

Assessing the Influence of Shopping Experiences on Customer Loyalty: A Study of Indian Jewellery Retail Brand

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ABSTRACT

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Purpose - This Study aims to develop a framework by investigating the interrelationship between dimensions, shopping experiences, store preference dimensions, retail brand images, customer patronage, and advocacy.

Design/Methodology/Approach - In this model, store preference is a mediating variable around the other four constructs: shopping experiences, retail brand images, retail patronage, and advocacy. Extant literature has not studied the interrelations among these four variables. A path model is proposed to capture the five dimensions' direct and feedback effects using a simultaneous-equation rank-ordered logistic regression model. We capture the impact of demographic and geographic variables, buying occasions, and five dimensions. The results have been tested for reliability and validity.

Findings - Store ambience, product knowledge, staff courteousness, and presentation positively shape customers' shopping experiences. The impact of loyalty and advocacy on shopping experiences has a favorable feedback effect. Store image attributes enhance retail patronage. Demographic variables, customers' geographical locations, and situational factors affect shopping experiences and loyalty. Perception of overall product quality, finish of the products, and service responsiveness builds trust and positive word-of-mouth amongst customers.

Practical Implications - The study prescribes positive ways of utilizing shopping experiences to enhance store patronage, store image attributes, and customer advocacy. It also gives positioning ideas based on buying occasions and targeting ideas based on demographic variables.

Originality/Value - The study shows the feedback relationships amongst the five dimensions, which have not been studied using the simultaneous equations model framework. Jewellery-buying occasions were not considered in previous research studies and are a unique feature of this study.

Keywords: Customer shopping experiences, Customer preferences, Customer loyalty, Repurchase intentions, Advocacy, Retail Patronage.

Introduction

The retail industry, a fiercely competitive arena, thrives on the delivery of positive shopping experiences to attract and retain customers. In this context, the profound impact of shopping experiences on customer behavior has emerged as a pivotal area of study in retail marketing. This research delves into the intricate relationship between shopping behavior and experiences and their influence on retail patronage and customer advocacy. By examining how loyalty, advocacy, and demographic factors shape customers' preference outcomes in retail stores, we aim to provide insights that demand immediate attention and action from the industry.

A customer's store's preferences are one of the most critical aspects in determining customer behavior and loyalty. A

positive shopping experience can significantly enhance customer satisfaction, while a negative shopping experience can lead to dissatisfaction and even customer churn. Therefore, understanding the factors contributing to customer satisfaction in a retail store is crucial based on shopping experiences for the retailers to improve customer loyalty and propagate customer recommendations to potential customers. Customer patronage, loyalty, or commitment (all three words used interchangeably) is another essential factor in determining retail behavior. A loyal customer is expected to make repeat purchases and recommend the store to others, increasing retailer revenue and profitability. Therefore, understanding the factors influencing customer loyalty in a retail store is critical for retailers to develop compelling customer retention strategies. Customer advocacy is another important factor in determining customer behavior in the retail industry. Advocacy refers to customers' willingness to suggest the store name to others, which can lead to increased brand recognition and product acquisition. Therefore, understanding the factors influencing customer advocacy in a retail store is essential for retailers to develop effective word-of-mouth marketing strategies.

This study will collect data through survey methods and analyse it using advanced statistical models to provide insights into the relationship between shopping experience, shopping preferences, and customer behavior. The conclusions of this research are expected to provide an understanding of the importance of shaping positive shopping experiences to enhance customer loyalty and advocacy in the retail business. Retailers can use these insights to increase revenue and profitability and improve their brand images and reputation. The modern retail sector is witnessing a shift in customer expectations, setting new standards for shopping experiences. Retailers constantly innovate to meet these demands and enhance customer satisfaction, loyalty, and advocacy. This study is significant as it delves into the impact of demographic factors on consumer choices. According to a McKinsey (2020) study, enhancing customer experience is a strategic priority for retailers to drive loyalty and customer satisfaction. Retail customer experience is a valid, reliable, and multidimensional construct for investigation.

