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The Impact of Location and Transportation on Shopping Mall Performance: A Case Study of Boulevard and Magnum Malls, Hyderabad

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Abstract

This study explores the link between shopping mall accessibility and consumer preferences in Hyderabad, Pakistan, focusing on Boulevard Mall and Magnum Mall. As urbanization and mall culture expand in Hyderabad Pakistan, accessibility defined by location and transport connectivity has become crucial for attracting visitors. A quantitative survey of 500 respondents, split equally between both malls, examined the roles of transport mode, gender, and location in shaping consumer behaviour. Findings show a high reliance on private vehicles (61.6%), with limited use of public transport (10.8%). Boulevard Mall drew most visitors (84.6%), likely due to its proximity to residential areas and superior transport links. However, correlation and regression analyses found weak and statistically insignificant relationships between transport, gender, and location with mall preference. This suggests that other factors such as amenities, design, or brand offerings may play a larger role. The study highlights the need for integrated transport and urban planning to promote accessible and sustainable retail development.

Keywords: Shopping Mall Accessibility, Consumer Behavior, Transportation Connectivity, Mall Location Strategy, Retail Behavior, Hyderabad Pakistan

Introduction

Shopping malls show the beauty and appeal of big cities. (Aliagha, 2015; Ilias Said et al., 2020). Shopping malls are rapidly expanding throughout Pakistan, particularly in major urban centers like Hyderabad where multinational corporations and real estate developers have been focusing on them.(Kusumowidagdo et al., 2015; Shi et al 2015.,). A shopping mall is a combined commercial complex that is managed and maintained by a single central management organization and consists of multiple retail stores, service facilities, and parking lots. It's an amalgamation platform where two or more shops are co-located, providing an assortment of products and services under various brands. The mall contains several store units, which companies can purchase or lease and use to create their individual retail shops. (Soomro et al., 2021).Many customers view malls as a source of entertainment and aim for an enjoyable shopping experience. (Kholis et al., 2023). In addition to offering a greater variety of shops, a mall can enhance the shop experience for consumers, enticing them to return more often and remain longer. The increasing rate of urbanization is causing the populace to migrate toward shopping centers. It is common for retail malls to draw both residents and tourists that frequent the establishment. Its many advantages, such as convenience, recreational opportunities, a wide selection of brands, and parking, make it a desirable location. (Kiriri et al., 2023). Shopping malls play an important part in the city's financial landscape since they foster both social and economic advancement. They affect how public urban space evolves and how people view the city's beauty and vitality. (Sahito et al., 2020). In recent years, shopping malls have increasingly taken on the characteristics of compact urban centers embedded within the larger fabric of the city. No longer confined to retail activity alone, they now serve as multifunctional environments that incorporate a wide spectrum of urban features. These include commercial and office spaces, residential accommodations, exhibition and convention areas, hospitality services, dining options, recreational facilities, and even integrated transportation links. Such diverse functions are designed not as isolated components, but as interconnected elements that work cohesively to support a seamless

