
Visual Merchandising: (A Study on Consumer Impulsive Buying Behaviour in Greater Visakhapatnam City)

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ABSTRACT

Purpose – Due to increasing competition and the similarity of merchandise, retailers utilize visual merchandising to differentiate their offerings and improve the desirability of products. It sets the context of the merchandise in an aesthetically pleasing fashion that would convert the window shoppers into prospects and ultimately buyers of the product. Visual Merchandising is the art of displaying merchandise in a manner that is appealing to the eyes of the customer. It allows the retailers to ‘make the market place innovative, exciting and stimulating by creating product-led stories supported by merchandising solutions.

Design/methodology/approach -For the study a sample of 400 respondents were selected from Visakhapatnam city. A structured questionnaire was used, data analysis and interpretation was carried out using SPSS. Convenient sampling technique was used for selecting the respondents. Statistical tools such as chi square, cross tabulation and frequency tables were applied to interpret the data.

Findings – The study provides information as to why visual merchandising should be considered an important component of a strategic marketing plan in support of sales increase and positive store/company image. This study also provides insights to retailers on types of visual merchandising that can influence consumers’ buying behaviors. This paper mainly focuses on knowing the customers insights on visual merchandise and its effect on customers buying decision while shopping. Results do reveal that visual merchandising plays a significant role in influencing customers purchase decision.

Practical implications -The study primarily focuses on identifying the components of visual merchandize influencing customers’ decisions. The study not also helps in assessing the significance of these factors in the context of consumer buying behaviour.

Originality/value – The paper is structured to first provide a literature review to illuminate extant research on the growing role of visual merchandising in influencing customers purchase decision. Important managerial implications and recommendations are also presented.

Keywords: Visual merchandising, consumer purchase behaviour, customer appeal, store layout, lightning and colour

INTRODUCTION

The visual merchandising is an important marketing tool that represents the most direct means of communication, which the customer can see or visualize when shopping. It is the actual selling of merchandise through a visual medium, Visual merchandising is therefore concerned with both how the

product and/or brand is visually communicated to the customer and also whether this message is decoded appropriately in the context affecting a positive psychological or behavioural outcome, ultimately leading to purchase. The purpose of visual merchandising is to educate the customer, to enhance the store/company's image, and to encourage multiple sales. Therefore, each store tries to enhance its image and concept through visual presentations, which appeal to shoppers by encouraging buying which ultimately transforms them into customers by building brand loyalty.

TOOLS OF VISUAL MERCHANDISING

Broadly these comprise of: **Fixtures, Props, Lighting, Signage, Promotional signage, Location signage, Institutional signage, Informational signage etc.**

Today's fierce competition and the similarity of merchandise force each segment of the industry to utilize visual merchandising to improve the desirability of products. It is worthwhile for retailers to understand factors within the retail setting that trigger consumers' impulsive reactions. Retailers can help customers to find the right products through focused merchandising, intelligent store design and layout, and other visual merchandising practices, such as product displays, packaging, and signage

Visual Merchandising is the art of displaying merchandise in a manner that is appealing to the eyes of the customer. It sets the context of the merchandise in an aesthetically pleasing fashion, presenting them in a way that would convert the window shoppers into prospects and ultimately buyers of the product. An inviting atmosphere brings people into the store and also keeps them there longer. A creative and talented retailer can use this upcoming art to breathe in new life into store products. Visual merchandising is one of the major marketing tactics used by retailers to attract customers to the stores. It is a significant factor that attracts and captures the customers' attention towards the products and induces them to purchase. An effective visual merchandising strategy will help the retailers to be ahead of the competitors.

IMPULSE BUYING BEHAVIOR

Impulse buying behaviour is the purchase that is made without much thinking. It is done without involving much evaluation of different things like need, affordability, price, etc. The descriptors of impulse buying behaviour are spontaneous, intense, exciting urge to buy. Customer likes the products and purchases it such process is known as impulse buying behaviour.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Clark (2007) discusses that mannequin industry is crucial to any retail/visual merchandising. It has undergone drastic changes with the mannequins being realistic before, abstract then, headless later and now switching back to the realistic concept, associated with the human touch. The research concludes by saying that, how much ever the industry changes, eventually they will evolve to suit the changing times and the customer likes and desires.