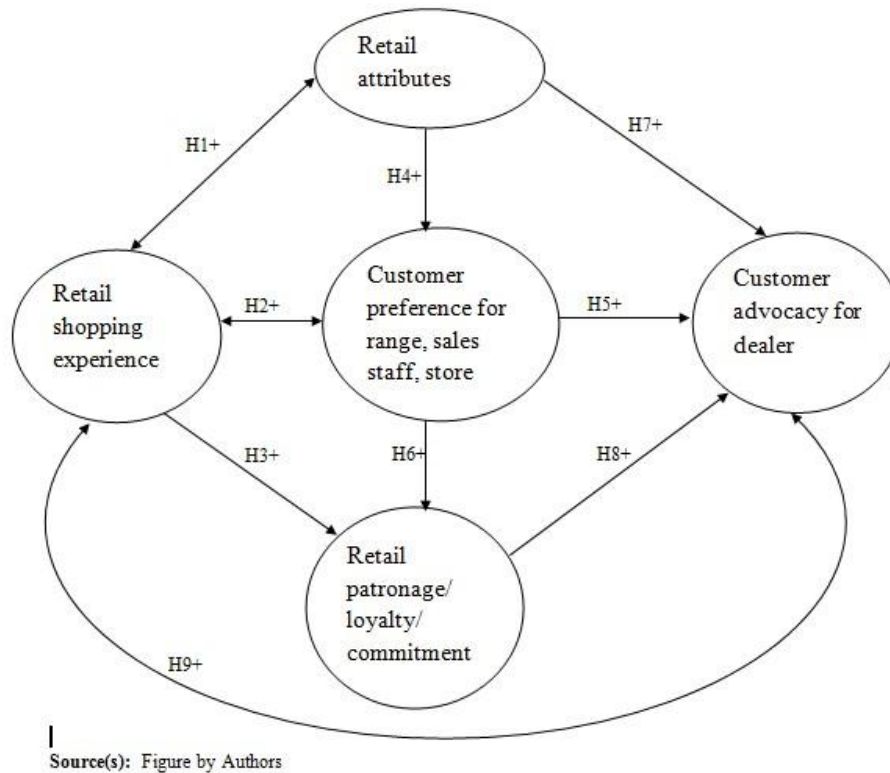
Findings by An and Han (2020) confirm the importance of creating a successful shopping experience to maximize hedonic value and reinforce positive shopping memories that lead to higher customer engagement. Dealers are increasingly aware that the primary determinant of growth and profitability is consumer experience in retail outlets, and building a great, long-lasting consumer experience is a critical priority in retail management and is essential for increasing consumer experience. A study by Nakamori *et al.* (2023) reveals that sales personnel have an essential responsibility to establish a positive customer experience.

This study uses the Customer Preference model as its theoretical foundation for analyzing customer behavior.

Positioning of the study

The interrelationship between shopping experiences, store preference dimensions, customer retail patronage, and consumer advocacy in a retail shop has yet to be studied. Retailers should enhance their focus on developing strong store attributes, including merchandise, staff communication, store atmosphere, and transaction convenience, to foster a positive customer experience, which can ultimately lead to increased brand affinity and loyalty (Anggara *et al.*, 2023).

Positive experiences gradually build trust and promote loyalty to a retailer (Närvänen *et al.*, 2020). Researchers also postulate that consumers engage in advocacy due to salubrious shopping experiences in retail outlets. Many extant literatures have considered the relationship between one or two variables at a time out of the four variables cited above. In particular, we study all the variables in one model, such as customer in-store shopping experiences, store image, shopping preferences of consumers, loyalty or customer retail patronage, and customer advocacy. Inter-relationships among the four concepts and the dual nature of the relationship between these four variable's feedback effects are shown. The path model considers each variable's contribution to impact on other variable's effects discussed above. Further, research has shown that some demographic variables like age and sex could lead to overall differences in shopping attributes and shopping preferences. Many studies reiterate that customer choices depend on shopping experiences, liking for store attributes, store preferences, retail patronage by end consumers, and consumer advocacy. The inter-relationship between these four variables is investigated in this paper. We use a novel econometric procedure called simultaneous-equations rank-ordered logit to find the feedback relationships between the four variables. We postulate a path model that studies the linkages among the four variables (see Figure 1).



Shopping experiences and retail preferences

Customers' shopping experiences shape their store preferences. Satisfied customers are likelier to engage in retail patronage; attributes like store ambience, layout, and atmosphere influence this. Positive experiences, reinforced by good word-of-mouth, boost retailer credibility and trust, influencing potential shoppers through recommendations from existing customers.

Loyalty and shopping preferences

A customer's preferences are positively influenced by (1) a customer's reaction to excellent service, (2) customer's pleasant interactions with salespeople, which can realize high patronage and customer satisfaction (3) A retailer's freebies like rewards and loyalty programs can encourage customers to shop more often., (4) lastly, long-lasting emotional ties and customers' willingness to pay higher prices for their retail products or assuage minor problems with the retailer that can act in their favor. All these four factors enhance store preference and the likelihood of repeat purchases.

Demographic variables

The study considers two significant demographic variables: age and sex. Both these variables can significantly influence preferences for retail establishments. Older customers might favor shops with a classy store ambience. Service encounters seem more important to older consumers than younger consumer groups (Berg H. *et al.*, 2023). Meanwhile, younger customers like to shop in a store with a contemporary ambience. We study the effects of age and sex on all four dimensions of the path model.

Store ambience

Music (Esfidani *et al.*, 2022), color schemes, lighting, scent and temperature, aroma, color combinations, elements of the actual physical space, and store embellishments enhance the retail ambience (Elmashhara and Soares, 2020). These activities determine customers' store experiences and preferences, influenced by staff product knowledge and courteous service. Exceptional service delivery, positive interactions, and knowledgeable staff foster customer loyalty and build lasting customer relationships.

