

HOW DO IN-MALL ENTERTAINMENT EVENTS IMPACT ON CONSUMERS' SHOPPING MALL BEHAVIOURS? A MODEL OF SPECIAL EVENT ENTERTAINMENT

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a conceptual framework which aims to examine the impact of special event entertainment (SEE) on shopping centre patrons' behaviours. Adapted from Wakefield and Baker's model (1998), the framework presented proposes that shoppers' perceptions of SEE constitute three factors and they are perceived quality, perceived participation benefits and perceived crowding related to SEE. These three perceptual factors are proposed to have a positive impact on shopper excitement with SEE which in turn influences their shopping satisfaction and unplanned purchases. Perceived quality of SEE is proposed to be a positive determinant of the other two perceptual factors. The framework presented is yet to be empirically tested but it should extend our knowledge in the marketing literature of retail environments and event marketing. Potential theoretical and managerial implications are also discussed.

INTRODUCTION

Shopping centres are operating in an increasingly competitive industry characterised by overcapacity of shopping centre space, overlapping of merchandise offerings, introduction of alternative retail channels like the internet and changing consumer lifestyles (DeLisle, 2005). These factors have collectively contributed to the decline of consumer patronage to shopping centres (Kim, 2002; LeHew, Burgess, & Wesley, 2002). In response to these competitive factors, shopping centres around the globe such as Mall of America (United States), West Edmonton Mall (Canada) and Hyperdome Shopping Centre (Australia) have commonly offered entertainment events to lure consumers back to their shopping precincts (Hazel, 2002).

Entertainment events that are commonly seen in shopping centres include kids' entertainment, fashion shows, celebrity appearances, band performances and Santa's arrival (Barbieri, 2005). These entertainment events are conceptualised as special event entertainment (SEE) and are typically offered on a seasonal, temporary and intermittent basis (Sit, Merrilees, & Birch, 2003). Using SEE, shopping centre managers seek to provide consumers with a reason to visit, visit more often, and/or stay longer at their shopping precincts (Kim, Christiansen, Feinberg, & Choi, 2005). It is anticipated that more frequent visits and longer duration of stay by consumers will generate more commercial opportunities for tenant retailers such as eating at the food court or making a

purchase at a specialty outlet (Parsons, 2003). For example, the appearance of Australia Idols contests and free opera concerts have been reported to draw traffic to shopping centres (Cincotta, 2006). SEE is also commonly used to differentiate a shopping centre's positioning (Muhlebach & Muhlebach, 2003). Hence, SEE can be considered a significant part of the contemporary shopping centre marketing mix (Kim et al., 2005).

Further, the distinction between shopping and entertainment is becoming blurred because shopping centre patronage nowadays involves more than the acquisition of goods and/or services but also involve the pursuit of leisure activities like entertainment (Smith, 2003). Consumers are becoming time poor and seeking to maximise their shopping time via multitasking of shopping activities (Wakefield & Baker, 1998). That is, consumers seek to fulfil both task and non-task oriented shopping activities in one excursion to shopping centres.

Despite the increasing significance of SEE, very few academic studies have either theoretically or empirically examined the concept of SEE and many research issues related to SEE remain unexplored (Parsons, 2003; Sit, Merrilees, & Birch, 2003). For example, what are consumers' perceptions and emotions related to SEE? Do consumers' perceptions and emotions related to SEE have an impact on their shopping behaviours and if so, what impact that is?

Hence, this paper presents a conceptual framework that aims to examine consumers' perceptions and emotions related to SEE and their possible impact on shopping behaviours. The next section presents an overview of the current thinking and empirical findings in the marketing literature of retail environments and event marketing.

OVERVIEW OF LITERATURE REVIEW

The marketing literatures of retail environments and event marketing provide the theoretical foundation to this paper. The retail environments literature is relevant because SEE is considered a marketing stimulus of the shopping centre environment (Sit, Merrilees, & Birch, 2003). The event marketing literature is reviewed because SEE is conceived as a form of event marketing in the shopping centre environment.

