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Impact of visual merchandising elements on apparel buying behaviors among medical professional Jodhpur city

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ABSTARCT

The research is focused to study the elements of visual merchandising and to define which visual merchandising elements makes highest impact the buying behavior among the medical professionals working at Jodhpur city. The questionnaires are made and presented in this article includes the elements of store exterior, location selection, and interior, and which of these elements are most important for medical professionals behavior of making a purchase. The visual merchandising elements are broadly divided into two major categories. The first is, store exterior and the second is store interior. At organized retail sector, visual merchandising elements play a major role in attracting customers and to increase the sales. This research has been carried out at branded apparel stores in different locations of Jodhpur city. The questionnaires' had been given to medical professionals working in hospitals and medical colleges. Profession changes the behavior of a person and changes the pattern of shopping and effects the selection of products. The focus of the paper is to find this pattern and elements which has attracted the medical professional the most.

Keywords: 1Visual Merchandising,2 Consumer buying behavior, 3Visual merchandising elements, 4Store exterior elements,5 Store interior elements,6 Mannequins & props,7 Store Ambience

Introduction

Retailers make all possible efforts to attract buyers and to retain them and look for customer loyalty. There are many strategies which they follow to become successful which includes, location of the store, size, products, services, equipment, theories of visual merchandising. They use and apply all possible conventional and available tools to achieve this strategy. Visual merchandising is one that successful tool. By using theories of visual merchandising, retailers create an attractive sales environment that affects emotions and changes behavior of buyers at the store. These elements induces a shopping experience which lasts long in the memory of customers by increasing the excitement and interest reducing the ability to assess own actions rationally and enhances the possibility of impulse buying. Some category of

customers has more of impulse buying behavior while some has less. Mattila & Wirtz, 2008, has mentioned in his study that shows that the resulted impulse buying behavior ranged between 27 to 60%. This has become an important topic for research.

Bhalla and Anuraag, 2010, have mentioned the positive impact of visual merchandising elements in creating sales in apparel stores. There is need of more research in this area, especially in the apparel retails. Visual merchandising helps retailers to create an environment that makes merchandise look attractive and invites customers (Colborne, 1996). Retailers are required to take visual merchandising seriously, as it is one of the final stage of store setting and which communicates visually to the customers. There are several components of visual merchandising that creates an impact on the store, and here these components are grouped majorly in three sections with seven components: 1) store exterior, including location, marquee, entrances; 2) store interior, including product display, brand selection, use of props, aroma, display fixtures, light and music; 3) store layouts, including aisle width, layouts, power wall, and new arrivals. These elements when used wisely, creatively and effectively educating customers, enables a successful selling process. It is necessary to achieve the correct background for merchandise to be sold, attracting the attention of the customers mixed with right visual merchandising strategies (Swati & Anuraag, 2010).

Visual merchandising along with stimulating positive response from customers also lead to a series of actions from consumers which reflects in the form of shopping behavior based on certain theories of visual merchandising (Law & Wong, 2012). This was the purpose of the research to show how consumers responded to visual merchandising theories applicable in apparel stores.

In addition to stimulating a positive affective response from customers, appropriate visual merchandising strategies can lead to a series of actions from consumers, such as affecting spending behavior and store/merchandise perceptions (Law, Wong, & Yip, 2012). The purpose of this research was to show how consumers responded to visual merchandising and how applying visual merchandising strategies may benefit small apparel stores.

Literature review

Visual merchandising is all about the techniques of product display in a way while applying its theories, that customer is motivated to get inside the store and make a buy. The product is visually communicated to the customer in the context affecting a positive psychological or behavioral outcome, which leads to closing of a sale (Kerfoot, Davies & ward, 2003). Visual merchandising is an art and it is also a science of presenting products in the most visually engaging way, wherein, communication with consumers is initiated using the techniques of images and presentations (Ebster & Garaus, 2011). Visual merchandising, as stated by (Law, Wong & Yip, 2012) is an instrument to convey message about goods to the buyers by use of various visual techniques, styles under various themes. A number of studies has been conducted to study the impact of visual merchandising elements and theories on impulse buying behavior of buyers (Theodoridis & Chatzipanagiotou, 2009; Mohan Shivkumaran & Sharma, 2013; Chang, Yan & Eckman, 2014; Pajuodis, 2020). Levy & Weitz mentioned in their studies, that customer are influenced by store traffic and find it convenient to move when there is smooth customer flow. Other factors which affects customer buying decision are well designed store and layouts, like grid, racetrack, and freeform are certain successful layouts, providing customers optimum space to walk and surf through their likable products (Vrechopoulos, O'Keefe, Doulidis, and Siomkos (2004). Store layout is an important determinant of store image. Grid layout deals with the routine and planned shopping behavior while freeform layout deals with the time which customer are willing to spend in the store while racetrack or boutique layouts allows customer to move free in the store. Customer are most entertained by freeform

