



IMPACT OF VISUAL MERCHANDISING DISPLAYS ON WOMEN IMPULSE BUYING BEHAVIOUR

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ABSTRACT

Research on impulse buying has gained abundant importance in the present business conditions due to the enormous business that it generates. Display as an element in brick and mortar stores play a crucial role in determining the impulse buying behavior. Store exterior display and In-store display techniques can be used to enhance the store environment this in turn influences consumer impulse purchase decisions. The present study has made an effort to identify the various visual display techniques and the order by which they influence women impulse decision making. Also the study aims to find out the association between impulsive buying behavior of women and display. Through Convenience sampling method the data was collected using structured Questionnaires, distributed to 150 respondents. Five hypotheses on window display, exterior signage, product display, form/mannequin display and store interior signage, was tested for correlation and regression analysis by using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) software.

KEYWORDS: Form Display, Impulse Buying Behaviour, Product Display, Signage, Window Display.

1. INTRODUCTION

Display is one of the important elements of visual merchandising that most retailers use as one of the strategies and techniques to attract, retain, sustain and persuade customer to make

impulse purchases. The primary purpose of displays is to present and to promote the sales. It is rightly said “the store is for display and display makes a store”. Studies have identified displays as “The demonstration and arrangement of the entire store and its products in such a manner that will entice prospective customers and encourage them to make shopping”. An interesting finding claimed that nearly 70 per cent of all purchasing decisions are made at the point of purchase (Heilman et al., 2002). Variety of strategies and techniques of display become more widely implemented and could be found in a variety of retail environments from local mercantile shops to modern spaces of commercial persuasion including boutique, malls, showrooms and retailers or wholesalers. (Mathew, 2008:48) Visual merchandising displays are viewed as visual features that desire and liking in a store and is known as feature areas. Essentially the displays are used to beautify and embellish a store by adding additional fixtures, props, posters’ materials, colour, frills and objects to a store. (Bhalla & Anuraag, 2010: 21) Visual merchandising displays use creative techniques in order to save the sales person's and the shopper's time by making shopping easy. The visual merchandising display practice is often connoted to as the "silent salesperson" by providing the consumers with information through visual mediums as well as by suggestive selling. This seeks scholars to engage in redefining the display design as an essential component of Visual merchandising.

Display as a component of visual merchandising is categorized into two types: Exterior display and interior display. The goal of these techniques is to fascinate the attention of consumers, seduce them into the store, to keep them in the store as long as possible, and sway purchasing decisions. Exterior displays are used as an initial attraction to bring customers into a store and are also used as a marketing tool to communicate. An eye-catching, innovative window display can promote the brand image. Windows can give consumers and by-passers understanding as to what goods are sold in store; they are also an effective method of endorsing fashion trends and give useful information to the target customers. Two important techniques of exterior display namely window display and exterior signage is considered in the study.

1.1. Window Display: It refers to the decorated display of a stores window to attract customers to the products. Usually, the term refers to larger windows in a shop arcade displaying items for sale or otherwise designed to attract customers to the store. A prospective customer when enters a mall is most attracted by the creative, elegant or stylish window displays. It often includes the

merchandise displayed, props, theme display, fully dressed mannequins as well as accessories on plinths or hanging from special display equipment.

1.2. Exterior Signage: Is used to identify a store, name various departments, and announce sales and sale merchandise, signage is the design or use of signs and symbols to communicate information, direction, identification, safety and regulation message to a specific group. It is communicated through banners, billboards, and murals or in digital or electronic displays forms. The present study has considered only the informational signage outside the store like the signage that displays promotional, seasonal offers, festive offers etc.

1.3. Interior Displays or In-Store Display

It refers to the technique used to capture the attention of the customer inside the store. If these factors are applied successfully to a store, they meet the needs of the consumer and provide a positive purchasing environment. If interior displays are done exceptionally well, they enable customers to make a selection without the assistance of sales personnel. Techniques of in-store display in the present study comprise the Product display, form or Mannequin Display and Store interior signage.