Retail environments

The environmental psychology theory postulates that an environmental stimulus will evoke an organism's cognitive, emotional and behavioural responses (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). This notion has been empirically tested and supported by studies of retail environments ranging from supermarkets (Smith & Burns, 1996), department stores (Yalch & Spangenberg, 1993), specialty stores (Donovan, Rossiter, Marcoolyn, & Nesdale, 1994) to shopping centres (McGoldrick & Pieros, 1998; Wakefield & Baker, 1998) and online stores (Eroglu, Machleit, & Davis, 2001).

In this paper, only studies on consumers' perceptions and emotions related to shopping centre environments have been reviewed because SEE is typically offered in this type of

retail environments (Kim et al., 2005; Sit, Merrilees, & Birch, 2003). Many studies of shopping centre environments have provided empirical support for the relationship between consumers' perceptions and emotions and also their impact on approach/avoidance behaviours (e.g. Chebat & Michon, 2003; Hunter, 2006; Laroche, Teng, Michon, & Chebat, 2005; Martin & Turley, 2004). Despite these empirical findings on shopping centre environments, five limitations are identified in this marketing literature and highlight the lack of attention on the SEE concept.

First, consumers' perceptions related to shopping centre environments have primarily focused on four key stimuli and they are tenant mix, accessibility, services and atmospherics (Hunter, 2006; Laroche et al., 2005; Martin & Turley, 2004). These four key stimuli are also known as the big four of shopping centre environments (Sit, Merrilees, & Birch, 2003). Very few studies have either theoretically or empirically identified SEE as a distinct stimulus of shopping centre environments (Kim et al., 2005).

Second, consumers' perceptions related to the big four have consistently been measured with the notion of perceived quality (Laroche et al., 2005; LeHew, Burgess, & Wesley, 2002; McGoldrick & Pieros, 1998). Further, the quality attributes used to measure the big four have been found to be highly tangible or physical in nature such as the tempo of background music (Laroche et al., 2005), the size of parking lot (LeHew & Fairhurst, 2000) and the availability of food or refreshments (McGoldrick & Pieros, 1998). While this 'tangible' treatment of perceived quality has been found to be appropriate for the big four, its relevance to measure perceived quality of SEE deserves further investigation. This is because SEE consist of special events that are intangible and experiential in nature. Thus, consumers' perceived quality of SEE may constitute some mix of tangible and intangible attributes. However, a list of quality attributes that are relevant to perceived quality of SEE is yet to be developed.

Third, besides perceived quality, very few studies have investigated if there are other perceptual concepts relevant to explain consumers' perceptions of the big four such as perceived participation benefits (Chandon, Wansink, & Laurent, 2000) and perceived crowding (Mowen, Vogelsong, & Graefe, 2003). This has raised the question of whether the concept of perceived quality is comprehensive to explain consumers' perceptions related to SEE. If not, what other perceptual concepts may also be significant to explain consumers' perceptions of SEE?

Fourth, consumers' emotions related to the big four has been typically measured with two affective states and they are pleasure and arousal (Chebat & Michon, 2003; McGoldrick & Pieros, 1998). Pleasure refers to the degree to which a consumer feels joyful, happy or satisfied at a physical environment (Donovan & Rossiter, 1982). Arousal refers to the degree to which a consumer feels excited, stimulated, alert or active at a physical environment (Donovan & Rossiter, 1982). While an advantage of this two-dimensional affect typology is its parsimony, its relevance to measure consumers' emotions related to SEE is yet to be determined. Pleasure and arousal were originally developed to examine consumers' emotions related to architecture-oriented stimuli of an environment such as the big four of shopping centre environments (Bitner, 1992; Mehrabian & Russell, 1974).

These architecture-oriented stimuli are typically tangible and permanent at an environment (Donovan & Rossiter, 1982). Unlike the big four, SEE is an event-oriented stimulus which is highly intangible and variable in nature (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1999). Given that emotions have been found to be context specific (Bagozzi, Gopinath, & Nyer, 1999), consumers' emotions related to an event-oriented stimulus like SEE are likely to differ from an architecture-oriented stimulus like tenant mix or atmospherics. Hence, further studies are required to examine the significance of pleasure and arousal in understanding consumers' emotions related to SEE.