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urban experience. This convergence of multiple city-like functions within a single architectural and spatial complex allows shopping malls to operate as comprehensive zones for work, residence, leisure, and social interaction. As a result, they contribute to a new form of urbanism where everyday life activities are concentrated in one location, minimizing the need for movement across different urban zones (Bäckström, 2006; Han et al., 2019; Nguyen et al., 2019). In the context of modern urban development, the traditional role of public spaces such as streets, plazas, and town squares has undergone a significant transformation. These conventional gathering places, once central to civic life and community interaction, are increasingly being replaced or redefined by commercial environments most notably, shopping malls. In many contemporary cities, malls have assumed the social and spatial functions that were historically fulfilled by open public areas. They now serve as key venues for social interaction, leisure, and communal experience, offering controlled, climate-regulated, and highly curated environments that attract diverse segments of the urban population. This shift reflects broader changes in urban design and social behavior, where commercialized private spaces are taking in roles traditionally associated with the public realm (Goss, 1993; Stillerman & Salcedo, 2012; Sahito et al., 2020). Customers are becoming more selective as a result of the development of shopping centers. Malls with attractive architectural designs and other elements are more likely to attract customers in addition to offering a large assortment of shops and products that fit their preferences. As a result, mall developers must have a thorough awareness of the architectural features that attract patrons to a given shopping centers (Rahman et al., 2021; Said et al., 2016). In crowded cities, the growing number of private vehicles causes severe traffic and environmental problems. The proximity of shopping malls to residential areas is critical to their success, and a sizable customer base within their target market is necessary for their financial viability. Architects, developers, investors, and the general public all strongly favor shopping centers situated near residential areas and public transportation. (Jabareen et al., 2006). A shopping mall's ambience is essential for attracting patrons, with features like entertainment impacting patron pleasure and increasing revenue. (Reutterer and Teller, 2008). Additionally important is the physical environment, which can enhance customer retention and elicit emotional reactions (Lin&Liang, 2011). Entertainment plays a crucial role in culture, offering captivating experiences that resonate with a wide audience. It is influenced by business strategies, aesthetic tastes, and emotional engagement. (Hanzaee et al., 2014; McKee et al., 2017; Stebbins et al., 2007).

Literature Review

This study emphasizes the several elements can influence customer purchasing behavior, with the store's location being one of the most important factors in attracting consumers.(Debak,2015) According to (Sit & Merrilees, 2005) Superstores are rapidly growing in popularity among consumers in developing countries. This rise is largely attributed to their strategic, easily accessible locations and the wide range of services they provide. By offering convenience and a comprehensive shopping experience, these stores are becoming a preferred choice for many shoppers. A customer's visit to a shopping mall is influenced by several factors, including the distance from their home, transportation costs, duration of the visit, and the specific day they choose to go. (Stillerman & Salcedo, 2012). Customers have varying preferences for different features of malls, and each consumer has unique tastes and product choices. (Sit et al., 2003) Certain factors that attract customers to shopping malls include store location, travel time, convenience, closeness to complementary shops, and the visibility of stores. Another key factor influencing the accessibility of a shopping complex is the availability of parking. The ease with which customers can reach the mall is enhanced by its parking facilities, public transportation options, road infrastructure, and traffic conditions. Moreover, accessibility and parking are important site-related features that contribute to the overall appeal of shopping mall marketing. (Priya, 2017). According to (Han et al.,2019) it has been observed that ample parking facilities attract high-income employees, whereas malls without adequate parking contribute to traffic congestion affecting both shoppers and local residents. Superstores play a crucial role in facilitating shopping by offering a wide range of products under a single roof, a comfortable and inviting atmosphere, and recreational areas for children. This study conducted in India highlights that geographical location significantly influences the buying behavior of young consumers. (Shalini Singh, 2009). A study of traditional stores in India explored how the distance travelled by customers influences their perceptions of the store, revealing a positive relationship between customer perceptions and store attributes. (Manfredini & Jenner, 2015).

Materials and Methods

Methodology

This study employs a quantitative research design combined with a case study approach to investigate the accessibility and consumer preferences associated with two major shopping malls in Hyderabad, Pakistan Boulevard Mall and the Magnum Mall. This approach aligns with methodologies used in similar urban and retail studies (Memon et al., 2020; Mangi et al., 2020; Afrae et al., 2021; Abdul Ghaffar et al., 2021), enabling a systematic analysis of location-based factors and transportation accessibility influencing mall usage.