1.4. Product Display

It refers to presentation of a store's products to attract and entice the customers to buying. The products for sale must be visible, easy to access, and there must be a range of merchandise to choose. Display should allow consumers not only to "buy what they see" but should be able to tangibly engage with the physical product. Product display includes shelf display, point of purchase display, and attractive display.

1.5. Form / Mannequin Display

Mannequins are used primarily by retail stores to display their products in-store. They are a tool used to show consumers what their merchandises look like on a person. The mannequins are commonly being styled to match trends as well as to display the latest products available. Visual stimulus can change the thoughts and opinion of consumers as they create a more desirable shopping environment for the consumers.

1.6. Store Interior Signage

Signage is a critical part of interior display and point-of-purchase promotion. The primary purpose of signage is to advertise vendors, colour, quality, and prices and also can explain customer benefits and describe merchandise features. Store signage that communicates a sales message to the customers can make up for lack of sales personnel.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Researchers have proven that Displays are important tools for increasing sales, because attractiveness of displays influences unplanned purchases as most of the customers would not have decided on everything they will be buying when they enter a retail store. . (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998) defined impulse buying as unplanned, sudden buying behaviour, which is often accompanied by feeling of excitement and pleasure and/or a powerful urge to buy. Dittmar et al. (1995) impulsive buying is defined as unplanned buying. Parboteeah (2005) conducted a concept analysis based on Piron, (1991) on impulsive buying and defined that “Impulse buying is a purchase that is unplanned, the result of an exposure to a stimulus, and decided on-the-spot. After the purchase, the customer experiences emotional and/or cognitive reactions”.

Due to intense competition in retailing, marketers apply visual merchandising elements in their practice more and more widely and inventively. Visual simulation and communication have long been deliberated as an important aspect of retailing by academicians and practitioners and alike by McGoldrick, (1990, 2002). Sen, Block, and Chandran (2002) researched the inquiry of whether window displays influence store entry and purchase decisions. Rasa Gudonavičienė et al. (2015) analysed the impact of five visual merchandising elements window displays, in-store design, store layout, promotional signage, and store atmosphere on buyers’ impulse behaviour. Mohamed Shareef Ishar Ali et al. (2016) studied exterior atmospheric factors such as store appearance; landscaping and window display. Valdimar Sigurdsson et al. (2010) studied the effects of a Point-of-Purchase Display. Sarmistha Sarma (2014) explored the relationship between the dependent (Impulse Buying) and the independent variables (store Layout, display of products, shelf position of products and promotional signage). Kedar Bhatt et al. (2014) studied the role of visual merchandising techniques like product shelf position; product display & promotional signage significantly influences impulse buying behavior. Raja Irfan Sabir (2015) examined the impact of promotional approach, attractive display of product, in store environment, price reduction on impulse buying behavior. In few researches authors have chosen

different buyer segments, they analysed the impact of visual merchandising on impulse buying in the youth or female segments.

Previous studies infer that in terms of visual display, the window display, in-store form or mannequin display, and promotional signage, are very essential dimension to be studied in visual merchandising. If these elements of visual merchandising are appropriately and trendily developed, the stores' sales might rise significantly. Exterior display will increase the walk-ins of the store. Once shoppers enter the store; the next encounter of the shopper in the store happens only if the experience with the store is impressive. In-store form/mannequin display, product display and promotional signage play a vital role in making their experience memorable. Therefore, this study aims at revealing what form of display as an element of visual merchandising make the highest positive impact on impulse buying for consumers in Bangalore when shopping in a footwear stores.

