

ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

Megamalls and lifestyles of urban dwellers in selected cities in southwest, Nigeria

DOI: 10.29063/ajrh2021/v25i5s.5

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Abstract

The globalization trend in the 21st century has come with tremendous impacts across the nations of the world. Notable among the impacts is the emergence of megamalls and people's changing lifestyles, resulting in socio-economic and infrastructural development. This study examines megamalls as an offshoot of the globalization process and the changing urban landscape in many cities with their growing population in Nigeria. It focuses on examining the relationship between megamalls and urban dwellers' lifestyles in Nigeria with implications on population and human infrastructure for sustainable development. The study was conducted in three main cities of Ibadan, Lagos, and Ota in Southwest Nigeria. The study employs a descriptive research design using quantitative (questionnaire) and qualitative (interview) research instruments to elicit information on respondents' views on shopping malls and how it has contributed to human infrastructure and urban centers' development. The modernization theory was employed to provide a theoretical guide for the study. Findings show that megamalls, with their aesthetic and magnificent structures, have contributed immensely to the development of urban centers and their dwellers by beautifying the urban environment, sales of quality and affordable goods, and a place for social gatherings relaxation. Therefore, it was recommended that more megamalls be built to meet up with urban dwellers' growing demands and attract more social development. (*Afr J Reprod Health 2021; 25[5s]: 54-66*).

Keywords: Cities, lifestyles, megamalls, urban dwellers, Nigeria

Résumé

La tendance à la mondialisation au 21^e siècle a eu des impacts énormes à travers les nations du monde. Parmi les impacts notables, citons l'émergence de mégacentres commerciaux et l'évolution des modes de vie des gens, entraînant un développement socio-économique et infrastructurel. Cette étude examine les mégacentres commerciaux en tant que ramification du processus de mondialisation et de l'évolution du paysage urbain dans de nombreuses villes avec leur population croissante au Nigeria. Il se concentre sur l'examen de la relation entre les mégacentres commerciaux et les modes de vie des citoyens au Nigeria avec des implications sur la population et les infrastructures humaines pour le développement durable. L'étude a été menée dans trois villes principales d'Ibadan, Lagos et Ota dans le sud-ouest du Nigeria. L'étude utilise une conception de recherche descriptive utilisant des instruments de recherche quantitatifs (questionnaire) et qualitatifs (entretien) pour obtenir des informations sur les points de vue des répondants sur les centres commerciaux et comment cela a contribué au développement des infrastructures humaines et des centres urbains. La théorie de la modernisation a été utilisée pour fournir un guide théorique pour l'étude. Les résultats montrent que les mégacentres commerciaux, avec leurs structures esthétiques et magnifiques, ont énormément contribué au développement des centres urbains et de leurs habitants en embellissant l'environnement urbain, en vendant des produits de qualité et abordables, et en un lieu de détente pour les rassemblements sociaux. Par conséquent, il a été recommandé de construire davantage de mégacentres commerciaux pour répondre aux demandes croissantes des citoyens et attirer plus de développement social. (*Afr J Reprod Health 2021; 25[5s]: 54-66*).

Mots-clés: Villes, modes de vie, mégacentres commerciaux, citoyens, Nigéria

Introduction

Globalization is undeniably a concept with diverse meanings, implications, and applications. Notable among globalization impacts is the emergence of megamalls in cities worldwide with drastic

adjustments in individuals' lifestyles. This has resulted in socio-economic and infrastructural development in many cities in the world¹. The growth of cities cannot just be viewed as a recent occurrence, but a fast and remarkable change in individuals' social background globally, where the

existing culture in rural societies is rapidly being replaced with mostly the culture of urban life². Historically, commercial activities regarding exchanging goods are traceable to the most primitive time when people engage in the most primitive kinds of communal life³. The rise in social groups and the means of production signaled the commencement of commercial activities. Many commercial buildings were situated in urban centers due to the steady and incessant commercial activity can be enhanced mainly in city areas. That is to say, profitable products of diversity and acceptable standards can only be created in an urban setting⁴.

One such global urban culture is modern life, which is evident in the rise of megamalls in many cities worldwide, including Nigeria. Megamalls, which can be regarded as one of the modern life features, are according to Olonade, Busari, Imhonopi, George, Iruonagbe and Adetunde, a big shopping centres with different stores, fast-food restaurants, and movies places⁵. Megamalls and fast-food restaurants line the highway system. A mega mall is a modern form of shopping quarter or shopping center, with more than one building to form a compound of stores demonstrating commercial activities with walkways connected to enable customers to move from one section to another⁶. It is a precise kind of shopping and pleasure area typically in an open place, which connect different pathways⁹.