Dawes (2008) specified the importance of Visual Merchandising and fundamental principles that need to be applied thus leaving an impact on customer's mind and perception. The study reveals that whatever display idea is apt and whatever way is to go, window displays portray brand and business, and they attract customs and promote products. Window displays are selling devices that should not be ignored.

Sebastian (2008) asserts that traditionally visual merchandising was always associated with store windows and sales floor display with companies hiring specialists for efficient layout for of floor space for optimization of retail space. The researcher opines that initial stages would not be very easy to ride for companies to begin with; but definitely the starters would have an edge for this structural change in their organization.

Maier (2009) emphasizes on how visual marketing should be incorporated into one's business strategy by explaining the importance of a visual schemes of boutiques. Certain factors are outlined in the study, such as price suggestion, layout, customer response and merchandising. The study concludes that the above-mentioned directives with regard to the visual aspect, would prove to be of immense help in setting up a boutique in an effective manner and that it can save time, money, and earn loyal as well as long-term customers.

Garvey (2010) highlights the various steps one must follow with regard to setting up a store, with respect to using eye-catching displays, showcase of diverse merchandise in an appealing manner. The study emphasis on preparing an effective business plan in order to decide on the theme and related aspects as the look and feel of the store can make a huge impact on a customer's decision to buy, enter the store, or return for repeat business.

Meenakumari S. (2013) in their study examined the role of visual merchandise on Retailing among supermarkets in Chennai city. The components of visual merchandise were analyzed in this study to find out the impact on purchase decision in supermarket. A sample of 105 was collected. Promotional signage and floor space plays important role in buyer's decision.

Arun Prasad and SC Vetrivel (2016) examined the role of visual merchandising and outlook factors impact store image and customer buying behaviour. The study identified that window display; fixture, signage, mannequin, colours and lighting were significantly associated with consumer buying behaviour

Elsa Corinne Nell (2017) explored the influence of sight atmospherics and visual merchandising displays in apparel retail stores in Tshwane on consumers' behaviour. The study revealed that visual merchandising displays had an unconscious influence on consumer behaviour and, since visual display is not the only factor considered when deciding to make a purchase, a pleasant atmosphere would influence participants to stay longer which in return could lead to a purchase.

RESEARCH GAP

A review of above literature reveals that most of the earlier studies focused on examining consumer shopping behaviour at retail outlet. Visual merchandize elements are considered to having immediate effects on the buying decision making process. Visual merchandize also helps create store patronage intentions and purchase. Visual simulation and communication have long been considered important aspect of retailing by practitioners and academic alike. Visual merchandising is concerned with both how the product and/ or brand is visually communicated to the customer. The shopping experience, as created by the store environment, has been found to play an important role in building store patronage by creating positive psychological or behavioural outcome, ultimately leading to purchase. The paper tries to explore the dynamics of marketing programs by analyzing significant perceptions those buyers towards visual merchandising strategies. This research aims to identify role and effect of visual merchandise on consumer Purchase decision in Visakhapatnam city. The Study also attempts to find out the impact of Visual Merchandise on Impulse Buying Behaviour.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The usage of visual merchandise always improves the image and sale of a retail outlet. However, there are only few researches done in this aspect. This research attempts to identify the preferred visual merchandise in supermarkets and customer buying behaviour. With increasing competition, retailers are striving to make their store attractive to their target market. The merchandise offered by retailers are found to be similar. As the merchandise offered cannot be differentiated, the retailers try to differentiate and manage the competition by Visual Merchandise. The usage of visual merchandise always improves the image and sale of a retail outlet.

However, there are only few researches done in this aspect. This research attempts to find out the preferred visual merchandise in supermarkets and the impact of visual merchandise on sales.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- i) To provide an overview on visual merchandising and its role in creating customer appeal in retail business
- ii) To examine the various elements of visual merchandising and its influence on consumers' buying decisions
- iii) To offer suggestions for improving visual merchandise as a tool in retail business promotion.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

H₁: Window display influence customer buying decision Process

H₂: Lighting influence consumer buying behavior

H₃: Color presentation influence consumer buying behavior

H₄: Promotional signage influence customer buying decision

H₅: Store design influence customer buying decision

H₆: In-store product display influences customers buying behavior

RESEARCH DESIGN AND DATA COLLECTION METHOD

Research Design: The research is exploratory in nature and survey method was used for the study. Primary data on customer views on visual merchandising were collected through a structured questionnaire.