layouts and found it useful also. Grid layout provides ease to the customers. A good store layout hence helps increasing footfall and sales.

Factors of visual merchandising, such as store exterior, window displays, store layouts, product display units and methods, store interior design, signs, fixtures, and the concept and themes used for store design and merchandise display helps to build a store in complete and are powerful tools of visual merchandising (Bell and Ternus, 1952; Lea-Greenwood, 1953).

Bashar and Irshad, 2012, conducted a study using Pearson correlation analysis mentioned the impact of form display, window display, promotional sign, and floor merchandise methods on impulse buying behavior on 250 Indian customers. The study revealed that window display and floor merchandise were correlated and had impacted impulse buying behavior, whereas, store display was not correlated. Podoshen & Andrzejewski, 2012, had conducted a study on accumulating material goods and its relation with happiness associated with branded product and unhappiness with risk of changing the brand. The happy consumers are also the loyal customers and tend to stay to buy one brand from one decided store and also that their likable brand is always highlighted in the store (Sheth & Parvatiyar, 1995).

Research problem and objectives

The customers are influenced by shop exteriors and interiors, the visual merchandising theories applied to store exterior and interior and also apply rationality before buying. Impulse buying is another factor which is influenced by store visual merchandising elements used to increase footfall at the store. The percentage of influencers ranges from 27% to 67% of total shopping experience (Mattila and Wirtz, 2008). The problem focused to conduct the survey is to find out shopping pattern and impulse buying behaviour by people of medical professionals working the a particular location with less organized retail sector in apparel section. The City Jodhpur has single branded stores only of certain clothing brands for both the genders. Under the influence of visual merchandising theories, an excitement if build up in customers inducing in them pleasure of shopping and desire to buy (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998).

1. To study the impact of visual merchandising elements of store exterior like marquee, location and entrance, store interior like aroma, display and lights on apparel buying behavior of medical professionals of Jodhpur city.
2. To study the impact created by visual merchandising theories on impulse buying behavior by medical professionals of Jodhpur city.

Research method

The purpose of the research is to find out the visual merchandising elements that creates the high impact of the Apparel buying behavior by the medical professional consumers in Jodhpur city. An empirical study is conducted for the research method and method is descriptive. A quantitative method for data collection-a survey was conducted. The questionnaires were formulated and were distributed in Hospitals and medical educational institutions. The research population was defined by a personnel meeting with medical professionals at Jodhpur working at three major hospitals and number of respondents covered ranged from 100 to 560. This included medical professional of all income brackets from staff to doctors, to teaching professors. The questionnaire was filled by 342 respondents. Survey instruments used for this research were based on close ended questions which were developed by literature review. Questionnaire

carried three sections. First section had questions related to store exterior elements. Second section had questions based on store interior elements. Third section had questions based on props. All the questions in each section were to analyze the impact of visual merchandising elements on medical professional customer buying behavior. Respondents' responses were collected on 5 point Likert scale. The data was processed using the software Statistical packages for Social Sciences (SPSS). Tools used for research are Reliability test, Factor Analysis and Multiple Regression.