Situational factors

Jewellery is a unique category; buying occasions affect customer patronage. For marriage occasions, customers look

for traditional designs and go for non-branded retailers or local leaders in a city. While buying trendy designs for themselves or gifting to others, customers will purchase standardized branded goods from a national chain. These buying occasions were not considered in previous research studies.

Description of the path model

The path model has four primary constructs: store shopping experiences, retail attributes, and product attributes comprising store image dimensions, customer loyalty or patronage, and customer advocacy for the retailer by satisfied consumers. These four constructs are mediated inside by retail preferences. In this model, there is no one global measure of retail preference; they are explicated by three variables: preference for range or variety, preference for sales staff, and preference for store ambience. These three variables mediate the relationship between the four variables.

Per propositions to be developed later, positive retail shopping experiences enhance retail preferences for the above three dimensions. The retail shopping experience enhances retail attribute perceptions or store images. At the same time, retail attributes can influence consumer store shopping experiences, which is the feedback effect we studied. The retail shopping experience also enhances customer patronage, loyalty, or commitment to the retailer. More loyal people tend to develop favorable preferences for the products customers buy at the retail outlets. Similarly, retail image or product attributes can dominate preference dimensions. Customer advocacy results from retail attributes: retailer preference dimensions, customer's retail patronage or loyalty, and commitment. Some attributes are considered unidirectional without feedback effects. As a result, we treat three variables: shopping experiences, customer loyalty, and customer advocacy as endogenous variables.

The scope of the research is as follows:

Empirically study the forward and backward feedback inter-relationships among the five variables - shopping experiences, store image, store preferences, retail patronage, and customer advocacy and jointly estimate the simultaneous model.

- Show how shopping experiences enhance consumers' perceptions of retail attributes, store images, and shopping preferences.
- How do customer advocacy and patronage enhance shopping experiences?
- Find the impact of demographic, geographic, and situational factors on patronage, shopping experiences, and customer advocacy.

The Purpose is to use a simultaneous-equations path model to empirically show the factors that affect shopping experiences, improve retail patronage and customer advocacy, and validate them. It can help retail managers improve customers' shopping experiences and explain reasons for customer patronage and advocacy.

Even though other feedback relationships can affect the model, we have used these three variables as endogenous variables to keep it simple and parsimonious. The empirical model studies these relationships to understand retail shopping experiences and store preferences. Customer advocacy and patronage can influence potential customers' shopping experiences by capturing reverse feedback.

This research makes the following contributions. First is a conceptual contribution, where a path model was developed with five determinant variables, and significant relationships between constructs were explored. Second, the methodological contribution focused on the feedback effects with a simultaneous equation rank-ordered logit regression model and showed that some feedback effects are significant. Third, key findings show that customer patronage and shopping experiences correlate negatively. Positioning based on buying for weddings influences shopping experiences and retail patronage. The study emphasizes that retailers should leverage suitable value propositions to woo consumers. Finally, results help us understand the impact of demographic, geographic, and situational variables on shopping experiences, retail patronage, and customer advocacy.

The proposed final model postulates ten hypotheses and will explain each hypothesis below.

Literature review and Hypotheses development

H1. The retail shopping experience has a positive impact on retail attributes.

Customer experience includes customers' mental, emotional, personal, and physical reactions to retail interactions. Helpful sales and service staff can increase customer satisfaction. Assessing store attributes and shopping experiences leads to positive customer satisfaction and subsequently influences retail patronage (Yokoyama *et al.*, 2023). A positive retail shopping experience strengthens commitment to the retailer, increasing customer loyalty.

H1 (reverse feedback). Retail store attributes build conducive retail shopping experiences.

Store attributes lead to a positive customer shopping experience. Layout and merchandise enable customers to find goods quickly, constituting a significant shopping experience for customers (Bonfanti *et al.*, 2023). Consumers' commitment to a retail brand is positively connected to their satisfaction with their in-store shopping experiences. The analysis concluded that store design influences customer satisfaction and commitment. Consumers appreciate attractive store designs, which enhance their satisfaction and strengthen their commitment to the retail brand. The image of a Store reflects consumers' perceptions of a retailer (Faria *et al.*, 2022). The store's physical and psychological attributes influence customer experiences. It must be mentioned that jewelry retailers compete with traditional jewelry shops, which offer more archaic designs and well-entrenched product preferences for local tastes. In contrast, this shop offers a standard mix of jewels, limiting its product range.

H2. Retail shopping experience positively impacts customer retail preferences.

The quality of customer shopping experiences impacts customer preferences. Customers' emotions during the shopping experience affect their actual shopping behavior. Research revealed that Brand packaging, innovative products, diverse product quality, and variety influence consumer behavior and can even be used to guide purchasing decisions in retail environments (Sekki *et al.*, 2023). Retailers should utilize advanced technology and customer data to understand shopping behaviors better, allowing for personalized shopping experiences while maintaining a smooth and consistent customer journey (Hickman *et al.*, 2019)

H3. Retail shopping experience has a positive impact on retail patronage/loyalty.

