CUSTOMERS' IMPULSE BUYING BEHAVIOR AND THE IMPACT OF VISUAL MERCHANDISING IN STAR BAZAAR'S CHAIN STORES IN PUNE CITY

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ABSTRACT
Impulse buying is when a purchase is made without any prior planning. Both internal and external factors, including visual merchandising, demographics, and socioeconomic background of the consumers, have an association with impulsive buying. The examination of the literature indicates that visual merchandising has long been considered a marketing tactic in the retail industry and that it significantly influences impulsive purchase behavior. So, with reference to the organized retail sector, the current paper attempted to analyze the key drivers of visual merchandising and the association of these determinants with the impulse buying behavior. Consumers of Star Bazaar have used it as a case study and conducted an extensive study utilizing a representative sample of these customers to determine the influence of their purchasing behavior when shopping at Star Bazaar. The researchers have identified four main factors of visual marketing in order to achieve the specified objectives. They are the eye-catching product display, the atmosphere within the store, and the current day's deals. The descriptive character of the research contributed to the conceptual development of clearly defined priorities and the dissemination of sufficient data that the researcher believes will aid in retailers' decision-making. 520 respondents were utilized to gather information structured questionnaires and evaluate the association of visual merchandising with the impulse buying behavior of Star Bazaar customers. The study employed a convenient sampling method, and attention was taken to ensure that the respondents were as diverse as possible. Cranach's coefficient, which was produced to assess the dependability and internal consistency of the replies, was used to measure the validity of the questionnaire. The data was examined with the aid of SPSS software to make drawing conclusions simple. Demographic factors were found to have significantly affected respondents' impulsive purchasing behavior. The main factors that influenced the responders, according to the regression results, were the attractive product display, the atmosphere within the store, and the day's special offers.
Keywords: Retailing, Visual merchandising, organized retail, impulse buying, consumer behavior, retail

Introduction

Today, marketing management plays an important role in the improvement of business of an organization. An easy, effective, and updated marketing system improves the organization's sales. An Increased sale also increases revenue of the business unit. Marketing includes all activities related to the delivery of goods from the place of production to the final consumer.

Marketing management is not a new idea from this century; rather, it dates to the beginning of time. At first, trade was merely a barter system. During this time, local markets were developed. That market received goods from nearby retailers. People considered a common medium of exchange because of the difficulties encountered in the exchange system at the time of shopping. They added a variety of metals: The phase of trade, which is the essence of marketing, was accelerated by the appearance of money. The marketing system became more and more complicated after the Industrial Revolution.

The market system underwent revolutionary shifts in production volume, technique, and methods during the industrial revolution. Mass consumption led to mass production the commodities, which in turn led to a newer marketing strategy to enhance revenue. Marketing is the channel through which an organization can adapt its capabilities to meet the needs of its customers during shopping. Beginning with customer needs and ending with customer satisfaction is modern marketing management.

Customers want to shop in a comfortable shopping environment. The physical environment of the store is referred to as the shopping atmosphere or environment. The atmosphere, lighting, music, signage, store layout, and many other aspects of the shopping environment have a significant impact on customers shopping. While some of these components have an impact on consumer behavior, the majority of them affect buyers' emotions, thinking, and physiological state. These elements have the potential to elicit a more immediate response from customers without compromising their mental or physical well-being.

Customers' perceptions of the shopping environment are a major factor in their decision to spend more time and money in a store than they had anticipated before shopping. Focusing on the idea of visual merchandising is the most effective strategy for achieving this goal to enhance revenue. Visual merchandising is the placement of a product or brand in a store and at the point of sale to communicate visually in the design of the environment. It is widely acknowledged as a successful visual based merchandising strategy for increasing sales.

Literature Review
Dash, (1974), discovered that the amount of pre-purchase brand knowledge affected the type of store chosen in a study of store choice behavior among consumers of audio equipment. Higher pre-purchase knowledge shoppers tended to frequent specialist stores, while lower pre-purchase information shoppers tended to frequent department stores. Customers' adoption of a risk-reduction strategy with reference to their upcoming purchase is primarily to blame for this.

Wulf (1999) asserts that the task's nature helps distinguish between various store options. They examined how customers choose which stores to use for a range of tasks that respondents listed, such as making urgent purchases, purchasing large quantities, tackling difficult tasks, making routine purchases, and gathering ideas. The salience ratings of the chosen stores varied depending on the task the shopper wanted to complete. Furthermore, it has been found that the context influences how salient the retailers are.

Tausef (2011) noted impulsive consumer purchases of FMCG goods. The independent variables are classifications of gender, age, educational attainment, and income, and the dependent variable is FMCG impulse purchasing behavior. He selected a sample of 160 respondents from Jodhpur, an Indian city. He employed factor analysis as a statistical technique (SPSS version 16). His research found that customers of different age's groups, genders, and levels of education had significantly different impulse buying patterns and significantly different impulse buying behaviors.

