Retail Location Attributes towards Consumer Patronage and Retail Brand Image – A Study with Special reference to Organized Jewelry Retailers at Kanchipuram Town, Tamilnadu

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Abstract: *Location management is the prominent promotional strategy in retail business environment. It is strongly believed in marketing parlance that well planned location leads to effective brand penetration and higher sales. In this aspect retail location selection by jewellery retailers is predominantly getting due importance in recent competitive environment due to the changes in retail market structure, entry of branded retailers, role of established unorganized retailers and as well as changes in consumer life style and demographics So a profound attention should be given by organized retailers towards retail location selection by considering different parameters comprehensively known as retail location attributes. The present study aims to test the conceptual framework of retail location attributes influence on consumer patronage and retail store brand Image. In order to test these hypothesized model structural equation model (SEM-Covariance) was employed with the help of AMOS 17.0 version was employed. It is observed from the model testing that location attributes have direct effect on consumer patronage and consumer patronage have direct effect on retail store brand image.*
Keywords: *Retail Location Attributes, Consumer Patronage, Brand Image and Organized Retailers.*

I. Introduction

Retailing is the process of delivering goods and services to ultimate consumer on their requirements at reasonable price on need quantity and as well as at prompt time. It is the form of a patronage motive in for retail brand promotion to retailers. The study of **Verma and Madan (2011)[1]** evident that retail services always deploys the patronage motive among the consumers for the promotion of goods and services and they also narrated that the core value of product as well as brands are promoted through retailers patronage values. Retail promotion in the competitive environment has become challenging task for consumer attention and retention. In present era emerge of synthesized retail formats (Conflict theory) with innovative category management strategies augment expectation of consumers. Henceforth the retailing service also need to chart out diversified retailing strategy related to location, store operation, layout planning, merchandize management, retail promotional mix, pricing, logistics operation and also CRM. **Kim (2003)[2]** studied the evolution of organized retailing in South Korea and he has mentioned that research supports a combination of cyclic, environmental and conflict theories in the evolution of many forms of retail organizations in the USA. Outstandingly among various retail strategy, retail location management includes market analysis, trade area analysis, size selection process, layout planning, location ambiance are scientifically evolves by retailers for the psychological consumer management. The growth & expedite retail promotion practices in consumer durables as well as non durables industry have become professional management practices and subsequently retailing has been noted as separate entity for academic and practical purpose. In connection to that there are continuously studies and theories were revolved and conceptual framework was developed by academicians and market practitioners towards various aspects of retailing especially at retail location practices. **Muller-Hagedorn & Natter (2011)[3]** found the factor influencing retail location are distance from home, competitors assortments, road traffic, present infrastructure, area establishment, public transport, demographic factors, competition in the area, location attractiveness. In case of durable and fashion related retailing like jewellery, the change in retail format(Traditional as well as modern), entry of branded retailers, attitude of consumer towards variety seeking behavior on buying jewellery have given due impetus for jewellery retailer on location management as the valuable input for consumer management as well as brand management are the output. The branded jewellery market came into trend, the number of gold retailers in the country increased sharply. Branded players such as Tanishq, Oyzterbay, D'Damas, Gili and Carbon opened outlets in various parts of the country **Shah Vipul**

(2012)[4.] Traditional jewelers also began to bring out lightweight jewellery, and some of them even launched their in-house brands related to retail location management by jewellery retailing various theories and conceptual model were evolved by keeping location attributes as the causal variable and measure the outcome of promotional success as sale, CRM, brand Image and so on as effective variables.

Brand Image is the important measurement of business growth and also to retain consumers, which proportionately increases Brand Image. The effect of product brand image helps either a particular product line to perform effectively in the market or add brand equity for manufacturers. Whereas proportionate increase of retail product brand image have cascading impact on the growth of manufacturer brand as well as retail business. **Morschett (2002)[5]** describe brand image is a psychological and behavioral factor which makes consumer perception towards store and the retail chain. He also describe it is an association of emotional and cognitive that creates behavioral value. The interrelationship between retail location attributes, brand image and consumer patronage are mutually influencing each other. It has been derived by various theories and conceptual framework by both economic school and marketing philanthropist. **Greenberg (1977)[6]** made an investigation in finding the important factor for shopping centre patronage is location and convenience.