Experiences, Reciprocity, trust, and customer satisfaction drive loyalty (Wallström *et al.*, 2023). They realize the importance of interactions between the company and customers, consistent messaging across communication channels, customer interactions and shopping experiences across multiple channels, and sales staff responsiveness to the customer's needs (Grewal and Rogeeveen, 2020). Positive customer experience has a positive impact on loyalty. Loyalty programs moderate these relationships and are critical in purchasing decisions (Närvänen *et al.*, 2020). Also, loyalty programs increase loyalty (Neset *et al.*, 2021).

H3. Retail shopping experiences positively affect Customer loyalty and Store commitment (reverse effect).

A study found that a favorable purchasing experience is among the few factors that encourage customers to advocate for a retailer. Repeat purchases by customers' impact and reinforce store experiences (reverse effect). A study by Faria *et al.* (2022) suggests that Consumers' commitment to a retail brand is directly related to their satisfaction with store shopping experiences. Positive customer experience enhances loyalty and patronage (Le and Nguyen-Le, 2021).

H4. Retail attributes have a positive impact on Retail customer preference for the range, sales staff, store ambience

Customers preferred store ambience and product quality, while younger customers were influenced by in-store technology. The shopping experience boosts customer satisfaction; retail patronage helps more people visit the shop and supports a retail establishment. Customer satisfaction increases wallet share (Yokoyama *et al.*, 2023). The retailers' care, warmth, and competence influenced customers' perceptions of the retailer and their intention to shop at the store (Vannucci *et al.*, 2023).

H5. Customer retail preferences have a positive impact on customer advocacy (feedback effect)

Multiple factors influence retail preferences, including customer experiences, store preferences, and customer interactions, which determine advocacy (Bascur and Rusu, 2020). Due to competition, retailers' strategies have shifted from attracting to retaining customers, leading to advocacy's importance.

H6. Customer loyalty/patronage has a positive impact on customer retail preference.

Customer loyalty/patronage has been defined as the combination of a positive attitude and intention that leads to repeat purchases based on solid promotional efforts, deep discounts, and free shipping. Hunneman *et al.* (2021) state that retail brand preferences significantly influence customers' purchasing decisions.

H6. Retail patronage/loyalty positively impacts store preferences (reverse feedback).

This study found that brand loyalty influences shopping experiences, preferences, satisfaction, trust, and customer

commitment. Jointly, brand satisfaction has the most potent effect on attitudinal loyalty, and brand loyalty exploits this relationship (Liang B, 2022). To strengthen the satisfaction-loyalty link, customer engagement must be high, and commitment and delight should be included (Thakur R, 2019).

H7. Retail attributes have a positive impact on Customer advocacy.

Närvänen *et al.* (2020) highlight that loyalty is seen as sharing opinions about a retailer with other customers. Studies have shown that customer satisfaction with retail attributes and product quality strongly predicts customer advocacy. The quality of the salesperson's interactions can significantly impact customer advocacy. Word-of-mouth affects consumer trust and loyalty (Hyun *et al.*, 2023).

H8. Customer loyalty has a positive impact on customer advocacy.

Brand and customer retail loyalty go hand in hand (Holmes *et al.*, 2020). Customers place retail brands first and then engage in customer loyalty. When robust retail brand loyalty and customer loyalty are blended, the optimal scenario for both the branded product and the product dealership arises. Retail advocacy focuses primarily on encouraging people to purchase goods and services.

H9. Impact of advocacy on retail shopping experiences.

When other satisfied consumers talk favourably about the retailer, it can lead to positive shopping experiences. Perceived value and electronic word-of-mouth drive repurchase intentions (Liao *et al.*, 2023). Loyal shoppers consider favourable shopping experiences and propagate their experiences to other potential consumers. The apparent results of advocacy are repeat business from satisfied customers and client loyalty.

H10. Impact of store attributes (store image) on retail patronage or loyalty.

Hunneman *et al.* (2021) highlighted the importance of store image in influencing potential consumers' retail patronage behavior. A positive store image, built on attributes like quality, service, and value delivery, attracts customers and fosters loyalty. Retailers must carefully manage these elements to create a positive store image that encourages repeat visits.

Research objectives of the study

The following research objectives are: build a simultaneous-equation rank-ordered logit model with three ordinal variables; find drivers of loyalty, advocacy, and overall shopping experiences; and find the impact of exogenous variables, such as positive or negative effects, on three constructs.

