

Visual Merchandising as a tool for Promoting Sales: A Survey among Shopping mall customers

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ABSTRACT

Visual Merchandising has long been considered as important strategic business decision for increasing sales. A proper visual merchandising helps the retailer to increase the customer walk-inland in turn increase the sales of the product. Also, the mall culture sets a limitation on the retailers for manually displaying each and every article in front of the customers. Thus, the retailers are facing a keen competitive market place and as a consequence of that they find many difficulties to differentiate their stores on the basis of product, place, people, price and promotion. Retail store elements such as colour, lighting and visual merchandising have always been considered as having immediate effects on the buying decision making process. Hence, the present study has been undertaken to determine the important factors of visual merchandising which influence consumer's buying behaviour and in-store promotion activities.

Key Words: Visual Merchandising, Visual Display, Sales Promotion

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1. INTRODUCTION

Visual merchandising is a marketing practice that uses floor plans, colour, lighting, displays, technology, and other elements to attract customer attention. Its ultimate purpose is to use the retail space to generate more sales by making a store stand out and attracting shoppers. Visual Merchandising is the practice in the retail industry of optimizing the presentation of products and services to better highlight their features and benefits. The purpose of such visual merchandising is to attract, engage, and motivate the customer towards making a purchase. Visual merchandising is a practice that supports retailers in presenting their retail space in the best possible way to maximize sales. It has long been considered as important strategic business decision for a number of reasons. First, customer store choice decisions are influenced greatly by merchandising (Arrangement of merchandise) which denotes the relationship between customer perception and buying behaviour. Second, retailers may be able to develop a sustainable competitive advantage through merchandising. Merchandising plays an important role in maintaining a balance between rack stock and the buffer stock.

VISUAL MERCHANDISING

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DISPLAY IN RETAIL STORE -

A retail display is anything in a store that houses or promotes your product. A visual merchandising strategy focuses heavily on the appearance of retail displays, as they are often the first point of contact between your product and the shopper. Any brand that sells at retail will use retail displays. Visual merchandisers are usually the ones to design and implement retail displays and are also in charge of making sure the displays maintain their appearance over time.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Review literature has vital relevance with any study due to literature review is it possibility of repetition of the study can be eliminated and another dimension can be selected for the study. Various empirical and theoretical studies have been undertaken at the national and international level to analyse impact of visual merchandising. The literature available to the researcher on the study of impact of visual merchandising are classified according to the related topics as mentioned below:

Amandeep Kaur (2013) in his study entitled that “**Effect on visual merchandising on buying behavior of customers in Chandigarh**”. This study explains that visual merchandising as a silent salesperson; as its tools do not speak out definitely convey their sales message through visual appeal. In order to fulfil the changing expectations of today's consumers, retailers need to place greater emphasis on presentation of merchandise retailers have to understand the importance of shopper's expectations and provide the right environment to use them.

Khurram L. Bhatti & Seema Latif (2014) in their study entitled that “**Impact of visual merchandising on consumer impulse buying behaviour**”. This study was conducted to examine that exterior factor effecting or influencing the consumer unplanned purchase behaviour. To investigate the relation further, the study attempted to elucidate the affiliation between the consumer's unplanned purchase behaviour and different types of visual merchandising. The key discovery of this learning was that the visual merchandising positively manipulates or influence consumer's impulse buying behaviour. Results proved that the consumer impulse buying behaviour is significantly influenced by the window display, forum display, floor merchandising or even with the brand name.

Mohd. Arif Hussian (2013) in his study entitled that, “**Impact of visual merchandising on consumer buying behavior at big bazaar**”. This study consists of the arrangements of the displays in an attractive manner initiates new interest about the products in the mind of the customer. By designing a proper theme and activating changes frequently one can thus a proactive retailer. with globalization and the retail room, visual merchandising is growing in leaps and bounds. IT is not simply concerned about, decorating a store beautifully, but must also symbolize the brand keeping the target audience in mind.

A. Prabhu Asirv Atham and Dr. N. Mohan (2014) in their study entitled that “**Role of visual merchandising on consumer buying decision**”. This study also explains that design is becoming a differentiating factor in retail. The store design and layout tell a customer what store all about is. It is very strong tool in hands of the retail for communicating and creating the image of the store in a mind of customer. It is the first impression that of a store. It is the first impression that a customer has of the store. Interiors are a function of fixtures, ceiling, lighting, and signage. Integration to the interior look of the store as the layout of the store.