Sample Technique: For the study convenience sampling technique is used.

Sample Size: A sample size of 400 respondents in Visakhapatnam city are covered in the study

Questionnaire Design: The questionnaire is carefully designed to meet the requirements of the research. For the present study, a total of 400 respondents in Visakhapatnam city were surveyed using a well-structured and pre-tested questionnaire.

Measurement: The survey questionnaire consisted of 28 scale items: The 28 items were to measure the consumers' perceptions towards selected visual merchandize elements with their most recent shopping experiences. The 28 items were related to six dimensions of visual merchandize such as window display, store layout, product display, signage, colour and lightening and four statements describing the impulse buying behaviour. The respondents were requested to select the response that best indicates their experiences and perceptions on each statement These variables are measured using 5-point Likert scale with responses ranging from "Strongly Agree" =1, "Agree" = 2, "Cannot Say" = 3, "Disagree" =4 and "Strongly Disagree" =5.

Data Analysis: The analysis has been in conformity with the objectives of the study and the hypotheses formulated to achieve the objectives. Collected data were first structured into grouped frequency distributions factor analysis and chi-square test was applied.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

A comprehensive model describing the components of visual merchandising influencing consumer's behaviour in the retail environment would be useful for both academics and practitioners by helping them to better understand the factors influencing consumer purchase behaviour in this emerging retail environment.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY

In this study, based on a thorough review of literature, the conceptual model was developed depicting the various dimensions of visual merchandising that influence consumer purchase decision.

Table 1

DESCRIPTION OF CONSTRUCTS FOR THE PROPOSED MODEL

Window display	The display window is accepted as the most important part of the store design because it is the first meeting place the customer has with a brand. Window displays are crucial whether a store is situated in a mall or in a busy street. They are mix of art, fashion, design and marketing. The purpose of window display is to create a special aura to draw in customers and also attract media attention. Store design and its display windows are the most important communication channels for retail stores.
Lighting	Lighting is an important factor in the environment’s impact on individuals because brightly lit rooms are more absorbing than dimly lit ones. The primary goals common in the lighting of merchandise are to attract the consumer, to initiate purchases, and to facilitate the completion of the sale.
Colour	Colour is one of the most powerful tools in the Visual Merchandising segment. It is a visual perceptual property. Colours can be associated with emotions, special occasions and gender. It attracts attention and pulls more customers into the store
Signage	Signage is used for promotional purposes by retailers. Initially, the purpose was to provide basic information. Signage is considered as an integral part of the retail environment because it plays a growing role in creating the unique image and atmosphere. Signage must communicate with customers quickly and effectively by introducing themselves and their products or services.
Store layout	The store layout is a huge and important duty for retail managers. Store Layout has a huge influence on customers and customers want stores to spend whatever it takes to create a layout that minimizes wasted steps and motion in the shopping process.
Product display	Products and merchandise are the most important element of almost any retail business; however, the way in which they are displayed and presented can be what distinguishes one retail shopping experience from another, and the design of the retail displays is the key to achieving a better experience for customers.

CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR

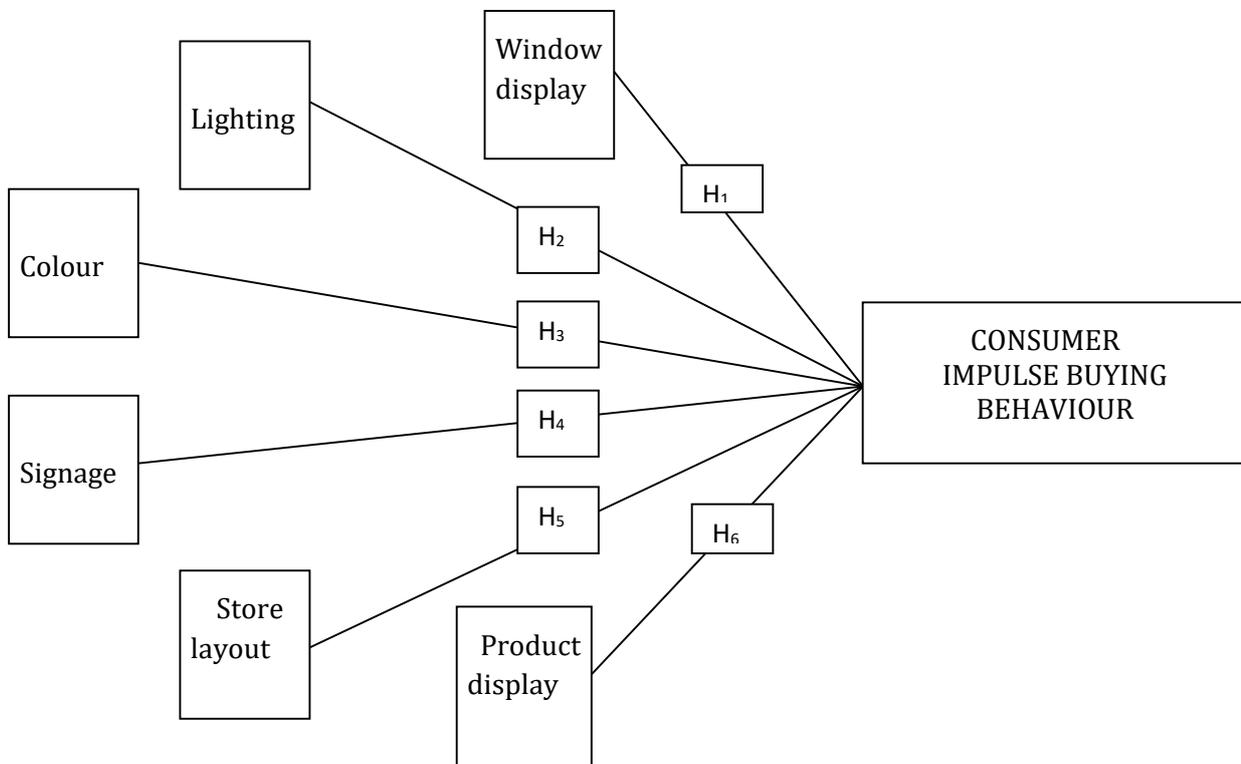


Figure 1: Proposed Model for Consumer Impulse Buying Behaviour

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table- 2 reports on the respondent's socio-demographic characteristics like age, gender, education level, occupation and income level of the sample respondents.

Table- 2: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Particulars	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Gender		
Male	164	40.9
Female	236	59.1
Total	400	100.0
Age Group (in Years)		
Less than 20	86	21.5
21 – 30	110	27.5
31 -40	80	20.0
41 – 50	42	10.5
51 – 60	34	8.50
Above 60	48	12.0
Total	500	100
Level of Education of the respondents		
SSC / Metric	34	8.50
Intermediate / ITI	21	5.25
Bachelor's degree	124	31.0
Post graduate	118	29.5
Diploma	84	21.0
Others	19	4.75
Total	400	100
Income Level of the Respondents		
Less than -Rs. 10000	48	12.0
Rs. 10001 – Rs. 20000	78	19.5
Rs. 20001 – Rs. 30000	98	24.5
Rs. 30001 – Rs. 50000	58	14.5
Rs. 50001 – Rs. 75000	52	13.0
Rs. 75001 – Rs. 100000	34	8.5
More than Rs. 100000	32	8.0
Total	400	100
Occupation of the Respondents		
Employed in private service	92	23.0
Employed in government service	63	15.7
Business/ self employed	54	13.5
Professional	85	21.2
House Wife	82	20.5
Student	12	3.0
Others	12	3.0
Total	400	100

INFERENCES:

GENDER: As can be observed from Table -2, With respect to gender distribution of respondents, it is observed that, majority of the respondents constituting around 60 per cent of the sample were females while the remaining 40.1 per cent of the respondents were males.

AGE: it can be observed that majority of the respondents constituting 27.5 per cent of the total sample belongs to the age group of 21-30 years, while 21.5 percent of the sample is aged group of less than 20 years,

while 20 percent of the respondents belong to the age group of 31-40 years. This indicates that majority of the respondents constituting around 50 percent of the sample are below 30 years of age.