Modeling Details

Three single-equation rank-ordered logit models are run for three endogenous variables: advocacy, loyalty, and shopping experiences:

- Shopping experience = F (shop-attributes / store-image, city-wise dummy variables, buying occasions, store preferences, loyalty, advocacy, sex, age)
- Loyalty = F (shopping experiences, shop attributes, city-wise dummy variables, age, sex, buying occasions, store preferences, advocacy)
- Advocacy = F (shopping experiences, shop attributes, city-wise dummy variables, buying occasions, store preferences, loyalty, age, sex)

Further, the above three equations are jointly estimated as simultaneous-equations rank-ordered logit models with the help of Procedure QLIM in SAS Software. Then, the results of simultaneous models and single-equation models are compared.

Data Collection

The questionnaire developed in this study is based on the client's requirements and inputs. The Client was interested in the shops deployed in four major cities- Bangalore, Delhi, Pune, and Mumbai and in two demographic variables - sex and age. A questionnaire was administered to customers shopping at several retail outlets mentioned above and in four Delhi regions (Ghaziabad, Gurgaon, Noida, and Delhi). The total sample size was 803, with 44% males and 56% females. Age <20 years = 1, 20 to 40 years as 0, >40 years as 1. Modified variables were used in modeling. Sex was a binary variable.

Details of questionnaire and measurement scales

The following variables were measured using a four-point evaluative scale ranging from not good (1), could be better (2), good (3), and Vow/delighted (4) (see Table 1)

Table 1.
Sampling profile analysis: Shopping experience

Index	Value	Frequency	% frequency
1	Not good	4	0.57
2	Could be better	49	7
3	Good	469	67
4	Vow/delighted	178	25.4
Total number of observations		803	100
	Advocacy		
1	No response	18	2.17
2	Answer no	12	1.46
3	Answer yes	798	96.38
The overall number of observations		828	100
	Retail Patronage		
1	No response	12	1.51
2	Answer no	6	0.75
3	Answer yes	778	97.74
The overall number of observations		796	100

Source(s): Table by authors

Variables measured are overall shopping experiences, shopping attributes consisting of store ambience, warmth, courteousness, staff presentation/grooming, responsiveness, product knowledge, billing speed/ efficiency, range and variety, the relevance of designs, value for money, overall finish, and product quality. The primary assumption was that endogenous variables' properties are ordinal-scaled, and exogenous variables are interval-scaled. The following variables are measured with a binary – yes or no scale: these variables are recorded as 1 = no-response, 2 = answer-no, and 3 = answer-yes. This variable is treated as ordinal-scaled. Binary variables are: visit again- loyalty or patronage, advocacy, buy for self, gift, weddings, special occasions, and daily wear; store preferences were also measured on a binary scale consisting of liking for the product range, variety, staff interactions, and store ambience. The sample sizes differ depending on the missing data of other independent variables deleted in other columns instead of the dependent variables' column.

Interpretation of Results

A comparison of goodness of fit measures (See Tables 2-4)

As displayed in the SAS PROC QLIM outputs, different R^2 measures for rank-ordered logistic regressions with McFadden R^2 and several other R^2 measures proposed by many authors exist. Shopping experience regression has an R^2 range from 0.324 to 0.5116.

Loyalty regression has an R^2 value ranging from 0.3307 to 0.9943, and the advocacy equation had a narrower range

for explaining R^2 values, ranging from 0.57 to 0.615. For the simultaneous equations, there is no one measure of R^2 . Instead, AIC and SWC are used to compare and select the models.

We have built a separate single-equation logistic regression model and a simultaneous-equation rank-ordered logistic regression model. Collective regression results are given in Tables 2-4. The empty cells in the estimation tables are variables not included in the model due to their lack of statistical significance. The results of single-equation and combined equation models are discussed below.

Equation 1 describes shopping experience results (see Table 2)

Table 2.
Results of equation 1 - Shopper's Experiences

Variables	Simultaneous Equation Results				Single Equation Results		
	<i>parameters</i>	<i>Odds Ratio (exponential of coefficient)</i>	<i>t-test</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>parameters</i>	<i>t-test</i>	<i>p-value</i>
Intercept					-3.74	- 4.07	<0.0001
City1-Bangalore	-0.14		-1.28	0.202	-0.171	-1.50	0.1324
City2-Delhi	-0.263		-2.60	0.0093	-0.22	- 2.08	0.0379
City3-Pune	0.472	1.6	1.5	0.1306	0.703	2.76	0.0058
City4-Mumbai	0.276	1.32	1.46	0.1446			
Store ambiance	0.482	1.61	5.58	<0.0001	0.511	6.02	<0.0001
Warm and courteous	0.63)	1.87	5.96	<0.0001	0.645	6.23	<0.0001
Staff grooming	0.200	1.22	1.82	0.0692	0.245	2.33	0.0198
Staff product knowledge	0.362	1.43	3.79	0.0002	0.298	3.04	0.0024
Billing speed and efficiency					0.315	3.99	<0.0001
Range and variety							
Relevance of designs							
Value-for- money							
Overall quality-finish							
Service responsiveness							
Sex							
Age							
Loyalty	-1.13		-8.13	<0.0001	-0.139	- 0.40	0.6916
Advocacy	0.864	2.37	30.06	<0.0001	0.286	0.97	0.331
Buy for self	-0.30		-1.83	0.0667			
Buy for gift	-0.48		-3.10	0.0020	-0.184	-1.89	0.059
Buy for	0.146	1.157	1.13	0.256			

wedding							
Buy for special occasions.							
Buy for daily wear	0.133		1.21	0.225			
Preference-range	0.383	1.46	5.15	<0.0001	0.43	5.93	<0.0001
Preference-sales people							
Preference for ambiance							
R squared range	0.324 to 0.5116		AIC 1063 SWC 1258	AIC 973.8 SWC 994.1			