Also prominent among globalization features in this 21st century is the emergence of megamalls with their aesthetic and magnificent structures springing up in many cities across the globe⁷. Megamalls, which is referred to as large shopping malls, have been seen as exceptionally eye-catching ventures by many global investors, and this, in its broad sense, has been eagerly sought after when there are sales opportunities⁴. These malls have adopted new designs and resident diversities to satisfy the change in consumers' values, needs, and lifestyles⁷.

The importance of shopping as a commercial activity has been modified for social elements as well as consumption. It is a daily doings and public praxis. Therefore, shopping can be a manifestation of lifestyle, and by extension, megamall patronage is connected to the modern lifestyle. Miller *et al.* posited that "consumers congregate around things which describe their personality and become attractions of particular habits of social life"⁸. Therefore, megamalls' most significant responsibility in this modern world is

responding to persons' distinctive needs, or else they may lose relevance in social spaces⁸.

According to Juhali *et al.*, four shopping malls include community shopping malls, neighborhood shopping malls, convenience shopping malls, and regional and superregional shopping malls⁹. However, this paper focused more on regional shopping malls because these malls are more evident in Nigeria. According to Juhari *et al.*, a regional shopping mall is characterized by two to four key resident stores occupying the same building with flooring around 250,000 to 800,000 square feet⁹. These malls provide various goods and services ranging from domestic appliances, business products to equipment for entertainment⁹. Megamalls are identified as places that offer convenience shopping adventure and have become venues for social interaction, recreational, and entertainment arenas⁷.

Urbanization is a phenomenon that has links to industrialization, modernization, and the globalization process. It can be regarded as a particular situation at a particular period, for instance, the amounts of the total number of town or city dwellers². Also, urban lifestyles created through the perception and belief towards materialism come with particular consequences for the urban population. It is arguably grounded by the consumerism concept, which is usually practiced every day by members of the society and expressed through their insatiable wants for goods or products. Urban areas or cities are known to symbolize the unity and combination of varieties of influences. Hence, the need to invest maximally in its population and human infrastructure for sustainable development. It represents and mirrors the value of social culture within it⁹. As stated by Creswell and Clark, the urbanization concept involving a particular urban lifestyle which is a reflection of the pattern that is related to social, economic, behavioral, fashion culture, taste, the identity of a globalizing world, and all of these are part of the aspirations of the people who live in it⁹. Hence, the rapid growth of urban infrastructures, such as shopping malls, contributes to maximizing the urban life potential. It does not just provide a global patterned economic structure but also brings the value-added for consumption patterns among urban dwellers. The rise of shopping malls in Nigeria is not unconnected with the rapid industrialization and urbanization process being experienced by most nations of the world. For instance, Ibadan

and some other cities in southwestern Nigeria are fast becoming a center of attraction with various happenings associated with the industrialization of economies and increased in the number of transnational organizations that have brought about several drastic alterations the pattern of consumption and lifestyle of the urban dwellers. This experience has undoubtedly brought about certain key transformations in city centers' social and economic structures¹¹. Economically, it is evidence that employment opportunities have increased, leading to a rise in many of the population's purchasing power.

Furthermore, it appears that these cities are not left out in acclimatizing themselves to this novel consumerism culture, which has engrossed most cities in Nigeria (such as Lagos, Port Harcourt, and Abuja), and the entire world, the indicators for these are evident in the upsurge in the number of mega shopping malls which has been established in the last two decades. Prominent among the growing megamalls in Nigeria is Shoprite, with almost 25 shops worldwide (Nigeria) since the first shop was established in 2005¹². Megamalls have turned into magnets for urban dwellers. Individuals prefer to use their free time at the malls and even when foreigners/tourists enter the city, and they mostly visit malls⁷. From time immemorial, the consumption of goods has become a way of life, and megamalls allow the 21st-century urban dwellers to express their shopaholic behavior. Shopping malls are regenerating urban surroundings with their various functionality, different aesthetic designs, and creative architectural solutions they make available in order to achieve a modern life and global standard².

As part of society's development and modernization, smaller arcades are being pulled down, replacing them with larger centers or mega shopping buildings, frequently easy to get to by vehicle¹³. The International Council of Shopping Centers categorized eight primary types of shopping malls in 2015: community center, regional center, neighborhood center, superregional center, fashion/specialty center, superstores, and outlets center. The neighborhood centers are usually small in size, offering services to the immediate community. In the present day, lifestyle and consumption patterns may be

attributed mainly to the household economic situation. In the past, man's food consumption patterns were determined mainly by the territory where he lived. Thus, through the centuries, cultures have revolved around the principal indigenous foods that are locally available. These food cultures included special and sometimes unique food preparation methods and processing techniques that have helped determine the food consumption patterns of the people who practiced them. Therefore, indigenous foods and their respective cultures kept populations on the same food patterns for generations. However, with the advent of change in socio-economic structure and urbanization, other factors have been determinants of consumption patterns. These include, among others, level of education and economic status. Economic status is principally a function of income, especially in urban areas where people purchase most of their food. Therefore, it would be expected that income will influence the foods people buy in such areas.