EDUCATION: Table-2 depicts the respondent's level of education. Majority of the respondents representing 31.0 per cent of the sample hold a bachelor's degree closely followed by 29.5 percent of the sample holding a master's degree.

INCOME: The income is one of the factors, which play a vital role in influencing the purchasing behaviour of an individual. As can be seen in the Table-2 majority of the respondents constituting 24.5 per cent earn monthly income of 20,001-30,000, while 19.5 per cent earn Rs 10,001-20,000, 14.5 per cent earn Rs.30, 001 – 50,000 per month.

OCCUPATION: Majority of the respondents constituting 23 per cent of the sample are employees working in private companies followed by 21.2 per cent of the respondents are professionals while 20.5 percent of the sample are housewives.

PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR OF CONSUMERS

Table- 3: PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR OF CONSUMERS

	Particulars	Frequency	Per cent
Elements in Visual Merchandising	Window display	56	14
	Signs	92	23
	Store layout	76	19
	Music	60	15
	Lighting	36	9
	Cleanness	50	12.5
	colour	30	7.5
	Total	400	100
In store factors of purchase	Special promotional Offers	65	16.25
	Discount	124	31
	Visual merchandizing	108	27
	Sales personnel	85	21.25
	Others	18	4.5
	Total	400	100
I tend to enter a store when I am attracted by	New Arrivals	65	16.25
	An eye-catching window display	104	26
	Interesting promotional offer	112	28
	Flat Discount	95	23.75
	Any other, please specify	24	6
	Total	400	100
How often do you visit the store?	Once every week	42	10.5
	Once a month	84	21
	During festival days	126	31.5
	Only on offer days	102	25.5
	Twice a month	34	8.5
	Very rarely	12	3
	Total	400	100

INFERENC: From Table -3, it can be observed that majority of the respondents constituting 23 of the sample indicted that Signage is the most preferred elements of visual merchandize followed by 19 percent of the respondents who preferred store layout, while 14 percent of the respondents indicated that window display was the preferred element of visual merchandizing. with regards to Instore factors influencing purchase, it can be noted that majority of the respondents representing 27 percent indicated that visual merchandize factor like store layout influenced their purchase decision, followed by discounts represented by 31 percent of the respondents, while 21.25 percent indicated that special promotional offers were the major factor influencing their purchase decisions. With regards to store attractiveness, majority of the respondents representing 28 percent of the sample indicated that Interesting promotional offer is the major reason which draws them towards a particular store followed by 26 percent of the respondents indicting eye-catching window display as a reason for preferring a particular store.

It can be observed that majority of the respondents representing 31.5 percent indicated that they visited the retail outlets during festival days, followed by 25.5 percent who indicated that they preferred to visit during offers and discounts.

CHI SQAURE ANALYSIS

In order to analyze the significance of the selected visual merchandize constructs on the consumer impulsive purchase behaviour, chi square tests were performed where four statements depicting each of the six factors chosen for the study such as window display , signage , product display , lighting colour and store layout and four statements depicting the impulsive buying behaviour of the respondents were analysed using chi square test and the results are presented below.

WINDOW DISPLAY:

H₀: window display has significant influence on consumer's purchase behaviour

H₁: window display has no significant influence consumer's purchase behaviour

Table- 4

Chi Square Values for window display and purchase behaviour

Window display	Variables	Pearson Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
WD -1	I choose to enter a store because of attractive window display	18.721(a)	4	.001
WD -2	I tend to choose which store to shop in depending on eye catching window displays.	69.356(a)	4	.000
WD-3	Window displays always increase my interest towards those product items being displayed.	33.277(a)	4	.000
WD-4	I feel compelled to enter the store when I see an interesting window displays	36.852(a)	4	.000

From the above Table- 4, it can be observed that with regards to influence of window display on purchase decision, I choose to enter a store because of attractive window display (0.001), I tend to choose which store to shop in depending on eye catching window displays. (0.000), Window displays always increase my interest towards those product items being displayed. (0.000), and I feel compelled to enter the store when I see an interesting window displays (0.000) all have significant chi square values. From this it can be concluded that there is significant relation between window display and consumer purchase behaviour.