Randhawa & Saluja (2017) found visual merchandising is what a customer sees both inside and outside the business that makes them like it and gets them to pay attention, be interested, want to do something, and act quickly.

McGoldrick, (1990) & Marsh, (1999) found Because of the intense competition in the market, retailers are unable to distinguish their brands based on the goods they sell or the customers they serve. Color, lighting, and visual merchandising have always been considered to have a direct impact on consumer purchasing decisions. The emphasis shifts from in-store product displays to flat-screen displays to sensory elements that appeal to the customer's senses, such as video and graphics, music, smells, lighting, and flooring, to capture the brand's personality and create a unique shopping environment.

Mahmood and Ahmadinejad (2011) investigated how store environment stimuli and contextual factors contribute to impulsive purchasing. He used the store environment, promotions, product viewing, and the availability of money as the independent variables, with impulse purchases as the dependent variable. He used the coefficient of variance as a statistical tool on a sample of his 329 clients who went to Iranian malls. His research shows a strong correlation between visual merchandising and store environment.

Kenhove (1999) found situational factors, such as time restraints and whether or not to purchase as gifts rather than for oneself, may influence the retailer of choice and the salience of a feature. It is also advised that each visit should focus on context influence. As a result, depending on the circumstances, some customers may change their choice. The competitive environment, the individual's situational environment, and the shopping occasion are three categories into which these situational factors can be divided.

With reference to the retail chain stores of Star Bazaar in Pune, the current study paper's objective is to investigate how visual merchandising techniques influence customers' impulsive purchasing decisions. As a result, a review of the pertinent literature provides information about the knowledge gap in the chosen field of study:

 (i) The majority of research on the topic at hand, visual merchandising techniques and their influence on impulsive purchasing, has focused on western and developed nations, paying little attention to emerging markets like the organized retail chains in India.

 (ii) As a developing economy, India exhibits a number of cultural variations, which have a big impact on consumers' impulsive purchasing habits. Therefore, the goal of the current study is to comprehend how demographic factors affect the selected variables. In addition, this study has proposed a number of hypotheses to investigate the connections between common issues with visual merchandising and impulsive buying.

Objectives Of The Study
The purpose of this exploratory study is to provide an in-depth, organized understanding of consumers' impulsive buying behavior with reference to Star Bazaar retail chain stores in Pune city and with a special focus on visual merchandising.

The current study's timing is crucial because organized retailing in India is increasing rapidly and a major source of revenue for many players in the retail environment and is at a point where a comprehensive understanding of these markets would encourage additional dominant players to provide organized retailing with better service.
The objectives of the study, which the researcher hopes to achieve through investigation and comprehension, are as follows:

1. To examine how visual merchandising affects customers' impulsive purchases
2. To investigate the effects of appealing product displays, store atmosphere, and daily deals on customers' impulse behavior.

Hypothesis Of The Study
H_1- Attractive product displays influence customers who make impulsive purchases.

H_2: Ambiance in a store can have an impact on impulsive buyers.

H_3- Daily offers have an impact on consumers who make impulsive purchases.

Research Methodology
The descriptive study, which is restricted to Star Bazaar retail chains in Pune City, aims to investigate the impact of visual merchandising on customers' impulsive purchasing decisions. The degree to which certain visual merchandising factors, Attractive productive display, Ambiance inside the store, and Offers for the Day are associated with impulse buying is also determined in this study. The study's intended respondents are regular Pune-based customers of the Star Bazaar department store chain.

Respondents were asked to provide first-hand information through a structured questionnaire. An interview schedule was created so that the respondents could provide information. The factors chosen for the study's objectives were the focus of each section of the questionnaire. The survey's method of sampling was convenience sampling. The researchers have selected a sample size of 520 respondents for the purposes of the study. Respondents were asked to rate the significance of five visual merchandising factors on a Likert scale, with 1 representing strong disagreement and 5 representing strong agreement.

To make sure there are no invalid or missing responses, the information gathered from the respondents was cleaned. Next, tests for construct validity and the KMO and Bartlett's tests, test of communalities, factor analysis, and test of factor structure were run.

Reliability Statistics
Five to seven items were used to measure each variable that was chosen for the purposes of the study. The Cronbach's coefficient (α) was calculated to determine the questionnaire's validity and used to evaluate the responses' reliability and internal consistency. A Cronbach's coefficient of greater than 0.7 is considered sufficient for this kind of study. The reported factors, including the dependent variable, had values of 0.836, 0.816, 0.794, and 0.769 in this study. It suggests that the responses to the questionnaire are highly internal consistent.

Data Analysis
The purpose of the researcher's creation of Table 1 was to display the survey respondents' demographic profile.