Sampling

The sample collection method was stratified and random selection of respondents from the complete population. Out of total 342 respondents 65% were female and 35% were male respondents who made purchase at major shopping stores of the city located at prime locations. In majority of respondents 72% belonged to an age group of 20 to 35 years, 17% belonged to an age group of 40 to 55 years, and 11% belonged to an age group of 35 to 40 years. Majority of respondent belonged to an average monthly income. 43% of the respondents were having a monthly income bracket of Rs. 35000 to 50,000, whereas, 25% of respondents were having a monthly income higher than average. Shopping behavior studied was varied in both the genders. Mostly females have shown a varied pattern of shopping depending upon professional position and age. Middle aged women shopped once in two months whereas, young age women made apparel purchases on irregular pattern suffered by their moods. There was no specific pattern of shopping was studied in young medical professionals. Women on high medical positions made purchase once in one to three months but only from branded stores. The similar pattern was observed in men shopping habits. Young medical professional made purchase once in one to two months whereas, senior medical professional made purchases once in one to six months

Questionnaires sample

The questionnaire was framed based on division of visual merchandising elements in three sections. The respondents were selected on the basis of age bracket 20 to 35, 35 to 40, 40 to 60 belonging to all income groups and working at all levels in medical profession. The sample is as attached below;

Dear Sir/ma'am, I Dr. Neelam Agrawal is conducting a survey to find out the impact of visual merchandising elements at store apparel store presentation located at Jodhpur city on influencing the buying habits, impulse buying and brand influence while making a purchase in apparel retails. Therefore, seeking your support by filling the questionnaire by putting a check mark against the box, which appeals and relates to you most. I assure this data will not be shared elsewhere and will be used only for this survey. Please check V mark against the box of age for the age group you belongs to.						
Age : 20-35	Age: 40-60				Age: 35-40 Above	
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
SECTION A						
Do you select the location of shop						
Do you consider the comfortable entrance and outside store displays						
Do you consider discount offers displayed outside						
SECTION B						
Do you consider the store aroma and music						
Do you consider the store lights						
Do you consider product display methods						
Do you consider the product brands						
Do you consider the store presentation and guidelines for product displays						
SECTION C						
Do you consider the store use of props like mannequins						
Do you consider the store window display change frequency and methods						
Do you consider the other than product display props						

[Result and discussions](#)

Reliability calculation

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.677	7

Inference: This was calculated to find the reliability of questions used to note the responses from respondents. The value .677 is quite a satisfactory reliability.

KMO and Bartlett's test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.501
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1616.058
	df	267
	Significance level	.000

[Inference](#)

It is feasible to run factor analysis as the value of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy is larger than the expected value of 0.5. The significance level is .000.

Total Variance Calculated

Component	Initial Eigen Values			Extraction sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	4.353	18.389	18.389	4.55	18.389	18.389	2.676	11.218	11.218
2	2.555	12.952	30.341	1.968	10.932	30.141	2.555	10.171	22.308
3	2.403	11.248	40.589	1.980	9.248	40.589	2.434	9.092	32.029
4	2.063	10.011	49.600	2.199	9.011	49.589	2.343	9.562	41.091
5	1.501	7.506	56.106	2.098	5.506	56.106	2.232	8.126	49.091
6	1.432	5.133	62.239	1.359	5.133	62.239	1.121	7.828	57.663
7				1.2	5.663	67.803	1.747	6.464	71.616

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	1.309	5.563	67.903	59					
8	1.074	5.207	73.209	1.1 74	5.037	73.119	1.593	5.632	81.616
9	1.051	3.798	70.007	1.0 51	3.748	78.001	1.782	6.210	78.801
10	.629	2.454	81.461						
11	.531	2.046	84.508						
12	.552	1.716	87.224						
13	.515	1.102	89.326						
14	.449	1.929	91.155						
15	.337	1.545	92.600						
16	.306	1.259	93.958						
17	.237	1.172	95.030						
18	.211	.639	95.869						
19	.130	.690	96.659						
20	.104	.827	97.385						
21	.142	.508	97.993						
22	.127	.407	98.439						
23	.070	.291	99.731						
24	.065	.269	100.000						

Extraction method used was principal component Analysis

Rotated component Matrix

	Component						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I consider store location							.987
I Consider store exterior					.653		
I consider Store Marquee							
I consider Store Entrance	.532						
I consider store Window display							.762
I consider changes in window display					.534		
I consider the discounts and offers displayed outside the store							
I consider the Institutional signs			.542				