LIGHTING

Lighting is considered as an important factor influencing consumer behaviour towards retail shopping; therefore, the following hypothesis is formulated

H₀: Lighting has significant influence on consumer's purchase behaviour

H₂: Lighting has no significant influence consumer's purchase behaviour

Table- 5
Chi -square values for lighting and purchase behaviour

Variables	Particulars	Pearson Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
LT-1	The lighting arrangement allow me to see the merchandise with ease	38.552(a)	4	.000
LT-2	The use of lights in different brightness to decorate the store would increase my possibility of making purchase	59.326(a)	4	.000
LT-3	Adequate lighting in the store allows me to evaluate the colour, texture and design of product offerings with ease	38.277(a)	4	.000
LT-4	Brightly lit retail settings are more arousing than dimly lit ones.	34.561	4	.000

From the above Table -5, it can be observed that lighting arrangement allow me to see the merchandise with ease (0.000), The use of lights in different brightness to decorate the store would increase my possibility of making purchase (0.000), Adequate lighting in the store allows me to evaluate the colour, texture and design of product offerings with ease (0.000) and Brightly lit retail settings are more arousing than dimly lit ones. (0.000) all have significant chi square values, indicating that there is significant relation between lighting and consumer purchase behaviour

COLOUR

H₀ : Colour has significant influence on consumer's purchase behaviour

H₃ : Colour has no significant influence consumer's purchase behaviour

Table- 6
Chi Square Values for Colour and Purchase Behaviour

Colour	Variables	Pearson Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
CO-1	Product items are placed according to colour allow me to find them more easily.	44.380(a)	4	.078
CO-2	Colour coordination creates an appealing store atmosphere.	43.822(a)	4	.065
CO -3	I prefer to enter a store with good colour sense	52.270(a)	4	.127
CO -4	The choice of colour used in the store influences by purchase choice	76.009(a)	4	.000

Product items are placed according to colour allow me to find them more easily (.078) Colour coordination creates an appealing store atmosphere (0.065), I prefer to enter a store with good colour decoration (.127) and the choice of colour used in the store influences by purchase choice (0.000) all have values higher than the significant values. Therefore, it can be concluded that colour has no significant influence on consumer purchase decision.

PRODUCT DISPLAY

H₀: Product Display has significant influence on consumer's purchase behaviour

H₆: Product Display has no significant influence consumer's purchase behaviour

Table- 7

Chi Square Values for Product Display and Purchase Behaviour

Product Display	Variables	Pearson Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
PD-1	Product placement on shelves helps me to recognize different brands with ease.	70.529(a)	4	.000
PD-2	best-selling articles are usually displayed where i can find them with ease.	60.355(a)	4	.000
PD-3	I tend to buy products displayed at or near the Checkout desks.	50.834(a)	4	.000
PD-4	I tend to walk towards and buy products displayed in eye-catching displays.	68.519(a)	4	.000

The resulted chi- square values indicate that Product placement on shelves helps me to recognize different brands with ease. (0.000) best-selling articles are usually displayed where i can find them with ease. (0.000) I tend to buy products displayed at or near the Checkout desks. (0.000), I tend to walk towards and buy products displayed in eye-catching displays. (0.000) all have significant chi square values hence it can be concluded that product display has a significant influence on consumer purchase behaviour.

SIGNAGE

H₀: Signage has significant influence on consumer's purchase behaviour

H₄: Signage has no significant influence consumer's purchase behaviour

Table- 8 : Chi Square Values for Signage and Purchase Behaviour

Signage	Variables	Pearson Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
S-1	Signage in form of tags offers me more information about the product. (e.g. Price, material)	61.773(a)	4	.000
S-2	If I see an interesting promotional offer (reduced price, sales promotion, and etc.) signs, I tend to buy	50.066(a)	4	.000
S-3	I am more likely to make an unintended purchase if the clothing has a sale or clearance sign.	74.124(a)	4	.000
S-4	Effective signs in the store help me to identify departments, describe the merchandise and its price	48.465(a)	4	.000

From the above Table- 8 it can be observed that Signage in form of tags offers me more information about the product. (e.g. Price, material) (0.000), If I see an interesting promotional offer (reduced price, sales promotion, and etc.) signs, I tend to buy (0.000), I am more likely to make an unintended purchase if the clothing has a sale or clearance sign (0.000) and Effective signs in the store help me to identify departments, describe the merchandise and its price (0.000) all have significant chi square values indicating that there is significant relation between signage and consumer purchase behaviour