The social lifestyle is collected in one space and connected through several aspects of life. Therefore, it is imperative to develop its human, infrastructural development but very sacrosanct if sustainable development must be attained. Urban people are keen to seek satisfaction in living. Thus, cities and megamalls are no longer seen as spaces merely for developing financial and economic aspects. However, as significant symbols of lifestyle for urban society members to satisfy an emotional desire, it is positively related to individual value of life perception. Megamalls can, therefore, be regarded as an offshoot of the globalization process, which is fast becoming an index of development in a changing global world. Based on the above backdrop, this paper aims to examine the development of megamalls and their influence on Nigeria's urban dwellers' lifestyles. The study also investigates if the rise of megamalls in Nigeria is beneficial to the urban economy.

Research questions

- I. To what extent has the development and rise of megamalls influence the lifestyle of urban dwellers in Nigeria?
- II. Do the rise of megamalls in Nigeria beneficial to the urban economy?

Theoretical framework

Modernization theory

The modernization process refers to a transition pattern from an orthodox era to contemporary civilization. It came up from Max Weber's (1864-1920) works Talcott Parson (1920-1979). This theory examines some of the inherent causes and mechanisms of a nation in a different perspective. As opined by Olonade *et al.*, the theory recognizes social factors capable of contributing to societal growth and pursues to describe society's evolution process and development⁵. It can be related to urbanization, westernization, and industrialization with their attendance in a modern way. As noted by Kendall, urbanization is a product of modernization, which led to the rapid process of industrialization¹⁴. Modernization is the ultimate rationalization process that views economic conditions as heavily determined by society's social, cultural, and political values. However, the theory of modernization has suffered criticism from various theorists, including the socialists, Immanuel Wallerstein world-systems theory, globalization debates, and the dependency theorists¹⁵. Not only was the process of change emphasized, but most importantly, how societies respond to such change. More so, internal forces were examined while addressing cultural cum social organizations to adapt to new technologies. It portrays that traditional societies will progress or advance if only they can embrace specific modern ideas. Some modernization theorists think that modern countries are more prosperous and more powerful and have more freedom to a more satisfactory lifestyle³. Hence, one can view modernization as a phenomenon that is synonymous with development and social well-being.

The modernization theory portrays megamalls as something novel and worth embracing; it solidifies megamalls as an essential feature of the modern world and part and parcel of developed countries' developmental process, hence the need for third-world countries to follow suit¹⁵. For instance, the modernization theory depicts innovation through technologies and novel ideas to attain the modern world⁵. It states that development is a process like modernization. To live in a primitive world is to be undeveloped, but to dance to the

dictate and demand of the waves cutting across Europe, Asia, the Caribbean, and in recent times, Africa is to be civilized and modern. Some countries are seen as modern as well as developed. This implies that such countries have imbibed, internalized, and exhibits modern values in their political processes, social carriage, candor and values, economic activities and business, as well as the adoption of technology to ease the ways and manner of doing things and perhaps best practices in a global world¹⁷.

Modernization theory opines that the buying and selling trend in a friendly, organized and more cozy environment is inevitable as the world is transforming into a more comfortable and social-oriented setting¹⁷. Because of the nature of person's work and the non-availability of time, shopping, relaxation, and building relationship in a public space become an easy task. Mega shopping malls offers an environment that makes people feel safe, homely, familiarized and purchase goods at a relatively affordable amounts⁵. Similarly, urban dwellers are taking advantages of this offer for the benefit of themselves and that of their family members. Compared with the traditional societies, the process of modernization has endeared people to the need for change with time and events¹⁸. Virtually everything can be gotten in a mega shopping mall including social activities. Individuals and families visit shopping malls on weekends and any available holidays to relax, shop, relate, meet people and initiate business talks, unlike in the traditional settings where good are displays in local stores lacking in serenity and relaxation opportunities. Even in the olden days, items were placed by the side of the road with inscription of prices, and buyers were expected to pick and drop money without negotiation or any form of interaction⁵. However, the modernization theory has been criticized for the erosion of traditional way of live. More harm has been done than good to social life by preaching western ideas at the expense of conventional and orthodox way of getting things done in a manner that is void of crises and other anti-social behaviors.

The adoption of modernization has endangered the lives, properties, and dignity of labor of many due to over-reliance on technology and new ways of doing things. Ancient buildings, town planning policies are eroded, and public places are



Plate 1: The Shoprite in Ibadan

captured in the name of building mighty edifice (Mega malls, fast food centers, eateries, and others) for buying consumables. Many societies' net effects are consequently seen in the substitution of primitive poverty to a more modern type of misery¹⁹. Even though some achievements have been made in education, social relationships, business viability, improvements in the standard of living, physical infrastructure, and economic opportunities, modernization also has some negative consequences.