Problem Statement

Kanchipuram is a renowned tourism destination in India which meant for pilgrimage. In additional to that it is a landmark witness for traditional silk manufacturer, designing and export. In recent years the surrounding environment of kanchipuram has emerged as a notable industry has due to its connectivity with leading commercial centers of India like Chennai, Mumbai, Bangalore and Pondicherry. The combination of tradition tourism as well as business viability invoke these place as one among the destinies floating population(Pedestrian) which is proportionately increasing day by day. In additional to that the complementation of auspicious silk purchaser on jewellery consumption like pedestrian population all over the country as well as host country buyer helps the organized jewelleries (leading Indian branded jeweler) like Joy Alukkas, Jos Alukkas, Kalyan Jewelry, GRT Jeweler, Tanishq Jewellery, Tata Gold Plus, NAC Jewellery and Khazana Jewelry to choose kanchipuram town as the best and prominent business centre for establishing retail business. The changes in occupational status, taste and preference of consumption by residential location also influence them to avail value related shopping experiences towards the purchase of durable as well as fashion items. In this aspect the intake of organized retail jewellery in kachipuram has shown a significant growth in recent years. But at the same time the existing market structure, location background forces the organized jewellery retailers to deploy effective location strategy to attract consumers as well as to manage existing traditional retailers.

II. Literature Background

Bearden (1977)[7] established through this research work that seven attributes for store patronage: location, price, parking facility, quality of merchandise, ambiance, assortment, and friendly approach by staff. **Baker (2002)[8]** outlined that consumer looks for travel cost such as petrol or parking charges while selection a location for shopping**. Mc Goldrick and Andre (1995)[9]** concluded in his study that behavior of shopping is dependent on three factors such as value for money, parking and opening hours. **Islam (2006)[10]**narrated in his research work that convenience store attributes are location, knowledge of sales associates, product assortment, checkout speed, store layout, service and parking**.** Accessibility is prioritized followed by parking facility, store cleanliness, convenience and ease of mobility according to **Donvon and Rossiter(1982). Arnold et.al (1983)[11]** highlighted that the important store characteristics were location, convenience, low prices, assortment/variety, courteous helpful staff, high quality merchandise, quality of fresh food, fast checkout/fast service, cleanliness, and shopping environment. Location, convenience and low prices were clearly more important attributes than the other attributes. **Van der Waerden and Borgers (1994)[12]** tested the relationship between parking and location selection for shopping. **McCarthy (1980)[13]** attempted to include transport mode / travel attributes in studying the role of the qualitative characteristics that influence the choice in shopping destination. **Ghosh et al (2010)[14]** addressed the issues related to store attributes and their relevance in the store selection process. Convenience is the distance travelled by consumer from residence to shopping location. **Sumeet Gupta, Kavita Jain & Divya Jain (2009)[15]** concluded that convenience is more important for consumers for the store choice. **Ghosh, Tripathi and Kumar (2010)[16]** carried out a study relating to the Indian context, and addressed issues related to store attributes and their relevance in store format selection. Eleven variables had been identified based on theory and judgment. Factor analysis had yielded three factors: Convenience and Merchandise Mix, Store Atmospherics, and Services. Store patronage is influenced by above factors. **Brooks et al. (2001)[17]** concluded that attributes refer to two types of location- based convenience close to my home or my work, close to my shopping area; plus other types of convenience: Car parking, Ease of finding wine within the store. **Sinha and Banerjee (2004)[18]** in their study to determine predictors of store choice in the Indian market, found the following factors determining store choice: proximity, merchandise, ambience, service, and patronized store.