Study Area

Hyderabad, the second-largest city in the province of Sindh, Pakistan, is a rapidly urbanizing metropolitan area with a population exceeding 2.1 million residents. The city is administratively divided into three major talukas: Qasimabad, Latifabad, and Hyderabad City, each representing distinct demographic and spatial characteristics that contribute to the overall urban fabric. This study centers on two prominent shopping malls within Hyderabad, selected specifically to reflect diverse geographic and urban dynamics for a comprehensive comparative analysis. The first is Boulevard Mall, situated in Latifabad, a taluka primarily characterized by its dense residential neighbourhoods and well-established community infrastructure. The mall's strategic location near residential zones makes it a critical hub for local shoppers who prioritize convenience and accessibility. In contrast, the second focus of the study is Magnum Mall, located in the heart of Hyderabad City taluka. Serving a wider metropolitan population, Magnum Mall attracts visitors not only from the immediate vicinity but also from across Hyderabad's more commercial and business-oriented districts. This central placement offers a different urban context, marked by higher pedestrian traffic, greater public transportation connectivity, and a more diverse consumer base. By examining these two malls, the research aims to capture the influence of location and urban context on consumer behavior, accessibility, and overall mall performance within a fast-growing South Asian city. The distinct spatial settings of Boulevard and Magnum malls thus provide an ideal framework for analyzing how geographic and transportation-related factors shape shopping mall viability and user experiences in Hyderabad's complex urban environment.

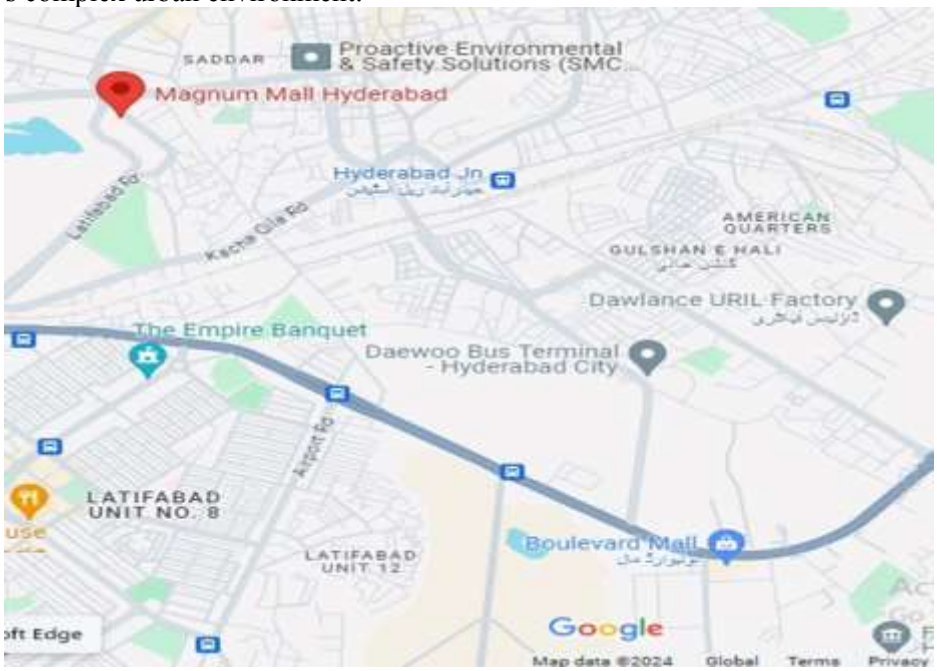

Figure 1: shows the location map of both shopping malls (Source: Google maps, 2022)

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The sample size for this study was set at 500 respondents to ensure high statistical power, reliability, and generalizability of the results. In social science research, larger samples improve the accuracy of results, reduce sampling error, and increase the representativeness of data. The size chosen was considered appropriate to reflect the diversity of consumer behavior while being feasible within the available time and resources. The sample was evenly split between the two malls, with 250 participants interviewed at Boulevard Mall and 250 participants at Magnum Mall. This balanced

distribution enables comparative analysis of consumer behavior and availability patterns in different urban environments of Hyderabad. Random sampling was used to select participants to minimize selection bias and ensure representation of different age groups, genders, income levels, and geographic locations. (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970; Mangi et al., 2019; Brohi et al., 2021; Memon et al., 2021).

