloch and Richins, 1983; Khare, 2011; Singh and Sahay, 2012; Kushwaha et al., 2017).

The findings for H_4 support studies of previous researchers where mall ambiance, internal and external environment, design, and architecture are prominent contributors for providing ESTE to visitors (Phillips and Sternthal, 1977; Michon et al., 2008; Kusumowidagdo et al.,

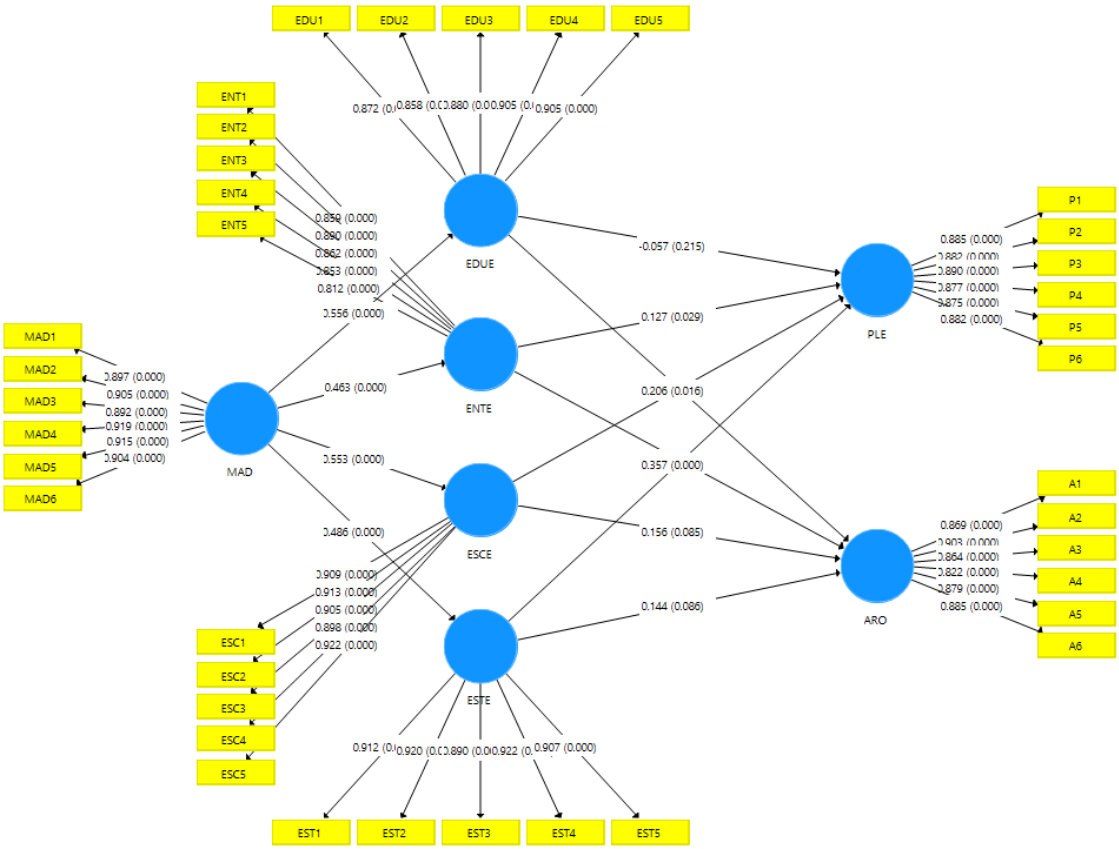

Fig. 2: PLS Structural Equation Model – Output

2016; Kushwaha et al., 2017). Findings of the H_5 and H_9 established an insignificant relationship between EDUE and PLE and ARO. This shows that pleasure and arousal are not predicted from educational experiences from a mall in Tier II & III cities. This may be because the malls in Tier II and Tier III cities are small, lack variety and have limited brands, unawareness of international brands, and visitors being a follower of old traditional markets and shops (Mathur, 2010; Basupattad and Kothari, 2016; Sahu, 2016). This is a contradiction from previous studies where exploration and educational experience play an important role in making the mall a habitat, provide adventure and pleasure, satisfaction, motivation, and arousal (Bloch et al., 1994; Bayley and Nancarrow, 1998; Jeong et al., 2009; Singh and Prashar, 2014; Sadachar and Fiore, 2018).