Rajesekharan Pillai et.al (2011), in their study entitled that “**Design effectiveness and role of visual merchandising in creating customer appeal**”. This study consists of the store design and outlook impacts behavior and how retailers incorporate these factors and mold it according to the preference of the consumers. Also investigated those preferences of customers and wanted to find out how they rank visual merchandising appeal amongst others like brand name, offers and discounts and accessibility. And also wanted to investigate what ambience factors was most preferred.

Ramandeep Sodhi, Rita Kant (2012), in their study entitled that “**Visual merchandising - A changing scenario**”. This study consists visual merchandising is the art of presentation, which puts the merchandise in focus. It provides silent service for the customers, helping them in findings their products more easily. It includes everything from display window to fixtures used for visual presentation. (Dawes 2008) window display is now a big business. Window displays portray brand and business, and they attract customers and promote products. The purpose of visual merchandising is to promote the sale of specific merchandise while reflecting the store image. the changing need for visual merchandising has reflected by the increase in budget in their displays. Use of different props, fixtures and tools has increased. Visual merchandising is a clever way to exhibit products with the intent to touch the customer's senses, striking the right chords in arising an emotion to possess the product in display, thus subtly persuading to take an impulsive purchase

Dr. Ritika Jain (2013) in their study entitled that “**Effect of visual merchandising of apparels on impulse buying behavior of women**”. This study consists of present times, consumer is not influenced anymore from routine selling styles but they are influenced by the show casa. In changing global environment visual merchandising has become most discussable topic. It is a silent salesperson that does not speak but definitely convey their sales message through visual appeal. In order to fulfill the changing expectations of today's consumers, apparel outlet have to understand the importance of shopper's expectations and provide the right environment to lure them. An effective visual merchandising can improve a store's brand image and increases sales

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ❖ To identify role of visual merchandising in sales promotion.
- ❖ To identify various visual merchandising tools used in shopping mall.
- ❖ To identify the customer perception of visual impact of malls.

4. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

A good looking and well strategized retail space is essential to meeting a business's sales and marketing goals. Visual merchandising helps retailers to impart better experience to customers –Customer experience is vital to running a successful business and visual merchandising is a very important part of it. It helps to organise the retail space and help customers find what they're looking for easily – thus improving their experience while shopping in your store. Customers are changing their buying habit from single shop to big malls.so in this present scenario this study is more relevant one.

5. METHODOLOGY

The study followed an exploratory method by attempting to understand the impact of visual merchandising in shopping malls. The sample covered both employed & unemployed young adults. The sampling technique was selective random sampling. This study used a comprehensive questionnaire designed to cover major aspects of visual impacts of shopping malls. The researcher has relied both on primary data and secondary data for this study. Questionnaires were supported by discussion with the target group. In addition, research journals, related articles, books, publications and report, newspapers, websites etc. formed a part of our secondary data sources. The selective random method used to sample. The researcher selected 60 customers of shopping malls as sample for the study.

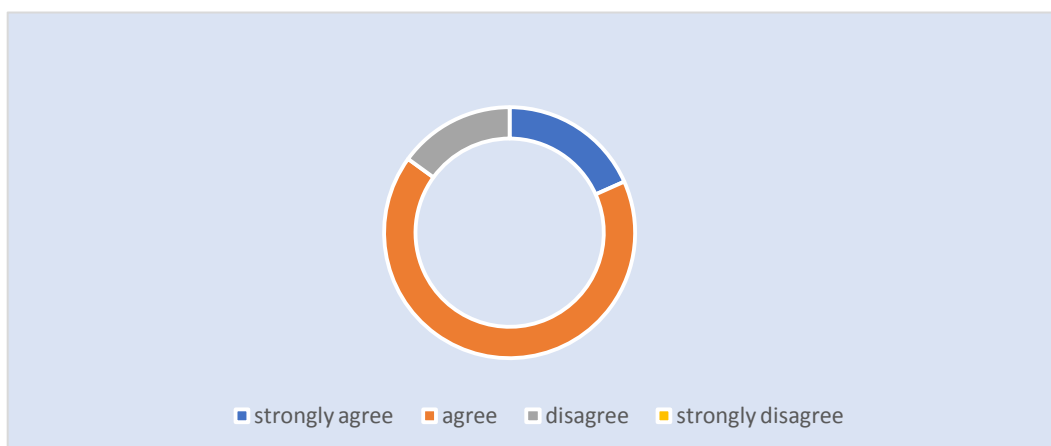
6. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Purchase unexpected product through display marketing.