Data Collection

Primary data was collected through structured questionnaires administered on-site at both shopping malls. The questionnaire was designed to capture key variables related to accessibility, transportation modes, frequency of visits, consumer satisfaction, and preferences regarding mall facilities and services (Sahito et al., 2020; Memon et al., 2021; Rabia et al., 2021; Brohi et al., 2021). To supplement the survey, observational data on mall surroundings, transportation infrastructure, and foot traffic patterns were also recorded to contextualize the survey responses.

Data Analysis

The data collected were processed and analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) to ensure rigorous quantitative analysis of the relationships between variables influencing consumer behaviour and accessibility at both malls (Rabia et al., 2020; Memon et al., 2021). Next, correlational analysis was performed to examine the strength and direction of relationships between key variables such as distance from residence, transportation options, frequency of visits, and consumer satisfaction. This step helped identify which factors were most closely linked to mall visitation patterns and user preferences (Sahito et al., 2020; Memon et al., 2021). To further explore the predictive power of these factors, multiple regression analysis was conducted. This analysis assessed the impact of independent variables such as location proximity, transport accessibility, parking availability, and mall facilities on the dependent variable of overall mall attractiveness and consumer visit intention. The regression models provided insights into which factors significantly influence consumer choices and the extent to which accessibility explains variations in mall usage (Afrae et al., 2021; Abdul Ghaffar et al., 2021). Together, these analyses enabled a comprehensive understanding of how spatial and transportation-related factors contribute to the accessibility and competitiveness of Boulevard Mall and Magnum Mall in the urban context of Hyderabad.

Results and Discussions

This table shows the total of 500 respondents participated in the study, with a slight female majority (56.2%) compared to males (43.8%). The majority of participants (61.6%) reported using their own vehicles to access the shopping malls, while others relied on autos or taxis (13.2%), public transport (10.8%), or motorcycles (14.4%). In terms of location distribution, 84.6% of the respondents were surveyed at Boulevard Mall in Latifabad, reflecting its higher footfall and residential proximity, whereas 15.4% of responses were collected from Magnum Mall in Hyderabad.

Table 1: The questionnaire's demographic variables, respondents' location, mode of transportation, and questions

Variable	N	%
Gender (total)		
Male	250	43.80%
Female	250	56.20%
total	500	
Mode of Transportation		
Bike	16	14.4%
Auto, taxi	66	13.2%
Own Vehicle	322	61.6%
Public transport	47	10.8%
Location		
Boulevard Mall	491	84.6%
Magnum Mall	9	15.4%

The figure 1 illustrates the percentage distribution of survey respondents across the two selected shopping malls in Hyderabad. A significant majority of participants (84.6%) were surveyed at Boulevard Mall, located in Latifabad, while only 15.4% of respondents were from Magnum Mall, situated in Hyderabad City taluka. The disproportionate representation reflects Boulevard Mall's closer proximity to major residential areas such as Latifabad and Qasimabad, as well as its higher accessibility via private and public transport modes. This suggests that Boulevard Mall serves as a

more frequently visited commercial hub compared to Magnum Mall, emphasizing the role of location and transport connectivity in influencing consumer footfall.