Variables	Categories	No of Respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	332	63.8
	Female	188	36.2

Age	Below 25	48	9.23
	26-35	64	12.30
	36-45	188	36.15
	46-55	160	30.76
	56 and above	60	11.54
Marital Status	Married	396	76.15
	Unmarried	124	23.85
Qualification	Matriculation	40	7.69
	Diploma	8	0.02
	College but not graduate	68	13.07
	Graduation	340	65.38
	Post Graduate	64	12.31
Occupation	Self employed	186	35.76
	Salaried	100	19.2
	Professionals	64	12.3
	Home makers	154	29.6
	Students	16	3.1
Monthly household income	Below 50000	180	34.6
	50000-75000	100	19.2
	75000-100000	100	19.2
	Above 100000	140	26.9

Table 1- Showing The Respondents' Demographics

As can be seen from the information presented above, Table No. 1 displays the demographic profile of the survey respondents; male make up 63.8 percent of the survey participants, while women female up 36.2%.
The researcher can observe that 36.15 percent of respondents are between the ages of 36 and 45, 30.76 percent are between the ages of 46 and 55, 12.30 percent are between the ages of 26 and 35, 11.54 percent are between the ages of 56 and up, and 9.23 percent are under the age of 25.

In the survey, respondents were divided into two groups: married respondents (76.15%) and unmarried respondents (23.85%).

Five strata have been developed to accommodate the complete educational background of the customer respondent. According to the survey, 7.69 percent of respondents have completed their matriculation, 12.31 percent have postgraduate certificates, 13.07 percent have attended college but do not have a degree, and 65.38 percent have degrees.

Based on their occupational patterns, the survey respondents' occupational profiles can be seen in the above Table 1. They were divided into five strata by the researcher. According to the table, 35.76 percent of respondents to the survey are self-employed, followed by 29.6 percent who identify as homemakers, 19.2 percent who identify as salaried, 12.3 percent who identify as professionals, and 3.1 percent who identify as students.

Above Table 1 shows that 34.6% of respondents fall into the monthly household income class of less than Rs.50000, 26.7 percent fall into the annual household income class of more than Rs.10000, and 19.2% fall into the monthly household income class of between Rs. 50,001-Rs.75, 000   and Rs. 75001- Rs. 100,000 in each case.

Hypothesis Testing
The testing of the hypothesis between the independent variable(s) and dependent variable(s) is covered in the following section. The researcher has developed the following hypothesis and used Pearson Correlation analysis to either prove or disprove it.

Hypothesis (I)
H_1- Attractive product displays influence customers who make impulsive purchases.

H_0- There is no statistically significant connection between appealing product presentation and impulsive purchasing behavior of customers.

Hypothesis (Ii)
H$_2$: Ambiance In A Store Can Have An Impact On Impulsive Buyers.

H$_0$-There Is No Correlation At All.

Hypothesis (Iii)
H$_3$- Daily offers have an impact on consumers who make impulsive purchases.

H0- There is no statistically significant correlation between daily offers and impulsive purchasing patterns of customers.

Correlations		Attractive Product Display	Ambiance Inside the Store	Impulse buying	Offers for the day
Attractive Product Display	Pearson Correlation	1	-.401**	.321**	.290**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.001
	N	520	520	520	520
Ambiance Inside the Store	Pearson Correlation	-.401**	1	-.198*	-.178*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.028	.048
	N	520	520	520	520
Impulse buying	Pearson Correlation	.321**	-.198*	1	.278**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.028		.002
	N	520	520	520	520
Offers for the day	Pearson Correlation	.290**	-.178*	.278**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.048	.002	
	N	520	520	520	520
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).					
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).					

TABLE-2 SHOWING CORRELATIONS AMONG THE VARIABLES

The significance value (p) of the Pearson correlation is less than .05 (p<.05) for attractive product display, store ambiance, and even daily deals, as can be seen in Table-2 above. This suggests that attractive product displays, store ambiance, and daily specials all have a big impact on impulse buying.

Findings And Conclusion
The purpose of our research was to investigate the relationship between attractive product display, store ambiance, new product arrival, and offers for the day with impulse buying behavior and the impact that visual merchandising has on consumer purchase behavior. Though all the three factors act as independent factors while impacting the impulse buying behavior, It is concluded from the research findings that all these three factors have an impact on the consumer purchase behavior in some form or the other.

This suggests that consumers are most influenced to buy a certain product if they find the display attractive. The ambiance inside the store is also a driving factor to positively influence an individual to buy a product. Offers for the day also influence impulse buying significantly.

Hence, it can firmly conclude that managerial attention should be focused on these five factors to increase impulse purchases. Retailers should make their displays more attractive. This is likely to increase the sales of their product on impulse.

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