A country's development and modernization level has a way of carving a niche for her in the international community. Modernization is necessary and preferable to cushion the effect of excess stress and pain attached to conventional means of doing things. It opines development, such as the invention of the latest data technology and the need to upgrade conventional means in transportation, commerce, communication, and manufacture of local goods, as a welcome development and should be imbibed. Nevertheless, effort must be geared towards curbing the menace or adverse effect it has on the core traditional society, people's lives, and properties.

Methods

Research design and study location

The study adopts a descriptive research design. As noted by Creswell and Clark, the combination of a descriptive cross-sectional research design is necessary when the researcher seeks to collect information, summarize, present, and interpret it for clarification purpose⁶. For that reason, this design was chosen since the study sought personal views, opinions, attitudes, and perceptions about megamalls and urban development. The location of the study is Ibadan, Lagos, and Ota in southwest Nigeria. Ibadan, apart from being the capital city of Oyo State, is also the largest urban center by population in Nigeria, following Lagos and Kano, having a population of 3.5 million people, Ibadan is the biggest city by geographical location (Nigeria Demographic Profile, 2018). Lagos represents Nigeria's megacity, with about 20 million populations, and is the commercial nerve center in Nigeria¹⁶. Ota's choice for this study is premised because this is the only area in Ogun State with a Megamall (Ota Palms mall) and the industrial hub of Ogun State.

Nigeria comprises 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The states are divided into six geopolitical zones: The Northeast, Northwest, Northcentral, Southeast, Southwest, and South-south Nigeria. Of all the geopolitical zones, the study focused on the southwestern part of the country due to available resources, and most megamalls are presently cited. The United Nations has reported that between 2018-2050, 35% of Nigerians will be urban dwellers. Hence the need for proper planning and effective use of resources and achieve sustainable cities.

Sampling and research instruments

The non-probability sampling technique was adopted in this study using a purposive sampling method. The sample size for the qualitative study (interview method) is six (6) respondents. A total of (6) mall operators/managers (each from the six selected malls) were purposively selected to elicit information on how the malls operate and how the mall's location has influenced the people's lifestyle. Some of the interview guide questions are; "what are your thoughts on how mall locations shape customers' lifestyle?". Also, questions on their services or products and what makes them different from other retail shops were asked. An interview section was scheduled with each of the respondents, and about 25-30 minutes was spent on each respondent. The researcher interviewed using tape-recorder and writing materials (In cases where the respondents do not agree to be on record). The interview was in the English language, as most of the respondents are learned. The tape-recorded interview was transcribed and analyzed thematically.

Also, for a quantitative survey, a total of two hundred and thirty-five (235) copies of the questionnaire were distributed to elicit responses from the megamalls' customers in the selected malls. This was done conveniently. It is convenient because the researcher stood at the customers' exit point at the mall to distribute copies of the questionnaire to as many customers coming out of the mall and are willing to fill the questionnaire. This helps the researcher ascertain respondents with good knowledge of the mall who can relate their experiences. It is also essential to understand that

customers at the shopping malls are a mobile population, usually in a hurry, and may not have the time to fill out a questionnaire. Hence the need to be more proactive in the approach to the consumers. The breakdown of the questionnaire across the three study areas goes thus: one hundred and thirty (130) copies of the questionnaire was administered across the three selected mall in Ibadan, while a total number of sixty-five (65) copies of the questionnaire was administered in the two selected malls in Lagos with the remaining forty (40) copies of the questionnaire distributed in Ota Palms Mall. The questionnaire has three sections, including the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents. Other sections are centered on consumer's perceptions of the malls and consumer's lifestyles and consumption patterns.

More questionnaire was distributed in Ibadan malls because the researcher had unhindered access and more respondents are willing to be part of the study, unlike in Lagos where there are some restrictions and respondents are challenging to reach. The number was low in Ota Palms because it is the only megamall in Ogun state at the time of the study. Each respondent, across the study locations, filled the questionnaire. The study was conducted in 2019. At the end of the exercise, a total of two hundred and sixteen (216) copies of the questionnaire was duly filled and retrieved. This represents a ninety-two percent (92%) response rate. The quantitative data were analyzed using frequency distribution tables and percentages of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21.