STORE LAYOUT

H₀: Store layout has significant influence on consumer's purchase behaviour

H₅: Store layout has no significant influence consumer's purchase behaviour

Table- 9: Chi Square Values for Store layout and Purchase Behaviour

Store layout	Variables	Pearson Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
SL-1	Walking space in the store is not crowded	120.529(a)	4	.026
SL-2	The way through the store is well-structured so that consumers have no difficulty finding the products	60.355(a)	4	.810
SL-3	When you see featuring a new style or design on mannequin display you tend to buy it	50.834(a)	4	.293
SL-4	I purchase where floor space is sufficient to walk around.	68.519(a)	4	.032

The resulted chi- square values indicate that walking space in the store is not crowded (.026), The way through the store is well-structured so that consumers have no difficulty finding the products (.810), When you see featuring a new style or design on mannequin display you tend to buy it (.293) I purchase where floor space is sufficient to walk around (.032) all have values greater than the significant values , therefore it is safe to indicate that there is no significant relation between store layout and consumer purchase decision

Table- 10

SUMMARY OF HYPOTHESIS

Hypotheses	Influence significant	Results	Hypothesis Accepted / Rejected
H ₁	Yes	Window display influence customer buying decision Process	Accepted
H ₂	Yes	Lighting influence consumer buying behavior	Accepted
H ₃	No	Color presentation influence consumer buying behavior	Rejected
H ₄	Yes	Promotional signage influence customer buying decision	Accepted
H ₅	No	Store design influence customer buying decision	Rejected
H ₆	Yes	In-store product display influences customers buying behavior	Accepted

The results of the analysis indicate that regarding the hypothesized model, there is strong statistical evidence that window display, lighting promotional signage and instore product display significantly influence consumer impulsive buying behaviour. Whereas colour and store layout were found to have no significantly influence consumer impulsive buying behaviour.

MAJOR FINDINGS

1. From the analysis, it was observed that majority of respondents constituting around 60 per cent of the sample were females while the remaining 40.1 per cent of the respondents were males.
2. It can also be inferred that majority of the respondents constituting around 50 percent of the sample are below 30 years of age. while 20 percent of the respondents belong to the age group of 31-40 years. This indicates
3. Majority of the respondents representing 31.0 per cent of the sample hold a bachelor's degree closely followed by 29.5 percent of the sample holding a master's degree.
4. With regards to income is one of the respondents, majority of the sample constituting 24.5 per cent earn monthly income of 20,001-30,000, while 19.5 per cent earn Rs 10,001-20,000, 14.5 per cent earn Rs.30,001 – 50,000 per month.
5. Majority of the respondents constituting 23 per cent of the sample are employees working in private companies followed by 21.2 per cent of the respondents are professionals while 20.5 percent of the sample are housewives.
6. The findings of the study indicate that there is significantly relation between window display, lighting promotional signage and instore product display consumer impulsive buying behaviour. Whereas colour and store layout were found to have no significantly influence consumer impulsive buying behaviour.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The study has focused only on respondents from Visakhapatnam city only and does not include respondents from other cities or states
2. The sample size is limited to 400 respondents only, in order to gain a better insight on impact of visual merchandize on consumers shopping pattern, a larger sample size can be taken for future studies

CONCLUSION

Retailers have to understand the importance of shopper's expectations and provide the right environment to lure them. VM serves as a significant influencer of the retail experience and the shopper's decision-making process. It provides competitive advantage and helps in building the overall image of the store. Since a lot of retailers have started adopting this concept, one should be innovative enough in VM to achieve better results. The study reveals that visual merchandising plays a significant role in apparel purchase decision of the customer. Customer's expectations change sporadically and retailers must realize the significance of these expectations and offer them a congenial environment to attract and retain the customers. The study also provided insights about types of visual merchandising that can influence customers' impulsive buying behaviour. Four most important factors of visual merchandising namely attractiveness of window display, product display, promotional signage and lighting Hence, Visual merchandising has become an important variable in present scenario.

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