Table 1

SL No	Opinion	Number of respondents	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	11	18.3
2	Agree	40	66.67
3	Neutral	9	15
4	Disagree	0	0
5	Strongly disagree	0	0
Total		60	100

Chart 1



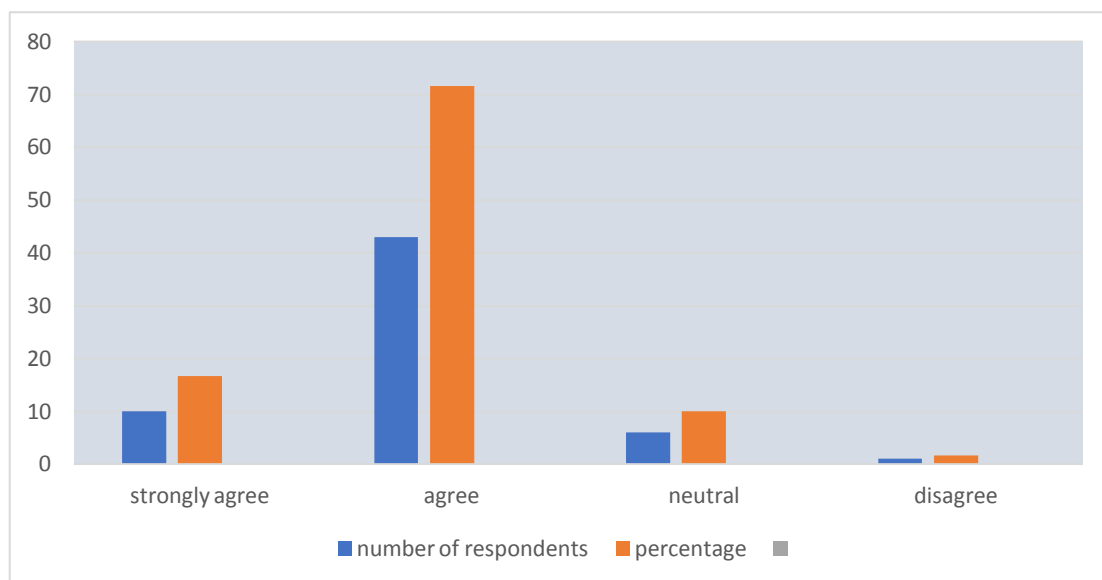
From the above table 66.67percentage of the respondents are opined that they have to purchase unexpected product through display marketing and only 15percentage of the respondents are neutral to purchase unexpected product through display marketing.

Opinion towards Attraction of Product Merchandise Display.

Table 2

SL No	Opinion	Number of respondents	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	10	16.67
2	Agree	43	71.67
3	Neutral	6	10
4	Disagree	1	1.67
5	Strongly disagree	0	0
Total		60	100

Chart 2



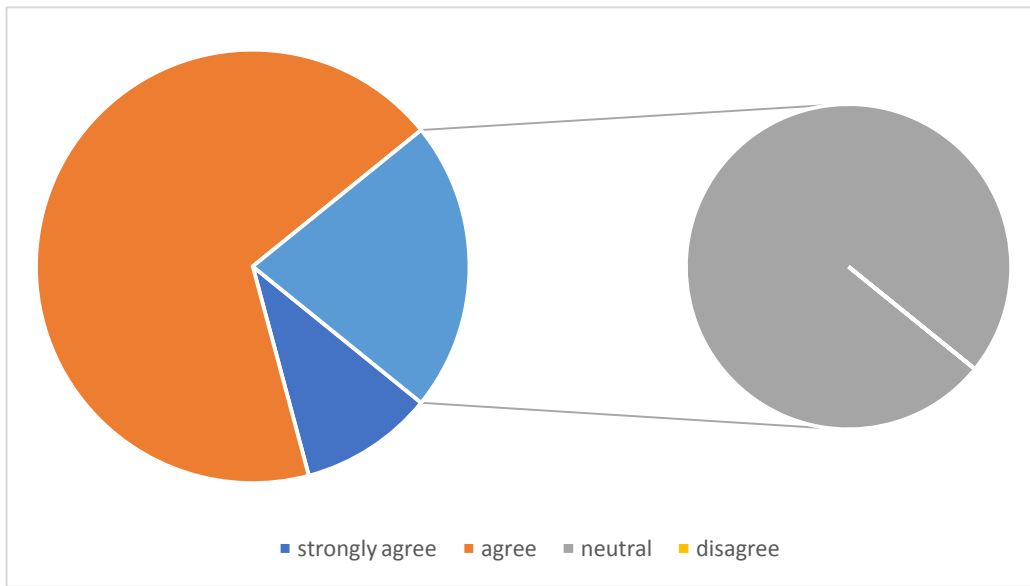
The table reveals that 71.67percentage of respondents have feel merchandise arrangement of product is attractive and remaining 1.67percentage have not feel merchandise arrangement of product is attractive.