Study population

The population for the study is mall managers and mall customers. The study was conducted in some purposively selected megamalls in Ibadan, Lagos, and the Ota metropolis. Below is the list of selected malls for the study in each city;

- Ventura Malls in Samonda Ibadan
- Cocoa Mall in Dugbe Ibadan
- The Jericho Mall in Jericho Ibadan
- Palms Mall in Ota Ogun State
- Ikeja City Mall (ICM) in Ikeja, Lagos
- Maryland Mall in Maryland Lagos

These areas were purposively selected because they are commercial areas that attract numerous

customers in those cities. For instance, Ibadan’s choice was because it accounts for more than 60% of urban dwellers’ concentration in Nigeria. However, there was no accurate information on the number of malls existing in each study location except in Ogun state, which only one in Ota

Results

Demographic data analysis

Table I above shows the demographic distribution of respondents. Based on age, 83 of the respondents, representing 38.4%, fall between 15-24, while 101 of the respondents, representing 46.8%, are within 25-34 age intervals with the highest frequency. This shows that 85.2% of shopping mall customers are youths, which confirms that the youths are the primary mall users because they want to enjoy the moment’s glitz and glamour. This fact was also reiterated by one of the mall operators in Ibadan that was interviewed. Below is his thought when asked on:

What are your thoughts on how the location of this mall’s services shapes the lifestyle of her consumer or members of this host community?

One of the respondents has this to say:

Actually, I will say that this mall is well located, looking at the fact that it is in between two higher institutions. Since this is an entertainment mall, it serves the youth population of these higher institutions. The youth are for entertainment, and this mall serves its purpose. The strategic location has also helped the mall to stand above other malls in this city (Ibadan/Mall operator/2019)

The remaining 32 of the respondents, representing only 14.8%, are above age 35, representing the older generation. On gender, 120 respondents, representing 55.6%, are male, while the remaining 96 of the respondents, representing 44.4%, are female. This implies that the majority of mall customers are male. This notwithstanding, gender differences in mall patronage as women are also active mall users, only that some of them were not willing to be part of the study. Also, most of the people seen at the shopping malls during the study were usually in two (male and female) who are just

Table 1: Respondents’ distribution based on their socio-demographic characteristics

Age	Frequency	Percentage
15-24	83	38.4
25-34	101	46.8
35-44	18	8.3
45-54	8	3.7
55 and above	6	2.8
Total	216	100
Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	120	55.6
Female	96	44.4
Total	216	100
Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage
Primary	3	1.4
Secondary	16	7.4
Tertiary	173	80.1
Others	24	11.1
Total	216	100
Monthly Income	Frequency	Percentage
Less than #20,000	42	19.4
#20,000-40,000	70	32.4
#40,000-60,000	33	15.3
#60,000-#80,000	21	9.7
80,000 and above	50	23.2
Total	216	100
Type of residence	Frequency	Percentage
Single room	51	23.6
Self-contain	45	20.8
Two bedrooms	99	45.8
Three bedrooms	19	8.8
Others (please specify)	2	0.9
Total	216	100

hanging out. On the level of education, 80.1% fell in the category of the tertiary level of education and ranked the highest while, 3 of the respondents, representing 1.4%, only had primary education while 16 of the respondents, representing 7.4% had secondary education, 173 of the respondents, representing 80.1% had tertiary education. In contrast, the remaining 24 respondents, representing 11.1%, possess one professional qualification or the other like ICAN, NIM, and PGDE. This implies that virtually all of the respondents are highly educated and knows the importance of a mall. This also confirms that megamall is a major part of the modernization process with formal education/western education. On monthly income, 42 of the respondents, representing 19.4% earn less than #20,000 per month while 70 of the respondents, representing 32.4% earn between #20,000--#40,000 which serves as the highest frequency while 33 of the respondents, representing 15.3% earns between

#40,000 - #60,000, 21 of the respondents, representing 9.7% earn between #60,000-#80,000. This ranked the least among monthly earners in the study. Only 50 of the respondents, representing 23.2%, earned #80,000 and above. This affirms the reification idea of Georg Lukacs (a neo-Marxist theorist) because the majority of the mall customers earned below #80,000 monthly.

Ordinarily, such people should use the local shops/market for their daily needs, but they still spend their meager income on frivolities at the mall because of the need to 'feel among.' This also reveals the shopaholic and ostentatious lifestyles being exhibited by many city dwellers. Megamalls depict a lifestyle that is endearing to everyone as a desirable place to be²⁰. Hence, every individual, irrespective of their socio-economic status, want to be part of it. On the type of residence, 51 of the respondents, representing 23.6%, live in a single room apartment, while 45 of the respondents, representing 20.8%, live in a room self-contain. Also, 99 of the respondents, representing 45.8%, live in two bedrooms flat, 19 of the respondents, representing 8.8%, live in a 3-bedroom apartment while only 2 of the respondents, representing 0.9%, lives in other forms of accommodations like bungalow, duplex which are houses mostly built by self. Looking at this result, most of the respondents live in decent accommodation that could translate to their desire to buy goods from the mall. However, most of the respondents are students, and some of them live in hostels, which makes many of them fill their parents' home (residence) in the questionnaire as their residence. This explains why there is a larger percentage of the respondents who live in a two-bedroom and above.