Ailawadi and Keller (2004)[19] made an attempt to find that store selection is based on distance travelled by consumer. Thus convenience is the important factor for store selection followed by brand image, price and product assortment. **Bloemer and Shroeder (2002)[20]** in their study concluded that store image is the sum of all the store's attributes, in the way perceived by the consumer, through his or her experience with the store. **Osman (1993)[21]** pointed out consumer patronage is based on the store image. He says favourable store image, the higher the valence of the store consumers. **Chandrasekhar (2001)[22]** Store image refers to the overall impression or perception of a store. The store patronage involves the consumer's choice for a particular retail store. Thus, Patronage of a store is derived out of both i.e.; attributes of the store and buying intentions Shopper's Behaviour towards Retail Stores. **Goswami Paromita (2009)[23]** concluded that consumer patronage to grocery stores is found to be positively related to location, helpful and trustworthy salespeople, home shopping, cleanliness, promotional offers, quality and negatively related to travel convenience. Studies with focus on patronage have found convenience as the primary reason for consumer's patronage (**Huff, 1964**)[24] where as product related studies have emphasized the uniqueness of assortment as a way of influencing patronage. **Pan and Zinkhan (2006)[25]** recognized two dimensions of consumer patronage behaviour towards a store: first is store choice (a consumer choice to patronize a particular store) and second is the frequency of visit (how often a consumer patronizes that store) and found that store image is a major predictor for explaining shopping frequencies of consumers at a particular store. **Yavas (2003)[26]** formed attributes for consumer choice of shopping malls and patronage includes: quality, price, assortment, atmosphere, cleanliness, courtesy, security, shopping hours and accessibility. **Yan and Eckman (2009)[27]** Shopping orientation and believes about store attributes effect consumer patronage behaviour towards lifestyle centres and as result lifestyle centres provide attractive pricing, fashionable merchandise, convenient shopping hours and parking in the comparision of alternative formats of retail store, so consumers used to go frequently to lifestyle centres for shopping . **Pan and Zinkhan (2006)[28]** found that Product related factors such as product selection, quality, prices and market related factors such as store services, store atmosphere, convenient location, shopping hours and convenient parking facilities, sales personnel, shopping hours, and fast checkout were considered as major predictors for explaining the consumer store choice and their shopping frequencies, beyond this, the study also suggested that greater assortment and low prices of products have a great influence on consumer" intention to patronize the retail store. **Morschett (2002)[29]** Retail brand image is a mental and behavioural concept which conveys the consumer's perception of the store and the entire retail chain, respectively.

III. Objectives And Hypothesis Development

The primary objective of the study is to test the hypothesized model on influence of location attributes of organized jewellery retailers on consumer patronage and retail store brand image.
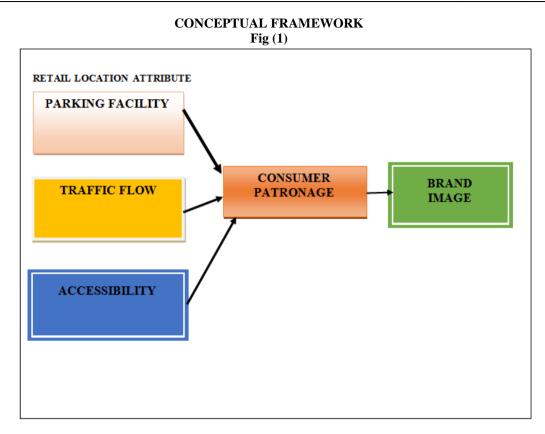
The study also attempts to understand the direct as well as indirect influence of retail location attributes on retail store brand image. It also probes the mediating role of consumer patronage on retail store brand image. In additional to that the study describe socio economic profile of the consumer who do shopping as well as buying from organized jewellery retailers.

Location attributes is the strategically framework can't be measured directly but have an influence on consumer buying behavior and actual purchase decisions. It is constituted with the help of parameters like Parking facility, traffic flow and accessibility which can be measured with the help of predetermined item form the opinion of consumers. The three attribute which individually contributes on retail location attributes as well as collectively have an impact on Retail location attributes (covariance). This can be studied through the following hypothesis as:

H1: Location related attributes (Parking facility, traffic flow and accessibility) have a direct and indirect influence on consumer patronage.

The proportion of consumer patronage and consumer stay through repeated visit is the strongest brand leverage aspect towards the establishment of Brand Image and retention. This is measured through the following hypothesis

H2: There is a positive influence of consumer patronage on brand image.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK
Fig (1)