The testing of the H_6 and H_{10} established a significant and positive relationship between ENTE – PLE, and ENTE – ARO, this is also supported by previous writers. Zerlang (2015) discussed the relationship between entertainment and urbanization which steered the world towards the development of mall culture in the 21st century as entertainment could evoke emotions viz. pleasure and arousal. Pleasure, arousal, or joyful experiences are inevitable components, categorizing entertainment as one of the most critical factors which should not be overlooked, and the concept of "retailtainment" and "entertainmerce" influence visitors to extend visiting hours, thus, are inevitable for physical as well as web-based shopping destinations (Jeong, 2007; Hosany and Witham, 2009; Anuradha and Manohar, 2011; Anuradha et al., 2020; Elmashhara and Soares, 2020). Wakefield and Baker (1998) also found that

entertainment influences consumer excitement or arousal in a mall setting. Finding to H_7 provided a significant positive relationship and H_{11} insignificant relationship between ESCE – PLE and ESCE – ARO respectively. This means escapist experiences positively contribute towards pleasure but does not instigate arousal. Both the results are supported by previous studies that happiness, pleasure, and satisfaction are outcomes of escapist experiences. Escapist experiences provide isolation from boring routine daily work pressures and are reinforced from various engagements at the mall (Bellenger and Korgaonkar, 1980; Bloch and Richins, 1983; Khare, 2011; Singh and Sahay, 2012; Kushwaha et al., 2017). The mall experiences instigate arousal and excitement when visitor's orientation is towards adventure and recreational activities (Hemalatha and Ravichandran, 2009; van Rompay et al., 2011), getting immersed and participating actively in non-utilitarian activities (Pine and Gilmore, 1998), which might be negligible in the case of Tier II & III city malls. The testing of the hypothesis H_8 and H_{12} established a positive relationship between ESTE – PLE and an insignificant relationship between ESTE – ARO. The results are relatively different from previous studies. Consumers with hedonic motivations will engage in the esthetic experiences, which will consequently lead to favorable emotional responses (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982).

In esthetic experiences, visitors like being involved in a sensory environment. Esthetic appeal from the mall design, architecture, settings, lightings, color combinations and atmospheric details (e.g., store layout, interior details, and visual presentation of products) provide immediate pleasure and arousal to consumers (Wakefield and Baker, 1998). In Tier II & Tier III the esthetic appeal provides pleasure but did not arouse the emotions to a high extent. This may be because the malls in Tier II & Tier cities lack architecture and ambiance compared to the malls in metro cities or western countries.

7 THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION

A great number of researches have given importance to the environment where customers roam, interact, sense, enjoy, examine, explore, identify, recognize, recall and decide. The emotional aspects of consumers play a vital role in reaching a particular decision. The decision to visit a shopping arena is critically based on the human psychological framework, which is affected by mall attractive dimensions (stimulus) and emotional outcomes (responses) through engagements and experiences (organism). This is also justified from the studies of (Mehrabian and Russell, 1974; Donovan et al., 1994; Baker et al., 2002). The present study in small city conditions has provided some different and specific insights. This could be regarded as a significant contribution to the current literature which was previously conducted in developed and metro cities, lacking empirical evidence of consumer behavior at Tier-II & III city malls. This research also contributes towards drawing new theoretical inferences. Because developed (e.g., western countries and metro cities) and developing cities have substantial economic, cultural and social differences and consumer behavior in small cities of rising economies like India, can differ dramatically from that of western countries like the United States and metro cities like New Delhi and Mumbai. Previous studies have used the experience economy approach extensively, although mostly in the context of western countries and metro cities. Hence, the present research significantly contributed to the theory while examining the relevance of Pine and Gilmore's (1998) 4E's and Mehrabian and Russell's (1974) S-O-R model for analyzing visitor's behavior. The present study encourages researchers to extend the application of MADs in various predictors like patronage intention, loyalty, revisit intention, and recommendations. Moreover, the present model may be applied for comparative study between Tier I and Tier II/III city malls. A comparative analysis may suggest results which

could be useful for arranging suitable services to Tier I city malls having rural immigrants and Tier II/III city malls having urban visitors. Extension of present study may also be done for retail grocery outlets, branded food chains, local restaurants, spa, saloons, etc. in Tier II/III city. Further, author opens avenues for exploring the moderating and mediating role of 4E's on pleasure, and arousal in similar or different demographics.

8 MANAGERIAL CONTRIBUTION

The present study confirms the appeal of new experiential marketing strategies (i.e., 4Es) to visitors and consumers which may be practically executed in Tier II & Tier III cities. Therefore, Malls should identify the hedonic motivations of their target customers and offer particular combinations of the mall attractive dimensions which have more effect over four experiences. By knowing the behavioral patterns of visitors, the mall management, mall tenants, and retailers can use their limited resources more effectively to focus on dimensions that provide experiences. Visitors felt pleasure, found relaxation, and were satisfied (escapist and esthetic experience) with the mall's attractive dimensions but did not have access to the desired recreational environment which could arouse their emotions. Thus, results suggest that malls in such cities considerably lack some of the recreational set-ups like fun-game zones, facilities for festival celebration, extended hang out places, health parlor (spa, etc.), food courts, etc. which could be a matter of concern. Hence, more efforts are required to strengthen this overlooked feature to ensure the outcomes of escapist experience towards evoked pleasure (positively significant from the present study) as well as evoked arousal (insignificant outcome) to strengthen mall engagements. Thus, the study findings suggest implications for the mall management to cohesively work with tenants to synergize MADs which affect consumer emotions due to experiences. Mall attractive dimensions should evoke experiential pleasure and arousal to attract visitors, make customers loyal and retain them as advocates.