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

As quoted anonymously "You never get a second chance to make a first impression". Innovative and tactical journey within the business of fashion visual merchandising begins by reconnoitering in depth one of the most potential areas of design –communication. The present study aims to find out the impact of visual merchandising techniques namely exterior display and interior display on women impulse buying behavior towards purchase of footwear. Store exterior includes window display, Seasonal displays, Related Merchandise Display, Promotional and institutional signage and Store interior display comprises of Product display, point of purchases displays, assortment display, and information or direction signage are considered as independent variables and impulse buying is considered as a dependent variable.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study is conducted with the following objectives:

1. To study the impact of various store exterior and store interior display techniques towards women impulse buying behaviour.
2. To find the most effective display technique that influences the women' impulse buying behaviour.

5. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

Based on the above mentioned objectives, the below mentioned Hypothesis is framed investigate relationships

H1: Window display has a significant influence on women impulse buying behavior.

H2: Exterior store signage has a significant influence on women impulse buying behavior.

H3: Product display has a significant influence on women impulse buying.

H4: Form/Mannequin Display has a significant influence on women impulse buying behavior

H5: Store interior signage has a significant influence on women impulse buying behavior.

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is an exploratory research undertaken through survey method. A convenient sampling technique is used to collect data from 150 respondents. The study intended to focus on the impact of various forms of display as a visual merchandising technique in fascinating women to grab their attention towards the products thus leading impulse buying. The data is collected by intercepting shoppers who buy footwear in specialized stores at shopping malls and requesting them to complete a self-administered questionnaire consisting of two parts. The first part consists of demographic data like age, disposable income, marital status, and Occupation. The second part of the questionnaire consists of questions measuring the impact of Store display both exterior and interior on impulse buying behavior of women. 35 questions were developed based on the previous study reviews. The questions mainly addressed on the window display, store exterior signage, Product display, form or Mannequin Display and Store interior signage and impulse buying. A five point LIKERT scale, ranging from never=1 to frequently=5 was used to measure each variable. The following table shows the demographic profile of the respondents

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Particulars	Frequency	Percent
Age		
18-22	57	38.0
23-27	38	25.5
27-32	32	21.3
Above 32	23	15.2
Disposable Income		
Less than 10000	39	26
10001-20000	45	30
20001-30000	36	24
Above 30000	30	20
Marital Status		
Married	60	40
Unmarried	90	60
Occupation		
Student	60	40
Employed	42	28
Unemployed	48	32

From the demographic profiles of the respondents, it is understood that the maximum respondents are in the age group of 18 to 22 years (38%), majority of the respondents' disposal income is in the category of 10000-20000. Most of respondents are unmarried i.e., 60% and coming to the occupation status of the respondents most of them are students.

7. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After collecting and scrutinizing the questionnaires, the data of completed questionnaires were coded and then entered into SPSS tool for analysis. The reliability of the scale is assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. This is applied to calculate the internal coordination of the measurement instruments. The overall Cronbach's alpha is 0.817, which is more than the standard value 0.7.

Table 2: Correlation of Display as an element of VM with Impulse Buying

Variables	Coefficients (r)	Significance(p)	Result
Window display	.152	.132	Non-Significant
Exterior Signage	.328	.001**	Significant
Product display	.284	.004**	Significant
Form/mannequin display	.342	.001**	Significant
Store interior Signage	.290	.003**	Significant

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

The above table shows the correlation between the (independent variable) window display, Exterior signage, Product display, form or Mannequin display, In-store signage and (dependent variable) impulse buying behaviour. The result of Pearson's correlation result revealed that of the five display techniques Product display, form/mannequin display, and store interior signage have a high relationship with impulse buying behavior of women. Window display does not show any significant relationship on impulse buying. The results shows that form/Mannequin display has the highest positive relationship with Impulse buying behaviour with the score of .342(34.2%) Pearson Correlation Coefficient followed by exterior signage, instore signage and product display .328, .290, and .284 respectively. This shows that independent and dependent variables are statistically significant.