Research Question 1: To what extent has the development and rise of megamalls influenced people's lifestyles?

Table 2 shows the percentage response to the time of respondents' first visits to the mall, 50 of the respondents, representing 23.1%, have only visited the mall in less than a year, while 59 of the respondents representing 27.3% have visited the mall for close to two years. Thirty-seven of the respondents, representing 17.1%, visited the mall for up to three years, while 70 of the respondents,

representing 32.4%, indicated their visitation to the mall for over three years and above, which is the highest while close to three years ranked least (17.1%). By implication, many of the total respondents have been to the malls for a considerable time to tell their experience, which is suitable for this research. It is also indicative of a new lifestyle in one way or the other. This also shows that there has been increasing mall patronage since the inception of the malls. It is important to note that most of the malls in this study were established between 2015 and 2018.

Table 3 shows the percentage response to how often respondents visit the mall. Fifty-three of the respondents, representing 24.5%, frequently visit the mall, while 49 of the respondents, representing 22.7%, visit the mall somewhat often. Also, 42 of the respondents, representing 19.3%, often visit the mall, while 72 of the respondents, representing 33.3%, do not often visit the mall. Out of the total respondents, only 33.3% (72) indicated that they do not visit the mall very often, while 66.6% (144) visits often. This also serves as a pointer to how megamall is reshaping the lifestyle of people who deemed it fit to visit malls.

Table 4 shows the percentage response to the section that interests the respondents. One hundred eight of the respondents, representing 50.0% of the total respondents, indicated that the supermarkets/store interest them with the highest frequency. In contrast, 24 of the respondents, representing 11.1% are interested in the game arcade. Five of the respondents, representing 2.3, enjoy the lounge and bar. Simultaneously, the restaurants attract 28 of the respondents, representing 13.0%, 50 of the respondents representing 23.1 are interested in the movies/cinemas section, and other sections aside, the itemized ones had 0.5%, which is the least. This implies that respondents visit the supermarkets/store more than other areas in the mall. Again, the idea of reification becomes evident here. With a large number of various supermarkets and provisions stores in town, people still find their way to the malls to buy items as petty as toothpaste, bread, and all sorts of other items that one can quickly get in any provision stores, perhaps due to the need to feel among and exhibit the urban lifestyle, people troop to the malls almost every time to get their daily

Table 2: Distribution of respondents showing the respondents first visit the mall

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Less than one year	50	23.1
Close to two years	59	27.3
Close than three years	37	17.1
Three years and above	70	32.4
Total	216	100.0

Table 3: Distribution of respondents on how often respondents visit the mall

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Very often	53	24.5
Somewhat often	49	22.7
Often	42	19.3
Not very often	72	33.3
Total	216	100.0

Table 4: Respondents' distribution based on section that interests them the most in the mall

Variable	Frequency	Percent
The supermarket/stores	108	50.0
The game arcade	24	11.1
Launch and bar	5	2.3
Restaurant	28	13.0
Movies/cinemas	50	23.1
Others	1	.5
Total	216	100.0

Table 5: Distribution of respondents on their experience visiting the mall

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Highly satisfactory	188	87.0
Not too satisfactory	26	12.0
Below satisfaction	2	.9
Total	216	100.0

Table 6: Distribution of respondents' on their rating of the quality of mall services

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Very high quality	37	17.1
High quality	122	56.5
Neither high nor low	56	25.9
Low quality	1	.5
Total	216	100.0

Table 7: Respondents distribution on their perception of how innovative they think this mall is?

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Extremely innovative	45	20.8
Very innovative	100	46.3
Somewhat innovative	54	25.0
Not so innovative	15	6.9
Not all innovative	2	.9
Total	216	100.0

needs. Even though various reasons are being attributed to mall patronage, which ranges from quality products to one-stop destination offers by the mall, other reasons might be responsible for increasing mall patronage by the mall users. The above further buttresses the fact that megamalls have a tremendous impact on people's lifestyles in the city.

The mall experience of the respondents was also accessed. One hundred eighty-eight of the respondents, representing 87.0%, which constitutes the largest percentage, was highly satisfactory, 26 of the respondents, representing 12.0, were not too satisfied with their experience in the mall, while only 2 out of the respondents, representing 0.9% was below satisfaction. This implies that respondents are satisfied with the experience of visiting the mall for their shopping and recreation. This result was also validated by the mall operators'/managers' responses during the interview when asked how they ensure continuous patronage to the mall? The responses are presented below:

We maintain good customer service. Here customers are our priority and we treat them as such (Ibadan/Mall operator/2019).