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10 ANNEX

Tab. 5: Measurement Items used in the study (Scale)

Scale-Items	Reference
(1) Mall Attractive Dimensions	Kumar et al. (2021)
Mall environment, Convenience, Mall staff, Mall hygiene, Entertainment and Security	
(2) Four realms of an experience	Oh et al. (2007), Pine and Gilmore (1998)
Educational experience, Entertainment experience, Escapist experience and Esthetic experience	
(3) Responders' emotions	Bakker et al. (2014), Mehrabian and Russell (1974)
Pleasure (Unhappy – Happy, Bored – Relaxed, Annoyed – Pleased, Unsatisfied – Satisfied, Despairing – Hopeful)	
Arousal (Unaroused – Aroused, Dull – Jittery, Sleepy – Wild awake, Calm – Excited, Sluggish – Frenzied, Relaxed – Stimulated)	

Tab. 6: Measurement Items used in the study (Questionnaire)

Constructs	Indicator	Statements
Mall Attractive Dimension (MADs)	MAD1	Mall environment factors like interesting design, attractive interior wall and floor colour schemes, attractive architecture, attractive lightings, spacious corridors, comfortable temperature and aroma – stimulate me for selecting this Mall for shopping
	MAD2	Mall convenience factors like operational timings, restrooms, lockers, escalators, lifts, spacious parking, mall location and proximity – stimulate me for selecting this Mall for shopping
	MAD3	Mall staff being pleasing, helping, polite, presentable, prompt and caring – motivate me for selecting this Mall for shopping
	MAD4	Entertainment factors like cinema and movie screens, restaurants, play and game area, acoustics in mall, hang-out facilities during celebrations and festivals – motivate me for selecting this Mall for shopping
	MAD5	Security factors for personal and belongings against theft, secure parking for vehicles and process of scanned entry – motivate me for selecting this Mall for shopping
	MAD6	Mall hygiene facilities like well clean washrooms, proper ventilation, clean floors, fragrant and clean air, enclosed facilities, dust free arena – motivate me for selecting this Mall for shopping
Educational Experience (EDUE)	EDU1	My visit to this mall has stimulated my curiosity to learn new things
	EDU2	I consider my visit to mall as real learning experience
	EDU3	I found something new related to my interest in the mall
	EDU4	Exploring the mall during visit helped me to find different merchandise
	EDU5	I noted mall as a place with multiple activities under one roof
Entertainment Experience (ENTE)	ENT1	All of the activities of the mall have been amusing to watch
	ENT2	I really enjoyed observing all the activities in the mall
	ENT3	All of the activities of the mall have been pleasurable to see
	ENT4	It was fun to watch all activities of the mall
	ENT5	I found myself happy during my stay at mall
Escapist Experience (ESCE)	ESC1	During this mall visit, I have felt I am living in a different time or place
	ESC2	I have felt I played a different character during this mall visit
	ESC3	This mall experience has let me imagine being someone else
	ESC4	During this mall visit, I forget my daily routine work stress
	ESC5	I feel relaxed during my mall visit
Esthetic Experience (ESTE)	EST1	I found the mall setting has a good sense of design harmony
	EST2	The interior design of the mall attracted me
	EST3	The environment (i.e., lighting, decoration and aroma) in the mall has excited me
	EST4	I found myself in a good mood during my stay at mall
	EST5	It has been pleasant just being in this mall
Pleasure (PLE)	PLE1	I felt happy with the mall experience
	PLE2	I felt relaxed with the mall experience
	PLE3	I felt pleased with the mall experience
	PLE4	I felt satisfied with the mall experience
	PLE5	I felt hopeful with the mall experience
	PLE6	I felt fulfilled with the mall experience
Arousal (ARO)	ARO1	I felt aroused with the mall experience
	ARO2	I felt jittery with the mall experience
	ARO3	I felt awake with the mall experience
	ARO4	I felt excited with the mall experience
	ARO5	I felt over enthusiastic with the mall experience
	ARO6	I felt stimulated with the mall experience

Tab. 7: Summary of Discriminant Validity – Fornel-Larckel Criteria

Latent Variables	ARO	EDUE	ENTE	ESCE	ESTE	MAD	PLE
ARO	0.871						
EDUE	0.312	0.884					
ENTE	0.392	0.509	0.856				
ESCE	0.428	0.626	0.754	0.909			
ESTE	0.422	0.582	0.742	0.906	0.910		
MAD	0.143	0.556	0.463	0.553	0.486	0.905	
PLE	0.386	0.344	0.518	0.589	0.604	0.324	0.882

Tab. 8: Summary of Discriminant Validity – Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

Latent Variables	ARO	EDUE	ENTE	ESCE	ESTE	MAD	PLE
ARO							
EDUE	0.332						
ENTE	0.422	0.545					
ESCE	0.453	0.665	0.804				
ESTE	0.445	0.618	0.788	0.955			
MAD	0.151	0.590	0.492	0.581	0.509		
PLE	0.409	0.364	0.555	0.622	0.636	0.341	

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