Fifth and final, consumers' perceptions and emotions related to the big four have been commonly measured on a retrospective approach (Hunter, 2006; Laroche et al., 2005). That is, studies have commonly asked consumers to recall what they think and feel about the range of specialty stores, ingress and egress, layout and décor of a shopping centre. Such retrospective approach may be appropriate for the big four because they generally constitute the permanent part of shopping centre environments and consumers generally have frequent interactions with them. Hence, consumers are anticipated to have reliable cognitive and affective recollections of the tenant mix, accessibility, services and atmospherics of a shopping centre. On the other hand, SEE does not constitute the permanent part of a shopping centre but it is offered on a seasonal, temporary and intermittent basis. Consumers' interactions with SEE are deemed to be brief, infrequent and inconsistent. This is because shopping centre managers constantly change the types of special events to match certain retail seasons in order to create a sense of novelty and excitement for their patrons. Thus, a retrospective approach will be less appropriate to examine the actual consumers' perceptions and emotions related to SEE at shopping centres. Therefore, more studies are needed to adopt an onsite approach when measuring consumers' perceptions and emotions related to SEE. In the next section, the current thinking and empirical findings in the event marketing literature will be discussed.

Event marketing

Studies of event marketing have commonly focused on consumers' perceptions and emotions related to festival events which are held in a natural, outdoor setting and examples include jazz festivals (Saleh & Ryan, 1993; Thrane, 2002), wine festivals (Nicholson & Pearce, 2001; Taylor & Shanka, 2002) and cultural festivals (Derrett, 2003; Xie, 2004). None of these studies have examined consumers' perceptions and emotions related to special events held in a climate-controlled, retail environment such as the shopping centre environment.

Festival events like jazz and cultural events are considered as high involvement events which consumers generally have an ongoing interest in and specifically plan to attend those festival events (Kim, Uysal, & Chen, 2002). On the other hand, entertainment events in shopping centres like SEE are conceived as low involvement events. This is because few consumers will have a constant interest in entertainment events at shopping centres and few consumers will visit a shopping centre exclusively for an entertainment event (Ward & Hill, 1991). Therefore, consumers' perceptions and emotions related to

SEE are likely to differ from high involvement, pre-planned festival events such as a jazz or cultural event.

As discussed earlier, consumers' perceptions related to the big four of shopping centre environments have primarily focused on the concept of perceived quality (e.g. Laroche et al., 2005; LeHew & Fairhurst, 2000; McGoldrick & Pieros, 1998). On the other hand, consumers' perceptions related to festival events have been found to involve other perceptual concepts beyond perceived quality. That is, studies of event marketing have examined consumers' perceptions of festival events with a variety of perceptual concepts ranging from perceived quality (Thrane, 2002), perceived service value (Lee, Petrick, & Crompton, 2007), to perceived authenticity (Xie, 2004) and perceived crowding (Mowen, Vogelsong, & Graefe, 2003; Wickham & Kerstetter, 2001). Accordingly, further studies are needed to investigate the relevance of perceived quality and other perceptual factors in understanding consumers' perceptions related to SEE.

There is some inconsistency in the treatment of consumer emotions in the literature of retail environments and event marketing. In the retail environments literature, pleasure and arousal have been widely applied to examine consumer emotions related to the big four of shopping centre environments (Chebat & Michon, 2003; Laroche et al., 2005; McGoldrick & Pieros, 1998). However, the relevance of this dual-dimensional affect is not evidenced in the event marketing literature. Instead, studies of event marketing have commonly adopted a one-dimensional affect typology to measure consumer emotions related to festival events and it is the affect typology of enjoyment (Wickham & Kerstetter, 2001; Mowen, 2003 #1655). These inconsistent treatments of consumer emotions in both literature of retail environments and event marketing have further supported the notion of consumer emotions being context dependent (Bagozzi, Gopinath, & Nyer, 1999). Therefore, further studies are necessary to explore consumer emotions related to SEE. To fill the research gaps related to SEE in the marketing literature of retail environments and event marketing, this paper has presented a conceptual framework which aims to examine consumers' perceptions and emotions related to SEE and their interrelationships. In the next section, the development of the conceptual framework and its key constructs will be discussed.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND KEY CONSTRUCTS

The conceptual framework presented is adapted from Wakefield and Baker's framework (1998) which examined the determinants and effects of consumer excitement at the shopping centre environment. In this paper, the conceptual framework presented consists of six key constructs and they are perceived quality, perceived participation benefits, perceived crowding, shopper excitement, shopping satisfaction, and unplanned purchases. The first three constructs are related to consumers' perceptions of SEE. Enjoyment is the measurement of consumers' emotions related to SEE. Shopping satisfaction and unplanned purchases represent the outcomes of consumers' perceptions and emotions related to SEE. The structural relationships among these six key constructs are illustrated in figure 1. Each of these key constructs will now be discussed.