IV. Methodology

The study on influence of location attributes towards retail brand image through consumer patronage was undertaken. The study location was kanchipuram town in Tamilnadu, India. The study unit was established branded organized jewellery retailers like Joy Alukkas, Jos Alukkas, Kalyan Jewellery, GRT Jewellery, Tanishq Jewellery, Tata Gold Plus, NAC Jewellery and Khazana Jewellery in kanchipuram town. These retail outlets are located in differ retail trade areas like primary trade area, secondary business district was (SBD), territory business centre (TBC), free standing location and neighborhood shopping centre. The study was proposed as descriptive come empirical nature to test the existing conceptual model on retail location attributes effect on retail promotion practices. The sampling unit interviewed as primary data for the study were taken from heterogeneous consumer background. The respondent was interviewed for the study purpose at the time of completing their purchase. A structured adopted questionnaire about the aspect of retail location attributes, consumer patronage and brand image were included with 5 pt likert scale (strongly Disagree to strongly agree). The sample size for the study was done through convenience mode of selection based on the availability and intension to respond. In addition to that, responses were collected on personal background of the respondent. The collected data were screened for its data cleaning as well as data purification. There were around 351 respondent exhibited all relevant information provided in the questionnaire were taken for final sample size for the study.

1.5.1 QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

This research paper adopted the questionnaire for the collection of primary data from the consumers based on survey. The aspects like traffic flow, parking facility, accessibility, customer patronage and retail brand image (based on 5-pt Likert Scale) where included in the questionnaire. The 5-pt scale was divided into Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neither Agree nor disagree (3), Agree (4) and Strongly agree (5). The aspect related to location attributes include traffic flow, parking facility and accessibility where taken from the study work of **DIVARIES COSMAS JARAVAZA PATIENCE CHITANDO**[30] adopted scale. The items related to consumer patronage were taken from the same study. The retail brand image items were taken from the study of **CHURCHILL'S (1979)**[31] related to apparel store image)

1.5.2 MEASURES

The purpose of the reliability testing was to examine the properties of measurement scales and the items in order to obtain the overall index of internal consistency of the scales [Hair et al.(2006)][32,] Cronbach's alpha is the most common measure of internal consistency ("reliability").It is most commonly used when

multiple Likert questions are used in the survey questionnaire that form a scale, and to determine if the scale is reliable.

SEM, a combination of statistical techniques including factor analysis, regression and path analysis, was employed because of its distinct capacity in estimating error variances from complicated measurement components and their structures, ideal for theory testing and development as a whole. SEM was used to test the measurement and structural models of all hypothesized relations among constructs. The causal relationships among the constructs would be determined after the hypothesis testing by using SEM. Evaluation for goodness-of-fit of the hypothesized model involved examining the following criteria: absolute fit measurement, incremental fit measurement, and parsimonious fit measurement .The hypothesized model comprising four exogenous variables (Parking facility, Traffic flow, Accessibility and consumer patronage) and one endogenous variable (Brand Image) was tested by Structural Equation Modeling using AMOS 17.

V. Results and Discussions
Table 1: Demographic Background

Sl.No	Attribute	Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage to Total
1		BELOW 25	38	10.8
2		26-35	110	31.3
3	Age	36-45	80	22.7
4		46-55	112	31.9
5		56 & ABOVE	11	3.1
1	Gender	Male	141	40.2
2		Female	210	59.8
1	Marital Status	Married	299	85.2
2		Unmarried	52	14.8
1		Urban	36	10.3
2	Location	Semi- urban	161	45.9
3		Rural	154	43.8
1	Monthly income	BELOW 20000	63	17.9
2		21000-30000	89	25.4
3		31000-40000	105	29.9
4		ABOVE 40000	94	26.8
Total			**351**	**100**

Source: Primary Data

Table 1 shows the demographic background of the consumer selected for the study from jewellery shops in kanchipuram. Regarding the age background, 31.9 percent are in the age group of 46-55, 59.8 percent of the respondents are female compare to 40.2 percent of male.85.2 percent of the respondent are married. It is observed that the 45.9 percent of the respondent are residing in semi-urban with the monthly income of 31000-40000(29.9 percent)

Structural Equation Model

As a series of interrelationship (between retail location attributes, consumer patronage and retail brand image) were to be explored and tested, SEM was treated as an appropriate data analysis tool. In connection to that, the primary research objective was to identify and establish the nature and strength of correlation between retail location attributes (Traffic flow, Parking facility and Accessibility- cause), Consumer Patronage and Retail Brand Image (consequence). According to Hair et al. SEM is a suitable statistical technique for establishing and understanding type of relationship between exogenous construct and endogenous construct.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS, RELIABILITY AND CORRELATION MATRIX
TABLE 2