Note: The significant variables influencing shopping attributes in descending order of importance are advocacy, warm and courteous salespeople, the city of Mumbai, staff grooming, wedding buying occasions, store ambiance, the city of Pune, preference for range, and staff product knowledge.

Source(s): Table by authors

The coefficients of people's shopping experiences in Delhi are negative in both equations. At the same time, Pune has a positive coefficient in the single-equation model and a statistically insignificant coefficient in the combined-equations model. In both models, store ambiance, staff warmth/courteousness, staff presentation/grooming, and staff product knowledge positively impact shopping experiences. Relative differences between the single-equation and multi-equation model coefficients differ by a small value, which can be attributed to the simultaneity effect. In the single-equation model, the feedback effects of loyalty and advocacy were insignificant. In contrast, loyalty and advocacy were highly significant in the collective regression model, capturing the feedback effects alluded to in the literature survey. Loyalty had a negative relationship with shopping experiences, while advocacy enhanced the consumers' shopping experiences. The accuracy of the simultaneous-equations model justifies the feedback effects we propose in this research. While considering the five buying occasions for jewellery, buying for self, and buying for gifting are negatively correlated to shopping experiences. At the same time, the other three variables had an insignificant impact on shopping experiences. While considering store preference variables, gauging preference for range and variety significantly influences shopping experiences. Both the single-equation and the simultaneous-equations models confirm the same.

Equation 2 describes patronage or loyalty equation results (see Table 3).

Table 3.
Results of equation 2 - Retail Patronage

Variables	Simultaneous Equation Results				Single Equation Results		
	<i>parameters</i>	<i>Odds Ratio</i>	<i>t-test</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>parameters</i>	<i>t-test</i>	<i>p-value</i>
Intercept					-91.6	-9.26	<0.0001
City1-Bangalore							
City2-Delhi	0.433	1.54	1.39	0.1657			
City3-Pune					138.21	4356	<0.0001
City4-Mumbai					-71.18	-2241.7	<0.0001
Store ambiance	0.720	2.05	4.74	<0.0001			
Warm and courteous	0.767	2.15	2.18	0.0296	119.02	11.87	<0.0001
Staff grooming	0.506	1.65	1.09	0.2736	52.57	5.26	<0.0001-
Staff product	-0.32		-	<0.0001	-85.254	-2.89	0.0040

knowledge			11.30				
Billing speed and efficiency							
Range and variety							
Relevance of designs	-0.519		-3.62	0.0003	-86.124	-2.19	0.284
Value-for-money	1.070	2.91	2.569	0.0196	223.01	7.56	<0.0001
Overall quality-finish	-0.789		-0.84	0.391	-94.4	-2.40	0.0165
Service responsiveness					111.81	3.78	0.0002
Sex					254.7	25.96	<0.0001
Age	0.644	1.9	3.04	0.0023			
Shopping experiences	-0.954		-2.59	0.0095			
Advocacy	3.047	21.054	4.26	<0.0001	636.927	20162.2	<0.0001
Buy for self					246.65	25.14	<0.0001
Buy for gift					-61.44	-796.2	<0.0001
Buy for wedding	0.483	1.62	1.71	0.087			
Buy for special occasions.					-103.49	-10.57	<0.0001
Buy for daily wear					93.1	1146.3	<0.0001
Preference-range					-166.376	-2.19	0.0294
Preference-sales people	-0.757		-3.86	0.0007			
Preference for ambiance							
R squared range	0.99 to 0.3387			AIC 1063 SWC 1258		AIC 36 SWC 120	

The significant variables influencing retail patronage in descending order of importance are advocacy, Value for money, age, warm and courteous people, store ambiance, staff grooming, buying for weddings, and the city of Delhi

Source(s): Table by authors

Customers in Pune are more loyal to shop with the retailer than customers from Mumbai. Store image attributes like staff warmth and courteousness, staff presentation, and grooming boost retail patronage, while lack of product knowledge in both models negatively correlates with loyalty. The relevance of designs undermines retail patronage because people buying for occasions seek to patronize traditional jewelers rather than depend on contemporary standardized ornament sellers. However, consumers buying ornaments in this retail outlet think they are getting value for money, and service experiences are noteworthy. The respondents' sex enhances retail patronage in the single-equation model, while age seems to drive loyalty in the multiple-equation model. There is a direct relationship between demographic variables and retail patronage outcomes. Customer shopping experiences are undermined among the feedback variables in building loyalty; at the same time, advocacy positively increases end-consumer loyalty. Buying for self and daily wear is the driving force for retail patronage by consumers. On the contrary, buying for special occasions and gifting take a back seat for the retailer. Whatever the situation, the retailer should steadfastly

position themselves on any of these buying occasions' parameters. Amongst the preference variables, preference for product range and variety in the single-equation model and preference for salespersons' effectiveness in the simultaneous-equations model attenuate store loyalty. Hence, the conclusion is that preference variables must be amended to build store loyalty.