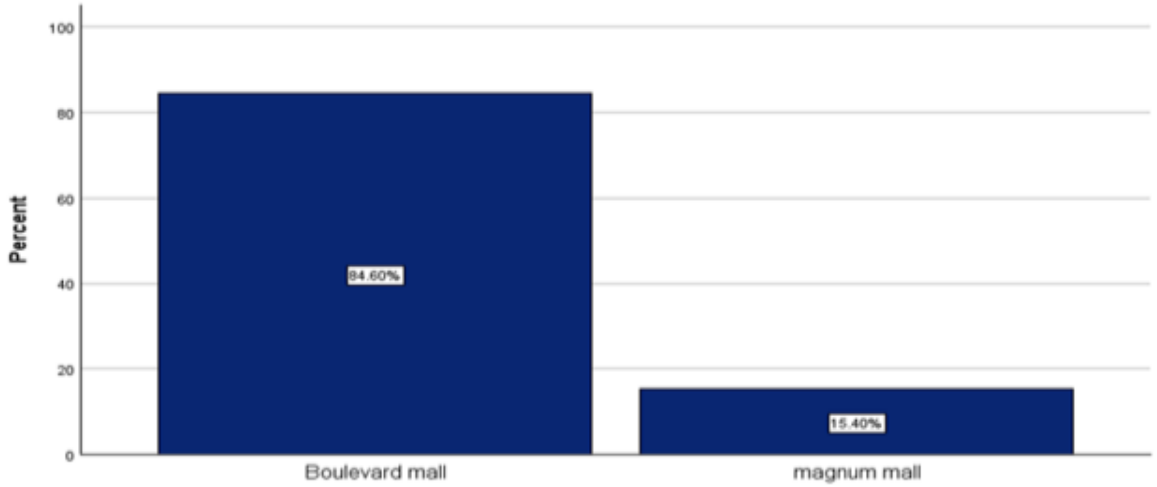

Figure 1 Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Shopping Mall Location

The figure 2 represents the percentage of respondents using different modes of transportation to access Boulevard Mall and Magnum Mall in Hyderabad. The majority of visitors (61.6%) reported using their own vehicles, indicating a high level of private car dependency among mall-goers. Bikes (14.4%) and auto-rickshaws or taxis (13.2%) followed as secondary modes, while only 10.8% of the participants relied on public transport. These findings suggest that personal mobility plays a significant role in mall accessibility in Hyderabad, and highlight the need for improved public transit connectivity to retail centers to accommodate a broader population and reduce traffic congestion (Soomro et al., 2021; Jabareen et al., 2006).

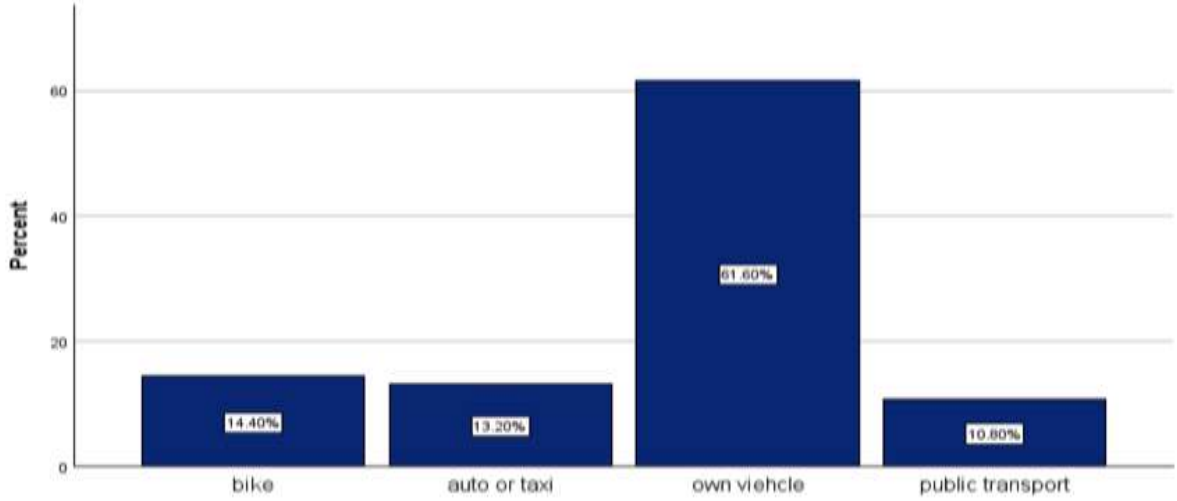

Figure 2: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Mode of Transportation

Correlational Analysis

Table 2: shows the correlation between the Boulevard Shopping Mall's location and transportation and the preferences of customers.