CONSTRUCTS	MEAN	S.D	CRONBACH'S α	TF	PF	AC	CP	BI
TF	3.7104	.96740	.858	1	-	-	-	-
PF	3.8319	.92807	.934	.226*	1	-	-	-
AC	3.8228	.95806	.948	.088**	.028	1	-	-
CP	3.6895	.89983	.923	.560*	.176*	.144*	1	-
BI	3.7732	.82245	.801	-.050	.010	-.034	-.024	1

*(Pearson) Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), **(Pearson) Correlation is significant at the 0.1 level (2-tailed)
(TF- Traffic Flow, PF-Parking Facility, AC-Accessibility, CP-Consumer Patronage and BI-Brand Image)

CONFIRMING THE MEASUREMENT MODEL USING CFA

After validation of the measurement instrument was satisfied, the results of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) using AMOS 17 was used to evaluate the model fit of the measurement model to confirm the hypothesized structure.

MEASUREMENT MODEL

The measurement model shown in figure 1 comprises of five factors. Each factor is measured by a minimum of three to a maximum of five observed variables, the reliability of which is influenced by random measurement error, as indicated by the associated error term. Each of these observed variables is regressed into its respective factor. Finally all the five factors are shown to be inter-correlated.

Figure 2

NOTE: TF- Traffic Flow, PF-Parking Facility, AC-Accessibility, CP-Consumer Patronage and BI-Brand Image.

Table 3: COMPUTATION OF DEGREES OF FREEDOM

Number of distinct sample moments	253
Number of distinct parameters to be estimated	54
Degrees of freedom (253-54)	199

The proposed model in this study is an over-identified model with positive degrees of freedom (253) as shown in table 3 drawn from the AMOS output. In this model there are 253 distinct sample moments (i.e., pieces of information) from which to compute the estimates of the default model, and 54 distinct parameters to be estimated, leaving 199 degrees of freedom, which is positive (greater than zero). Hence the model is an over identified one.

Table 4: Fit Indices of the Measurement Model

FIT STATISTIC	RECOMMENDED	OBTAINED
x^2	-	423.631
Df	-	199
x^2 significance	$p \leq 0.05$	.000
x^2 /df	$\leq 2 - 5.0$	2.129
GFI	≥ 0.90	.902
AGFI	>0.80	.876
NFI	≥ 0.90	.929
RFI	≥ 0.90	.918
CFI	≥ 0.95	.961
TLI	≥ 0.90	.954
RMSEA	≤ 0.08	.057
RMR	≤ 0.05	.049

Source: Hair et al. (1998, 2010), Hu and Bentler (1999), Byrne (2001, 2010), and Ernest et al. (2008).

Goodness of Fit attributes (GFI) obtained is 0.902 as against the recommended value of above 0.90. Adjusted Goodness of Fit attributes (AGFI) obtained is 0.876 as against the recommended value of above 0.80.The Normed fit Attributes (NFI), Relative Fit attributes (RFI), Comparative Fit attributes (CFI), Tucker Lewis Attributes (TLI) are 0.929, 0.918, 0.961, 0.954 respectively as against the recommended level of above 0.90.

RMSEA is 0.057 below the recommended limit of 0.08, and Root Mean Square Residual (RMR) is also below the recommended limit of 0.05 at 0.049. This can be interpreted as meaning that the model explains the correlation to within an average error of 0.041 (Stieger, 1990). Hence the model shows an overall acceptable fit. The model is an over identified model.
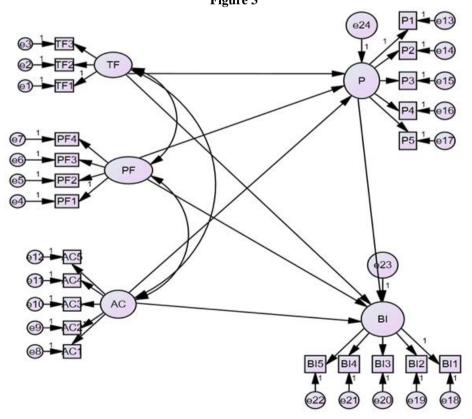
The confirmatory factor analysis showed an acceptable overall model fit and hence, the theorized model fit well with the observed data. It can be concluded that the hypothesized five factor CFA model fits the sample data very well.