Equation 3 describes the advocacy equation (see Table 4)

Table 4.
Results of equation 3 -Advocacy

Variables	Simultaneous Equation Results				Single Equation Results		
	<i>parameters</i>	<i>Odds Ratio</i>	<i>t-test</i>	p-value	<i>parameters</i>	<i>t-test</i>	<i>p-value</i>
Intercept					-9.27	-5.32	<0.0001
City1-Bangalore					-1.112	-1.52	0.1287
City2-Delhi					-1.065	-1.48	0.1384
City3-Pune					4.79	1.71	0.0881
City4-Mumbai					-1.58	-1.90	0.0569
Store ambiance							
Warm and courteous							
Staff grooming							
Staff product knowledge							
Billing speed and efficiency							
Range and variety	0.0083	1.008	0.03	0.972			
Relevance of designs							
Value-for- money	-0.894		-3.11	0.0019			
Overall quality-finish	0.562	1.75	2.00	0.0457	0.388	1.69	0.0001
Service responsiveness	-0.32		-1.52	0.129			
Sex	-0.32		-1.3	0.195	-0.552	-1.97	0.0492
Age							
Loyalty	1.83	6.23	7.50	<0.0001	3.19	6.10	<0.0001
Shopping experiences	-0.127		- 0.47	0.638	0.0392	0.12	0.901
Buy for self	-0.473		-1.59	0.1115	1.281	2.12	0.0342
Buy for gift					1.786	2.70	0.0070
Buy for wedding							
Buy for special occasions.					0.316	1.13	0.260
Buy for daily wear							
Preference- range and					0.302	1.47	0.142

variety							
Preference-sales people	0.784	2.19	2.40	0.0164	0.594	11.67	0.0094
Preference for ambiance							
R squared range	0.57 to 0.615		AIC 1063 SWC 1258		AIC 157.6 SWC 228.6		
The significant variables influencing customer advocacy in descending order of importance are patronage, preference for sales staff, overall product quality and finish, and range and variety.							

Source(s): Table by authors

Advocacy effects are more pronounced in Pune shops, while it impedes advocacy in Mumbai shops. No store attributes or image dimensions are significant in the advocacy equation. So, the conclusion is that the absence of store attributes' impact on advocacy is an essential problem for retailers. In regression models, the relevance of designs and service responsiveness are insignificant, while delivering value for money is deficient for the retailer. However, the perception of the overall quality and finish of products emphasizes the advantage that retailers enjoy by being a part of the most trusted organizations in India. Store loyalty is a significant driver of advocacy; there is no feedback effect from shopping experiences to customer advocacy. Again, a result of the combined model conjures the utility of applying feedback theory to path models like this. In the single-equation model, we find that buying for self or gifting seems to be the appropriate demeanor of consumers, displaying greater favorable latitude for advocacy or recommendation to others. Further, preference for sales staff enables customers to recommend this retailer to other potential customers.

Results of Hypotheses

The results section provides a table confirming the hypotheses (see Table 5). Although we considered the direction of the results for face validity, we have given log odds ratios in the tables and their interpretations based on the magnitude of impact.

Table 5.
Results of Hypotheses

Hypotheses	Shopping experiences equation	Patronage equation	Advocacy equation
H1: Shopping experiences in retail store attributes (+)	Store ambiance, staff courteousness, grooming, product knowledge (+)		None significant
H2: Shopping experience on customer preference (+)	Preference for style and variety (+)		None significant
H3: Shopping experience on retail patronage (+)			
H4: Retail attributes on preference (+)		Staff courteousness, staff grooming on Patronage (+) VFM (-) on patronage	Product knowledge (-) on store preference Store attributes (-) on advocacy

H5: Retail preference on advocacy (+)			
H6: Retail preference on patronage (+)		Preference for range, variety, salespeople (+) on patronage	
H7: Retail attributes on advocacy (+)		Overall finish and product quality (+) on loyalty	Overall finish and product quality (+) on advocacy VFM (-) on advocacy
H8: Retail preference on advocacy (+)			Liking for salespeople (+) advocacy
H9: Advocacy on shopping experience (+)		Relevance (-) related to loyalty/patronage	
H10: Retail attributes on retail patronage			
Feedback effects	Liking for range and variety + on shopping experiences Loyalty + on advocacy	Negative product knowledge on loyalty	Store loyalty on (+) advocacy
Wrong direction of hypotheses	Loyalty (-) shopping experience	Shopping experience (-) related to loyalty	

Note: Three hypotheses, H3, H5, and H10, had insignificant coefficients and could not be proved with this framework.