I consider the aroma of the store		.912					
I consider the product display methods and innovations			.818				
I consider the use of props used for product displays					.716		
I consider the lights and ambience of the store							.671
I consider the brands of the product and how are they highlighted			.918				
I consider the use of mannequins props for product display	.562						
I consider the traffic flow of the store						.781	
I consider the aisle width				.677			
I consider the power wall		.592					
I consider the bill counter easiness				.888			
I consider the promotional sign					.716		
I consider the store product variations							
I consider the customer engagement activities	.813						
I consider the store layouts							.513

Inference Extraction Method used was Principal Component Analysis; Rotation method was Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

First factor contributed 11 percent of the total variance; the second factor contributed 9 percent of the total variance; the third factor contributed 8.942 percent of the total variance; the fourth factor contributed 9.6 percent of the total variance; the fifth factor contributed 7.929 percent of the total variance; the sixth factor contributed 7.98 percent of the total variance; the seventh factor contributed 6.714 percent of total variance.

Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R.Sqaure	Adjusted R Sqaure	Std Error of the Estimate
I	.717	.515	.574	.20480

Inference

The summary of the model indicated that R-Sqaure for the model is .515. This shows that 51% of the variation has overall satisfaction with the visual merchandising dependent variable.

Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Significance
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	Constant	3.192	.021		170.210	.000
	REGR factor score 1 for analysis 1	.132	.021	.315	5.123	.000
	REGR factor score 2 for analysis 1	.153	.021	.412	6.787	.000
	REGR factor score 3 for analysis 1	.154	.021	.179	3.212	.000
	REGR factor score 4 for analysis 1	.066	.021	.321	4.184	.000
	REGR factor score 5 for analysis 1	.121	.021	.091	1.373	.000
	REGR factor score 6 for analysis 1	.031	.021	.321	6.474	.167
	REGR factor score 7 for analysis 1	.161	.021	.081	1.369	.000

Inference

From the above 7 components it was found that all the components statistically significant. The standardized coefficient beta column reveals, Factor score 1(.315) which is significant (.000), factor score 2 (.412), which is significant (.000), factor score 3(.179) which is significant (.000), factor score 4 (.321) which is significant (.000), factor score 5(.091) which is significant (.000), factor score 6 (.321) which is significant (.167), factor score 7(.081) which is significant (.000).

Findings and Conclusion

The variables were studied in 7 groups.

In Factor Component 1, customer does take care and are influenced by the store location, exterior and marquee before selecting the store to make a purchase. Store exterior, name displayed properly and an attractive entrance attracts the customer.

In Factor Component 2, Customer is attracted towards variety and creativeness of store entrance and window displays innovation and its frequency of changes with seasons and new arrivals. Customers are entertained and consider this factor while selecting a store before making a purchase.

In factor Component 3, Customer is attracted towards the offers and discounts displayed outside the store, aroma of the store and institutional signs, which are self-communicative and enhances store ambience.

In factor Components 4, Customer do pay attention to the product display methods and innovations in the use of props for product displays, lights on the special product, overall light of the store and the complete ambience of the store. Customer convert to loyal customer on getting these factors well communicated in the store.

In factor components 5, customers consider the branded products in the store, use of mannequins for display of certain merchandise, and clear traffic flow of the store. These factors bind the customers to the store.

In factor components 6, customers consider the width of aisle which allows easy movement of customer in the store, the displays done on the power wall, easiness at the billing counter and promotional signs used inside the store.

In factor components 7, customers consider the variations in the products and its display methods, the activities planned by the store to engage customers, and store layouts. These are the factors which helps customer to identify their merchandise and its location, and reach them.

The study was conducted to test the visual merchandising theories and the factors which impact the store image to the customer, its buying behavior, increase the footfall and closes to a sale. The main objective of the study was to identify the factors of visual merchandising played an important role by a specific group of customers of medical profession had impacted and attracted more while they decided to make a buy. As a result of the study, the factors which were majorly noticed by the medical professions of Jodhpur city were the store locations, exterior and entrances to a certain extent. The study also resulted to know the buying behavior of medical professionals and that their focus while buying was first on store location, aroma and availability of branded products, second their focus was on to see product display methods used, easiness at the billing, window displays, use of props in the store, easy traffic flow, and the promotional signs; third they considered overall ambience of the store, store exterior to some extent, aisle width, store layouts and frequent changes in the window displays.

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