Insert figure 1 here

Consumer emotions and shopping responses to SEE

In this paper, consumer emotions related to SEE are characterised by the affect typology of excitement which refers to the degree to which a consumer feels excited, amazed, stimulated, and/or interested in a special event (Wakefield & Baker, 1998). Consumer excitement is emphasised because special events are typically offered to create a sense of excitement and novelty for shopping centre patrons (Bloch, Ridgway, & Nelson, 1991; Parsons, 2003). This notion can also be supported by the common practice of shopping centre managers altering their offerings of special events at different retail seasons in order to create a lively and entertaining shopping environment. For example, kids' performances such as Dora the Explorer are commonly offered during school holiday seasons and fashion shows are typically held during the launch of each new spring or winter season (Gentry, 2004).

In this paper, shoppers' behaviours related to SEE are measured by two response outcomes and they are shopping satisfaction and unplanned purchases. In particular, shopping satisfaction refers to the degree which a consumer feels satisfied, pleased or happy with his or her shopping trip (Wong, 2004). Unplanned purchases relate to the degree to which a consumer has made any spontaneous purchase of food and/or non-food items due to his or her participation in a special event such as coffee, donuts, clothes and compact discs.

Many studies have reported the positive relationship between consumer excitement with the shopping centre environment and their subsequent behaviours such as desire to stay, repatronage intention and word of mouth (Martin & Turley, 2004; Wakefield & Baker, 1998; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1999).

Accordingly, consumers who experience greater excitement with a special event are more likely to express greater satisfaction with their shopping trip and have more unplanned purchases Therefore:

Proposition 1: There is a positive relationship between consumer excitement with SEE and their shopping satisfaction.

Proposition 2: There is a positive relationship between consumer excitement with SEE and unplanned purchases.

Further, there has been ample empirical findings on the positive relationship between consumer satisfaction on shopping behaviours such as repatronage intention (Reynolds, Ganesh, & Luckett, 2002), word of mouth (Babin, Lee, Kim, & Griffin, 2005) and retail preference (LeHew, Burgess, & Wesley, 2002). Accordingly, consumers who express greater satisfaction with their shopping trips are more likely to have more unplanned purchases This results in:

Proposition 3: There is a positive relationship between shopping satisfaction and unplanned purchases.

Consumer perceptions and emotions related to SEE

In this paper, consumers' perceptions related to SEE are proposed to consist of three factors and they are perceived participation benefits, perceived quality and perceived crowding related to SEE.

Perceived quality and excitement with SEE

The first perceptual factor is perceived quality of SEE and it refers to perceived attributes of a special which can be controlled or managed by shopping centre managers (Lee, Petrick, & Crompton, 2007; Tomas, Scott, & Crompton, 2002). Perceived quality has been suggested as an elusive and abstract construct that is difficult to define and measure (Brown & Swartz, 1989; Lee, Petrick, & Crompton, 2007). Further, researchers (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996) have noted that it is more difficult for consumers of services to evaluate quality than it is for consumers of tangible products because services are intangible, heterogeneous and inseparable.

Studies of event marketing have conceived the concept of perceived quality as the quality of opportunity and thus have focused on the quality attributes of a festival event that can be controlled or manipulated by the event provider (Crompton & Love, 1995). Examples of some controllable quality attributes related to festival events include entertainment features, information sources and comfort amenities (Lee, Petrick, & Crompton, 2007; Thrane, 2002). In the same vein, studies of shopping centre environments have commonly used tangible or physical attributes to measure consumers' perceived quality of the big four such as the tempo of background music (Laroche et al., 2005), the size of parking lot (LeHew & Fairhurst, 2000) and the availability of food or refreshments (McGoldrick & Pieros, 1998).