Source(s): Table by authors

Table 6
Summary -Shopping attributes

Attributes	Not good %	Could be better %	Good %	Vow %	Top 2 box %
Overall shopping experience	0.5	6.3	68	25	93
Store ambience	0.8	11	61	28	89
Warmth and courteousness	0.7	6.7	55	37	92
Staff present ability-grooming	0.3	9	59	32	91
Staff responsiveness	0.9	8	55	35	90

Table 7
Summary- Binary Variables

Attribute	Yes	No
sex	Male-44 %	Female – 56 %
Visit again- loyalty	99	1
recommendation	98.6	1.4
Buy for self	61	39
Buy for gift	43	57
Buy for wedding	19	81
Buy for special occasions	44	56
Buy for daily wear	45	55
Like –range & variety	51	49
Like- sales staff	38	62
Like- store ambiance	28	72
Source(s): Table by authors		

Discussion of the Results

Feedback effects. There is ample evidence in the modeling process for a simultaneous-equations feedback model of an inter-relationship between three endogenous variables: shopping experiences, customer retail patronage, word-of-mouth recommendations, or advocacy of existing potential customers. All three variables reinforce each other in such a manner; out of the six feedback parameters, five are significant, except for the effect of shopping experiences on advocacy. Three variables, shopping experiences, advocacy, and customer patronage, reinforce each other except for the impact of shopping experiences on advocacy. Some significant effects are negative, such as the effect of loyalty on shopping experiences; in the case of recommendations/advocacy, there is a favorable direction of results that store experiences and retail patronage reinforce advocacy; advocacy generally outshines the other two variables, retail experiences, and store loyalty.

Buying occasions. Buying for self-displays mixed results in such a manner that it is beneficial in engendering store loyalty and advocacy. On the contrary, buying for self defies good shopping experiences. Buying for gifts seems undermined by poor shopping experiences and store loyalty, but it shapes advocacy positively. Buying for weddings is weakly related to store patronage. Essentially, the retailer needs to position itself strategically based on the use of the occasion. A dedicated theme must be built for the retail brand to prosper on wedding occasions.

City-wise effects. Pune appears to be the only city where the salubrious impact of store shopping experiences is felt. Bangalore, Mumbai, and Delhi have subdued adverse effects on shopping experiences, customer loyalty, and advocacy. Collectively, retailers need to build the brand selectively in different centers.

Shopping attributes. Many shopping attributes favour retailers in garnering shopping experiences and building loyalty. Further, advocacy does not appear to be in sync with the effects of shopping attributes on store recommendations - value-for-money proposition gels well for the retailer in boosting loyalty. At the same time, it is a deterrent for advocacy. People expect a reputed brand like the retailer name to appeal to the customers and leverage a stronger position with a suitable value proposition to woo the consumers. Lastly, retail needs to realize that

standardized patterns of jewellery designs will wither away from traditional jewelers whose designs are amenable to local preferences. Is there a divide between national and local designs that may lead to a dysfunctional orientation for the retailer? In contrast to traditional designs, the contemporary designs of the retailer do not enthuse customers in building store loyalty and advocacy. The retailer should introduce traditional designs to woo shoppers who are buying for marriage and need to re-position this strategy to their success.

Demographic factors. Shopping experiences are ubiquitous and impervious to demographic factors like age and sex, studied here. Age is a positive contributor to store patronage, while sex is a negative contributor to advocacy.

Limitations and implications for future research

As with all studies, this study has limitations. Five variables were considered in the model, and two variables, store image and store preference, were multiple variables that could lead to complexity in modeling. Hence, they were not included as feedback variables. However, the effect was captured in the three-variable model. More research is needed on customer retail preference, patronage, and dealer loyalty.

Managerial Recommendations

This study provides ample opportunities to position the store brand and steer its success with the above recommendations. Buying occasions are a significant determinant of gold jewellery purchases; retailers should be concerned about that area. In contrast, shopping attributes are key contenders for shopping experiences and retail patronage. In addition to positioning for buying occasions, retailers should leverage store attributes for success. Retailers can infuse a strong positioning strategy for buying for themselves or gifting. Making retailers' aspirations conducive to building good shopping experiences and generating store loyalty and advocacy should significantly contribute to the study. Exploit store preference variables like attitude to sales staff and a preference for product range and variety. Instead of offering a standard product in different cities, they should customize jewellery to the idiosyncratic needs of various cities. Overall, product finish and quality help generate word-of-mouth recommendations from customers. By and large, positioning based on demographic variables is of limited use for the retailer.

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