Buying of more products through display.

Table 3

SL No	Opinion	Number of respondents	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	6	10
2	Agree	41	68.33
3	Neutral	13	21.67
4	Disagree	0	0
5	Strongly disagree	0	0
Total		60	100

Chart 3



Interpretation

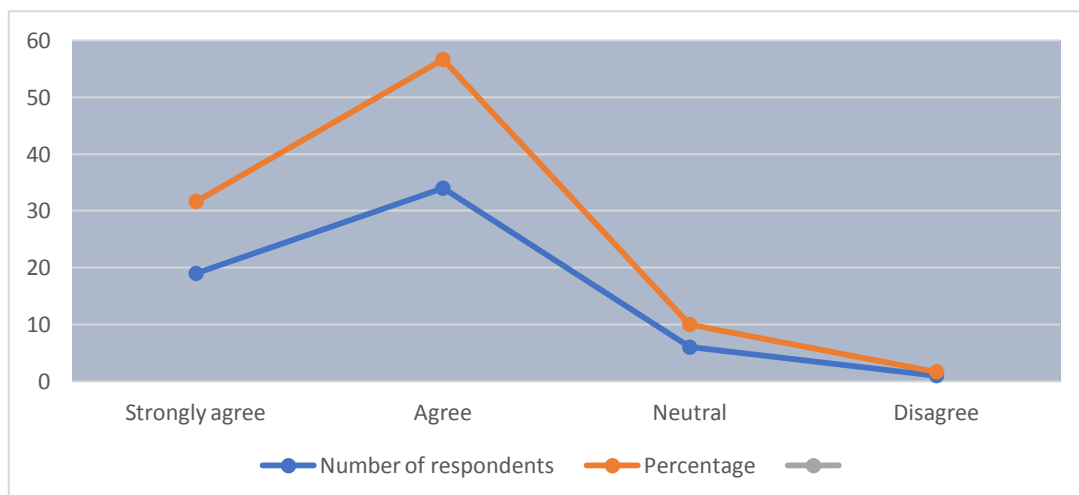
From the above table 68.33percentage of the respondents are tend to buy more product through display and 10percentage only the respondents are neutral to tend to buy more product through display.

Attracted by eye-catching window display.

Table 4

SL No	Opinion	Number of respondents	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	19	31.67
2	Agree	34	56.67
3	Neutral	6	10
4	Disagree	1	1.67
5	Strongly disagree	0	0
Total		60	100

Chart 4



Interpretation

From the above table shows 56.67percentage of the respondents are agree that they get attracted by eye-catching window display, 31.67percentage of respondents are feel strongly agree in get attracted by eye-catching window display, 10percentage of respondents are feel neutral in get attracted by eye-catching window display, 1.67percentage of respondents are feel disagree in get attracted by eye-catching window display.

7. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

From the light of above study, the researcher has arrived at the following findings

1. Visual merchandising has an effective role in sales promotion of shopping malls.
2. Window displays, Mannequins, Retail Planograms, Signage etc. are the main tools used in shopping malls.
3. Majority of the customers are expressed their positive attitudes towards the visual merchandising techniques
4. From the above study reveals that the respondents are want to purchase unexpected product through display marketing.
5. From the study 80% of the respondents are agree in tend to buy the product by an eye-catching window display.
6. The study reveals that 71.67% of respondents have feel merchandise arrangement of product is attractive.
7. The study reveals that 63.3% of respondents have feel happy to identify the price list before purchase of the product
8. From the above study reflects 61.67% of the respondents are tending to enter the store when I get attracted by lighting display.
9. From the above study 66.67% of the respondents are more likely to make purchase by discount and offers which is mentioned.
10. The table reveals that 51.67% of respondents have to enter the store when they were attracted by eye-catching window display.

8. SUGGESTIONS

On the basis of the above study the researcher made the following suggestions

- Introduce more fun games for attracting kids.
- Introduce various short- movies for attracting customers
- Introducing more signs and attractive symbols in shopping mall
- Adding the mall for customer friendly coffee cafes.

9..CONCLUSION

Visual merchandising also involves using new marketing techniques to influence buyers' decisions by appealing to their unconscious minds. This involves strategic product placement, store paint (to set the mood), fragrance (to make you want more), and music (to influence you subconsciously). Visual merchandising is the salesperson that persuades the customer to purchase intended products subconsciously. Marketers do this by strategically placing profitable items, making them noticeable and tempting people to buy them. Here researcher made an attempt to study the impact of the visual merchandising and data were collected and analysed through various tools and techniques and reached reasonable conclusion that visul merchandising as a tool for promoting sales.

10. REFERENCES

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