For participant 1, good customer service was mentioned to be their priority in the mall. This follows the saying that "customers are king." No wonder they have been experiencing massive patronage. For participant two, safeties of customers and good customer relations are their goals. Hence, the continuous patronage of urban dwellers to the mall. His words now presented below:

The primary thing customers want is their safety. For instance, if you go somewhere and hear they kidnap somebody or there is a fight, you may not want to go there again because of insecurity. So, the main thing here is adequate security. You can rest assured that in these premises you are safe. Other services are just the way we render our services to people; we cherish every customer, and we offer promotional activities periodically, especially in our film house. We are also very active on social media to showcase what we have in the mall (Lagos/Mall operator/2019).

Another respondent says:

Good customer relations, the safety of our customer and their properties, and seasonal promotional activities (Ibadan/Mall operator/2019)

Another respondent says:

We make sure we stock quality goods here, keep our environment clean. We have business cards for each of our clients, and we also sponsor TV shows on celebrities and lifestyles (Lagos/Mall operator/2019)

For participant 4, quality product and a clean environment is their strategy to ensure continued patronage to the mall. Participant 5 also express the same opinion.

Firstly, we sell quality, so there is no way the customer will not come again. When people trust your products, they will keep coming. Also, we maintain a conducive and clean environment, the safety of our customers and so on (Ota/Mall operator/2019)

Table 6 shows the percentage response to the quality of delivery of mall services. Thirty-seven of the respondents, representing 17.1%, rated the mall services to be very high quality while 122 of the respondents, representing 56.5%, indicated a high quality, 56 of the respondents, representing 25.9 rates the mall services to be neither high nor low. In contrast, only 1 of the respondents, representing 0.5%, indicated low quality. This is also on the positive side. It shows that the services rendered by the mall are outstanding and of high esteem.

Table 7 shows the percentage of respondents' perceptions of how innovative they think the mall is. Forty-five of the respondents, representing 20.8%, think the mall is exceptionally innovative, while 100 of the respondents, representing 46.3%, indicating very innovative, which has the highest frequencies. In contrast, 54 of the respondents, representing 25.0, think the mall is somewhat innovative. On the other hand, 15 of the respondents, representing 6.9%, think the mall is not innovative, with not all innovative ranked the least with two respondents, representing 0.9%.

Interview item 3: Responses to distinct mall services

The interviewees were also asked to respond to the type of services, opportunities, and benefits mega malls offer that are essentially different from the small shops that are initially patronized. All the participants submit that many things make them different from other small shops, which puts them at an advantage. For instance, one of the respondents' states that;

We have the price advantage that even some of these market women come here to buy goods in bulk and sell at retail prices in their shop. Also, the fact that you can get all that you need in one shop make us preferably and most importantly, we sell Indian raw food, which makes us unique to others. (Ibadan/Mall operator/2019)

Another respondent corroborated the fact that they are different from shops/small roadside stores. In his words;

The mall offers some benefits that cannot be gotten in any other place. Knowing that you are coming to the mall alone is exciting. There are a sightseeing effect, the conducive and serene environment, and safety. Everywhere in the mall is fully air-conditioned. So, coming to the mall exposed you to much comfort. There are a lot of facilities here that are not common outside the mall. In short, coming to the mall gives you a wow experience. (Lagos/Mall operator/2019)

For another respondent in Ibadan;

Well, the ambiance here is breathtaking. When it comes to entertainment no other place can beat us in this town. Our services are unique and classic. More importantly, most of our facilities are imported. So, we offer great entertainment that people cannot get in other places in town except here (Ibadan/Mall operator/2019)

Research Question 2: Do the rise of megamalls in Nigerian cities beneficial to the urban economy?

Interviewees were asked to respond to question on how the respondents think that malls have

contributed to their respective cities' physical, social, and economic development in one way or the other. All the six selected participants for interview across the six shopping malls acknowledged that mall has contributed to the physical, social, and economic development of their respective locations in one way or the other. They all gave positive responses that the mall has contributed in no small measure to the urban economy. Interviewees were probed further by asking how malls affect societal growth and development if they contribute to cities' socio-economic development. One of the respondents said;

Sometimes when schools have a quiz competition and inter-house sports, we sponsor them and donate a gift for such activities. We also pay tax, which I think it is contributing to the socio-economic development of the state. (Ibadan/Mall operator/2019).

Four of the other interviewees also support the above assertions that the mall contributes to the urban economy in their respective locations. Various contributions mentioned include employment opportunities, urban beautification that attract foreigners/tourists to the cities, and payment of taxes to their host state government. Other contributions are their various unique and quality services to the urban dwellers, making life easy and comfortable. One interviewee response is stated below;

Our presence here alone has many benefits for the people. We also engage in specific corporate social responsibility, like donating to schools and hospitals. We engage in street sanitation exercise (Ota/Mall operator/2019)

The above excerpts show the contributions of megamalls to the socio-economic development of urban centers. With various corporate social responsibilities, employment opportunities, tax payments, urban beautification, opportunities for a social gathering in recreational services, and other social engagements. Therefore, megamalls described as a feature of modernization are essential to urban development and human infrastructure for sustainable development. Hence the need to sustained them by providing them an enabling environment to thrive.