While a list of controllable quality attributes relevant to SEE is yet to be developed, studies in the marketing literatures of retail environments and event marketing have provided consistent empirical support for the positive relationship between perceived quality and consumer emotions (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1999; Baker & Crompton, 2000). Therefore, consumers who express greater perceived quality of a special event are likely to experience greater excitement with the event.

Proposition 5: There is a positive relationship between perceived quality and excitement related to SEE

Perceived participation benefits and excitement with SEE

Perceived participation benefits of SEE relates to the perceived advantage of taking part in a special event (Chandon, Wansink, & Laurent, 2000). While SEE is generally offered free of charge, few consumers will participate in all special events available to them. Instead, consumers will selectively choose to partake in special events they perceive to provide certain benefits or advantages to them either utilitarian or hedonic oriented or some mix of both (Chandon, Wansink, & Laurent, 2000; Rintamaki, Kanto, Kuusela, & Spence, 2006). The significance of this perceptual factor can also be justified by the meaningful theory of consumption. In particular, the theory suggests that individuals

possess an inherent predisposition or need for meaning and they engage in consumption decisions that they perceive to be meaningful to them (Babin, Darden, & Griffin, 1994; Holbrook, 1994). Consumers who express greater perceived participation benefits of a special event are more likely to experience greater excitement with the event. This leads to:

Proposition 4: There is a positive relationship between perceived participation benefits and excitement related to SEE.

Perceived crowding and excitement with SEE

In this paper, perceived crowding at SEE focuses on the perceived human density at a special event, particularly the degree to which the perceived human density is conducive to a consumer's experience with the special event (Pons, Laroche, & Murali, 2006). Many studies have provided empirical findings on the negative impact of human density on consumers' shopping experiences (Eroglu & Machleit, 1990; Machleit, Eroglu, & Mantel, 2000). However, some researchers (Pons, Laroche, & Murali, 2006) assert that human density can be a significant part of consumer experiences with some hedonic contexts such as theme parks, rock concerts, festival events and sporting events. For example, the presence of spectators in a sporting event has been found to enhance the experience of other spectators as well as team performance. Accordingly, in this paper, perceived crowding at a special event is suggested to have a positive impact on consumer excitement with the event (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1994). For example, if shoppers perceive the crowd at a special event creates a positive atmosphere and/or they enjoy being part of the crowd, they are likely to experience greater excitement with the event. Hence:

Proposition 6: There is a positive relationship between perceived crowding and excitement related to SEE.

Inter-relationships between consumer perceptions related to SEE

Studies have shown that a high quality store environment enhances a shopper's engagement in the shopping activity. That is, in an appealing and positive store environment, shoppers may be less distracted during their shopping activities. In this situation, consumers may be more involved in and focus on their shopping experience as compared to consumers in unappealing or negative store environments.

Accordingly, a high quality special event is more likely to encourage shoppers' attention and participation as compared to a poor quality special event. For a high quality special event, shoppers will perceive it is worthwhile to invest their time and effort to partake in the special event. Similarly, shoppers may be more favourable towards the crowds at a high quality special event as compared to a poor quality special event. This is because shoppers will expect a high quality special event like the appearance of Australian Idol contestants to draw a mass of fans to a shopping centre. Indeed, the crowd can be part of the entertainment experience that shoppers seek when participating in a special event because they can interact with other people who share a similar interest. Therefore:

Proposition 7: There is a positive relationship between perceived quality and participation benefits related to SEE.

Proposition 8: There is a positive relationship between perceived quality and crowding related to SEE.

POTENTIAL RESEARCH AND MANGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The conceptual framework presented will make contributions to both marketing theory and practice. Theoretically, it will provide an extension to the marketing literature of retail environments and event marketing which have so far provided limited knowledge on consumers' perceptions and emotions related to SEE and how they are interrelated. Further, there is also limited knowledge on the impact of consumers' perceptions and emotions related to SEE on their subsequent shopping satisfaction and unplanned purchases.