The study used the Regression analysis technique to measure the relationship between the display techniques and impulse buying behavior of women. The regression results are shown among the five identified techniques, four techniques namely the exterior signage, Product display, form/ Mannequin Display and store interior signage showed a significant influence on the customer's impulse buying decision. The results are shown in the table below:

Table 3: Regression Results

Hypothesis	Independent variable	β	Std. Error	T	Sig(p)	Result
H1	Window display	-.166	.135	-1.194	.826	Rejected
H2	Exterior signage	.237	.1421	.678	.012	Accepted
H3	Product Display	.043	.137	.314	.032	Accepted
H4	form/mannequin display	.232	.1521	.524	.018	Accepted
H5	store interior Signage	.081	.089	.908	.030	Accepted

The impact level of the visual merchandising displays is discussed below:

7.1. Impact of Window Display on Women Impulse Buying Behavior

The regression results of this research showed that there is no major association at 5% significance level between window display and impulse buying behavior as the p-value is greater than 0.05. Hence H1 is rejected and concludes that there is no significant relationship between these variables. This study did not restate the results by Sonali Banerjee (2012); Rusa Gudonaviciene et al.(2015) suggested the highest positive impact on impulse buying is made by windows displays, but is consistent with the result of Bashar and Ahmed (2012)..

7.2. Impact of Exterior Signage on Women Impulse Buying Behavior

As shown in table 3 Exterior signage has a significance value (p) 0.012 which is less than 0.05. It denotes that the exterior signage that displays promotional, seasonal offers, theme displays etc has a significant relationship with the impulse buying behavior. Having higher beta value i.e., 0.237, this display as an element of visual merchandising is ranked as first among the other techniques. Hence H2 is accepted.

7.3. Impact of Product display on women Impulse Buying Behavior

The result in the regression table shows that Product display has the p value.032; it is less than 0.05 it means that attractive product display has a significant relationship with women impulse buying behavior. H3 is accepted. The beta value is .043 and is ranked as the last among the display forms. . Kedar Bhatt et al. (2014); Raja Irfan Sabir (2015) concluded that there is a positive relation between attractive displays of product with impulse buying behavior.

7.4. Impact of In-form/mannequin display on women Impulse Buying Behavior

The outcome of the regression analysis table shows that Instore /mannequin display has a p-value 0.018 which denotes the significant impact on impulse buying behavior of impulse buying at 5% significant level. Hence, the result of this research shows that the Instore /mannequin display has strong influences with the consumers' impulse purchase. Hence H3 is accepted. As the beta value .232, this technique is considered as the second important display. This result restated the findings of Sujata et al. (2012) that there is a strong relationship between impulse buying and forum display.

7.5. Impact of In-store signage on women Impulse Buying Behavior

According to the results of the shows that the In-store signage scored the p-value 0.030 which denotes that it has a significant relationship with impulse buying behavior as the $p < 0.05$. Hence the H5 is accepted. Whereas Rasa Gudonavičienė et al. (2015) reported that Promotional signage did not show any significant relationship on customers' impulse buying behavior. Sarmistha Sarma (2014); Kedar Bhatt et al. (2014); Raja Irfan Sabir (2015) opined that promotional signage has a significant influence on impulse buying behavior. Further the beta value is .081 and is ranked as fourth element of Visual merchandising that has an impact on women impulse buying.

8. CONCLUSION

There are a horde of factors affecting shopper propensity for impulse buying. Display is one such factor that promotes the interest of customers in merchandise or services and encourages purchasing. The present study confirmed that women' impulse buying behavior is highly influenced most by the exterior signage among the five other display elements of visual merchandising followed by the form/mannequin display, in-store signage and product display. Exterior signage provides useful information to the target audience like fashion trends and communicates clearance sale, promotion offers, festive offers etc., and this research suggests that a number of factors affect shopper inclination for impulse buying, with non-economic factors like product and in-store related influences having a significant impact. Hence, retail managers should concentrate on strategies to Display their products in such a manner that it converts passersby into customers and motivates their purchase decision thus increasing their sales. The study partly coincides with the results of Shah Minal (2012) that elements of visual merchandising window display, mannequin display, floor merchandising and promotional signage has strong relationship with impulse buying behavior of consumers.

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