Structural Equation Modeling

In SEM Exogenous are correlated each other. There are three exogenous variable namely parking facility, Traffic flow, and Accessibility. There are two endogenous variables in the path diagram namely consumer patronage and Brand Image. In SEM Endogenous variable should have error terms. So there are two error terms namely e23 and e24. Endogenous variable are influenced by the exogenous variables in the model, either directly or indirectly.

Analysis of Structural Model

The results of the theoretical structural model indicated that the chi-square of 253 with 199 degree of freedom was statistically significant at p<0.05, indicating an inappropriate fit. However, it has been stated that the chi square is highly sensitive to sample size and usually suggests a poor fit with large sample sizes (Byrne, 2001). Other fit statistics were within the acceptable values (χ^2/df = 2.219; GFI= 0.902; AGFI=0.876; NFI=0.929; CFI=0.961; TLI= 0.954; RFI=0.918; RMSEA =0.057). Overall, the fit statistics indicated a high fit between the data and the theoretical model.
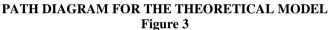
PATH DIAGRAM FOR THE THEORETICAL MODEL
Figure 3

Table 5

Hypotheses	Paths	Standardized (β)	S.e	C.r. (t)	P	Result
H_1 : There is a significant direct effect of traffic flow on consumer patronage	CP←TF	.521	.051	10.144	***	Supported
H_2 : There is a significant direct effect of parking facility on consumer patronage	CP← PF	.071	.042	.413	.679	Not Supported
H_3 : There is a significant direct effect of accessibility on consumer patronage	CP←AC	.085	.040	2.128	**	Supported
H_4 : There is a significant indirect effect of traffic flow on Brand Image	BI←TF	-.037	.031	1.180	.238	Not Supported
H_5 : There is a significant indirect effect of parking facility on Brand Image	BI←PF	.008	.022	.358	.720	Not Supported
H_6 : There is a significant indirect effect of Accessibility on Brand Image	BI←AC	-.002	0.21	-.107	.951	Not Supported
H_7 : There is a significant direct effect of consumer patronage on Brand Image	BI←CP	.447	.050	8.933	***	Supported

***Effect are significant at $p<0.05$
**Effect are significant at $p<0.1$

VI. Conclusion

The study on retail location attributes on consumer patronage and retail store brand image among organized jewelry retailers in Kanchipuram town, Tamilnadu attempted to test the theoretical model of location influence consumer patronage and brand image. The location attribute has been constructed with the aspects like traffic flow, parking facilities and accessibility have influence on consumer patronage directly and location attributes do not have indirect influence on retail brand image and it was also concluded from the study that consumer patronage has direct influence on retail store brand image among the organized jewelry retailers in Kanchipuram Town/ The study reveals that the location aspects among the consumers gives effect on consumer footfall and consumer interaction in the retail shop (retail atmospherics) significantly influences the retail store brand image.

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Acknowledgement

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Annexure
Table 6
Reliability

Construct	Item	Cronbach's Alpha
Traffic Flow	I prefer to choose the store where traffic flow is regularized and systematic	.790
	I believe consistent pedestrian flow decide the quality of retail shop	.761
	The content of traffic flow help to spot analyze the quality of retail shop	.853
Parking Facility	Availability of parking facility provides me pleasure shopping experience while buying jewellery	.895
	The facilities and add on values in parking facilities motivates me to prefer the stores	.919
	I prioritize space management in parking facility	.923
	I give importance for location where good open space for parking area	.918
Accessibility	I prefer a shop which is near to my residential location	.927
	I consider the availability of transport facility in and around the shop to buy jewelry	.935
	I give importance for average travel time while selecting the shop location at the	.941

	time buying jewellery	
	I prefer a location where crowd is less	.939
	My belief on shop location is influenced by shop area	.938
Consumer Patronage	I give importance for ambience of location	.912
	I intend to buy speciality items (jewellery) by travelling minimum distance	.908
	The density in and around the shop will give a belief on choosing the jewellery shop	.895
	I prefer to shop the location where adjustant shops also dealing the jewelry products	.907
	I find a shop when the facility for cross shopping is good	.905
Brand Image	Even if another location as the same features I would like to prefer to buy from existing shop	.850
	If another jewelry shop offer additional location facilities with extended chain my preference will not be changed	.763
	The present jewellery shop location and its offering gives me more benefits	.723
	I consider myself to be a loyal customer to the shop based on its location background	.728
	I prefer same location even the even shop changes the business entity	.732