Studies of shopping centre environments have primarily focused on the big four which consist of tenant mix, accessibility, services and atmospherics (e.g. Martin & Turley, 2004; McGoldrick & Pieros, 1998; Wakefield & Baker, 1998). Very few studies have either theoretically or empirically examined SEE as a distinct stimulus of shopping centre environments (Kim et al., 2005; Sit, Merrilees, & Birch, 2003). In the same vein, very few studies of event marketing have examined consumers' perceptions and emotions related to special events offered in a climate-controlled retail environment like the shopping centre environment. Instead, studies of event marketing have primarily devoted their attention on festival events that are held in a natural, outdoor setting (e.g. Boo, Ko, & Blazey, 2007; Crompton, 2003; Gursoy, Spangenberg, & Rutherford, 2006). These festival events such as jazz or cultural festivals are considered as high involvement events because they are normally consumed on their own right. That is, many consumers are expected to have an ongoing interest in festival events like jazz festivals and thus will specifically plan to attend those festival events (Bowen & Daniels, 2004).

Conversely, entertainment events at shopping centres like SEE are considered as low involvement events because they are typically offered free of charge and the efforts required to participate in SEE are relatively modest. Despite SEE is a significant part of the contemporary shopping centre marketing mix, it is not necessarily consumed as an 'event' per se like a jazz festival event. That is, few consumers will visit a shopping centre exclusively for SEE. Instead, consumers tend to combine entertainment with other shopping activities. Further, few consumers will have an ongoing interest in SEE at shopping centres.

The framework presented proposes that consumers' perceptions related to SEE constitute three factors, namely perceived quality, perceived participation benefits and perceived crowding. These three perceptual factors are proposed to have a positive impact on consumer excitement which in turn influences their shopping satisfaction and unplanned purchases. Moreover, perceived quality of SEE is proposed to be a positive determinant of the other two perceptual factors.

For management contributions, the conceptual framework presented should assist shopping centre managers to better target and promote their SEE efforts. That is, it will provide an understanding of how shopping centre patrons perceive and feel about special events at their shopping precincts and whether different shopper segments demonstrate different perceptions and emotions relative to a similar special event. For example, perceived participation benefits of SEE will provide an indication to shopping centre managers on consumers' motives or reasons of participating in a special event.

The conceptual framework presented will also provide a valuable insight to shopping centre managers in designing their promotional efforts of SEE. For example, if consumer excitement with SEE is found to have a greater impact on their shopper behaviours, an affective advertising appeal should be emphasised in the promotional campaign of SEE. On the other hand, if perceived quality of SEE is found to have a greater impact on their shopping behaviours, a 'rational' advertising appeal should be considered in the promotional campaign of the event. A hybrid advertising appeal should be considered when both consumers' perceptions and emotions are found to have the same impact on their shopping behaviours.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

There are four key limitations associated with the conceptual framework presented in this paper. First, the conceptual framework presented is yet to be empirically tested with different types of special events in order to validate the structural relationships among the key constructs. Henceforth, it will be tested in a three-stage research design. The first stage will involve convergent interviews with shopping centre management and focus group discussions with shoppers in order to explore consumers' perceptions and emotions related special events. The second stage will involve the development of measurement scales for consumers' perceptions and emotions related to SEE. This process will be driven by the findings from qualitative studies and literature review. The third and final stage will involve mall intercept surveys with shoppers at different types of special events such as kids' entertainment, fashion shows and celebrity appearances. The data from the mall intercept surveys will be analysed with structural equation modelling in order to test the structural relationships among the key constructs.

Second, the conceptual framework presented does not examine the cultural differences in consumers' perceptions and emotions related to SEE. Studies have provided empirical findings on the role of cultural orientations in influencing consumers' perceptions, emotions and behaviours in retail environments. For example, American and Chinese shoppers were reported to have significantly different shopping practices. In the context of grocery shopping, Chinese shoppers were found to use multiple senses when examining unpackaged goods and did more often than their American counterparts. Moreover, Chinese shoppers were reported to inspect more items and take much more time to shop. Accordingly, SEE strategies may vary in response to attract consumers of different cultural orientations...cultural orientations influence consumers' perceptions of shopping centre environments...