Discussion

This study examines the megamalls and lifestyles of urban dwellers in Nigeria using three main cities in southwest Nigeria as study locations. Research question one examined how the development and rise of megamalls affect people's lifestyles. Findings show that megamalls affect people's lifestyles (social), mostly urban dwellers. Regular visit of customers serves as a pointer to how megamall has affected their lifestyle. Respondents (Mall managers/operators) submit that shoppers visit and enjoy various sections of the malls ranging from supermarket/stores, the game arcade, launch and bar, restaurant, movies/cinemas, and others but visits the supermarkets/store more than other areas in the mall. This also implies that respondents are satisfied with the experience of visiting the mall for their shopping and recreation. However, some of the respondents stated that they still patronize local stores in case of some exigencies. This finding is in line with the work of Rousseau and Venter^{23,24} on 'mall shopping preferences and patronage of mature shoppers'. The study reveals significant relationships between various determinants that influence respondents' buying behavior in malls and retail outlets.

About research question two, whether the rise of megamalls in Nigeria is beneficial to the urban economy. All the interviewees gave a positive response, which indicates that megamalls are a feature of urban development. Also interviewed participants claimed that they have been contributing to the socio-economic development of host communities and their environs through regular payment of various taxes, employment opportunities, sponsoring of programs, freebies, communal labor, a good relationship with people, beautification of the environments, and many other corporate social responsibilities. This finding also affirms the modernization theory, guiding this study to be modern to be developed. By embracing megamalls, which is a product of modernization, many contributions are made to the socio-economic development of the urban centers and their population.

Ethical consideration

The ethical guidelines for the research process were followed. All participants were informed of the

purpose of the study and given a consent form. Their willingness to participate was also sought, and the principles of anonymity were ensured. The Shoprite picture on the paper was downloaded online, and no picture was taken at any study location

Conclusion

Conclusively, shopping is a commercial activity that entails both consumptions as well as social dimensions. It is a social practice that reflects people's lifestyles. Megamalls present atmospheres that resemble urban ambiance with social relations in a new structure that embraces modern life components. The essence of megamall is rooted in the various individual's options. Street life is exciting, but people look for different things in megamalls. The urban life wants to be live by people in a well-built, serene, and very secure ambiance. Also, they seek a platform for fun-catching, an arena to exchange business contacts, a place to get all needed items, and lots more. More so, the urbanization of residential locations, increased household income, growing exposure to foreign lifestyles, double earning families, the consciousness of healthy living, consumers increased aspirations, and the convenience of one-stop shopping, are the orienting principles motivating individuals to change their lifestyles as well as their patterns of consumption. Megamalls are global due to their structures that do not reflect any sign of local (cultural) content of a particular place. This made people relate and share a business idea without ruling out funs and shopping at the same place at the same time. Given this study's findings, it could be concluded that there is a leap or change in people's social lives in urban living. Megamalls have increased people's opportunities to exhibit modern lifestyles. It has created a communal life where people come together and behave in certain social conditions and even for various reasons. People devices mean to cut extra spending by shopping for commodities in cheap and affordable outlets. Based on this study's findings, which has demonstrated the importance of megamalls to urban development and human infrastructure for sustainable development. Therefore, it is recommended that private organizations and individuals continue to invest in megamalls. The government should continue to provide an enabling

environment for malls to meet up with the growing yearnings of the urban population and enhance social development. Even though online shopping is becoming trendy, and overtaking shopping in malls in highly developed countries, Nigeria and other developing countries are still at the rudimentary stage of mall patronage. They are not yet ripe for online shopping due to many difficulties and fraudulent acts involve in online shopping. Therefore, it is crucial for policymakers in many developing countries, including Nigeria, to ensure that the megamall establishment is fully developed to experience modern life and urban development.

Limitations of the study

As with any other study, this study has some limitations, which include financial constraints. A study of this nature requires grants to increase its scope and reach broader respondents. The researcher also encounters some difficulties in administering copies of the questionnaire within the mall as the mall operators feel the researcher has come to disrupt their sales. However, despite these limitations, the findings from this study would provide a good reference point when referring to issues on megamalls and lifestyles of urban dwellers in Nigeria.

Acknowledgement

The authors use this opportunity to appreciate the financial support of Covenant University's management through Covenant University Center for Research Innovation, and Discovery (CUCRID) for the payment of the article processing charge of this article.

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