Variables	Gender	Location	Transport
Gender	1.000	0.121	-0.113
Location	0.121	1.000	0.013
Transport	-0.113	0.013	1.000

The table presents Pearson correlation coefficients between the three main variables, the respondents' mode of transportation, location (Boulevard Mall or Magnum Mall), and gender, are displayed in the table. The degree and direction of the association between variables are indicated by a correlation coefficient, which goes from -1 to +1.

Interpretation

- The correlation between Gender and Location is positive but weak (r = 0.121), suggesting that gender has a minimal association with which mall respondents prefer to visit.

- The correlation between Gender and Transport is negative and weak (r = –0.113), implying a slight tendency for gender to influence transportation choice, though the relationship is not statistically strong.
- The correlation between Location and Transport is near zero (r = 0.013), indicating no meaningful linear relationship between the mall location and the mode of transportation used.

Overall, these correlations indicate low interdependence among the variables. While gender may slightly affect both mall preference and transport choice, the relationships are not strong enough to suggest direct predictive power without further analysis (e.g., regression).

REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Table 3: Transport, Location, and Gender Regression Model

Table 3a: Summary of the Model

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.057[a]	.003	-.003	.077

a. Dependent Variable: Mall choice among visitors.

b. Predictors: Gender, Location, Transport, and Constant

With an R of 0.057 and an R-squared of 0.003, the regression analysis in Table 3 demonstrates a very poor model fit, explaining only 0.3% of the variance in the dependent variable. The model's low predictive power is indicated by the negative (-0.003) corrected R-squared. A small average difference between the actual and anticipated values is indicated by the standard error, which is 0.077.

Table 3 a: Transport, Location, Gender (ANOVA[a)]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.010	3	.003	.547	.650[b]
	Residual	2.972	496	.006		
	Total	2.982	499			

a. Dependent Variable: Mall choice among visitors.

b. Predictors: Gender, Location, Transport, and Constant

Table 3b regression analysis indicates that the model is not statistically significant, with an F-value of 0.547 and a p-value of 0.650 (greater than 0.05). The independent variables do not provide a valid explanation for the variance in the dependent variable, as indicated by the regression's sum of squares of 0.010 and residual sum of squares of 2.972.

Table 3 b: Transport, Location, Gender (Co-efficients[a])

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1.	(Constant)	1.001	.022		46.235	<.001
	Gender	.004	.007	.027	.597	.551
	Location	.008	.010	.036	.791	.429
	Transport	-.003	.004	-.030	-.663	.508

a. One dependent variable is the decision of mall patrons.

The p-values for gender, location, and transportation are all high (above 0.05), suggesting that none of these factors has a statistically significant impact on the dependent variable, even if the constant in this table 3c regression analysis has a p-value of less than 0.001.

Conclusion

The findings of this study highlight that accessibility, particularly the use of private vehicles and proximity to residential areas, is a key determinant of consumer footfall in shopping malls within Hyderabad. Boulevard Mall, located closer to populous neighbourhoods and more easily reachable via private and semi-public modes of transportation, significantly outperforms Magnum Mall in attracting visitors. However, the study also reveals that gender, location, and mode of transport show only weak statistical correlations with mall preference, and the regression model demonstrates limited predictive power. This suggests that while accessibility plays a foundational role, other factors such as retail offerings, service quality, ambiance, and entertainment facilities may also critically influence consumer behavior. The heavy reliance on personal vehicles underscores the need for improved public transportation integration to reduce traffic congestion and promote environmental sustainability. Policymakers, developers, and urban planners should prioritize multimodal

accessibility and transit-oriented design when planning future retail hubs to foster inclusive, sustainable, and economically vibrant urban spaces.

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