Third, the conceptual framework presented does not examine the roles of personal and situational factors in influencing the relationship between consumers' perceptions and emotions related to SEE (McGoldrick & Pieros, 1998). Personal factors may involve demographics, personal interest in a special event and shopping personality. Conversely, situational factors may involve task definition, time availability and shopping companion. The antecedent or moderator roles of these personal and situation factors in influencing the relationship between consumers' perceptions and emotions related to SEE deserve further examination.

Fourth and final, the relationship between SEE and the big four of shopping centre environments is not examined in the conceptual framework presented. The primary focus of this paper is on the impact of SEE on consumers' shopping behaviours as opposed to the big four and thus the relationship between SEE and the big four is not examined. Further, there have been ample empirical findings on the impact of the big four on shopping centre patrons' behaviours.

CONCLUSION

This paper provides a starting point to examining the impact of SEE on shopping centre patrons' behaviours. In particular, a conceptual framework was presented to examine how shopping centre patrons perceive and feel about SEE and what impact they have on subsequent shopping behaviours like satisfaction and unplanned purchases. In the conceptual framework presented, consumers' perceptions of SEE were proposed to consist of three perceptual factors and they are perceived quality, perceived participation benefits and perceived crowding. These three perceptual factors were proposed to have a positive impact on consumer excitement which in turn influences shopping satisfaction and unplanned purchases. Moreover, perceived quality of SEE was proposed to be a positive determinant of the other two perceptual factors.

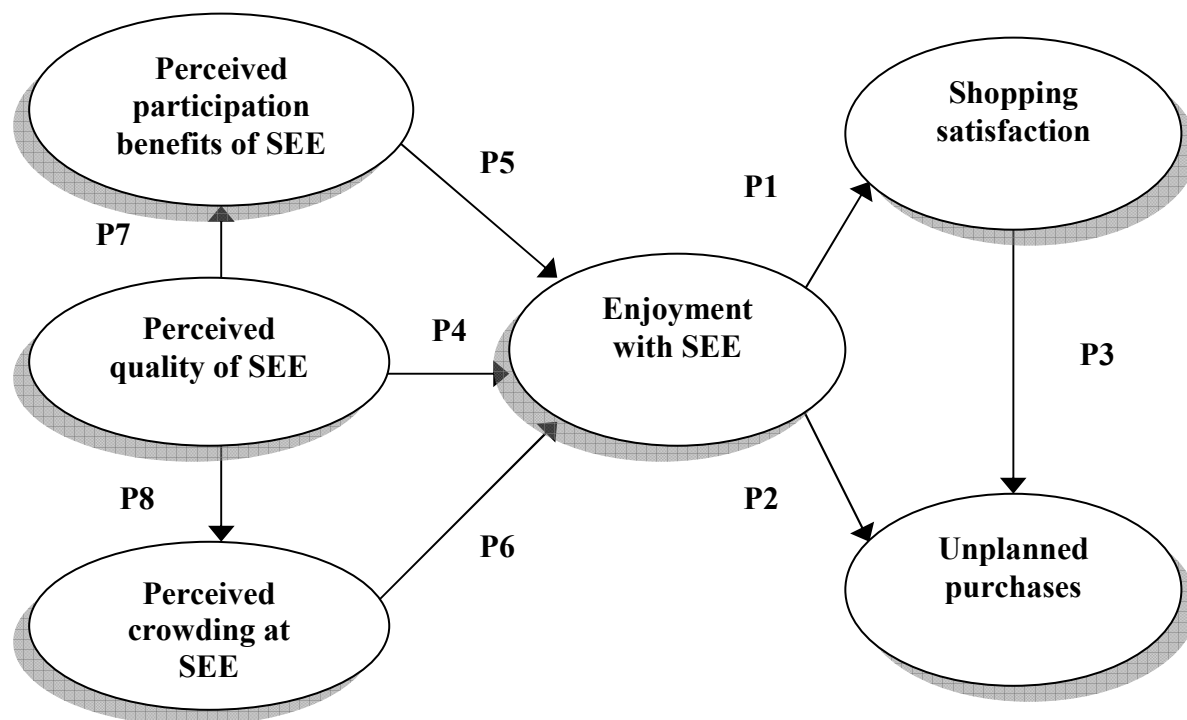
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Figure 1: A conceptual framework for the impact of SEE on shopping centre patrons' behaviours



Source: adapted from Wakefield and Baker (1998)