



## A STUDY ON SATISFACTION OF CUSTOMERS TOWARDS VISUAL MERCHANDISING

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### ABSTRACT

Visual merchandising has been adopted by the retailers as a strategy to attract the customers. There are various types or elements of visual merchandising including window display, store layout, mannequins, etc. The purpose of visual merchandising is to draw the attention of the customers and to increase their impulse buying behaviour. It has been widely followed by the retailers and most of these elements have been successful. However, the previous research studies have given little importance to the awareness and satisfaction of customers towards visual merchandising. Hence, an attempt has been made in this study to assess the level of awareness and the level of satisfaction of customers towards the selected elements of visual merchandising. The study has been conducted among 150 customers of Reliance Mall in Erode who have been selected under mall intercept method. Chi square test and Multiple regression analysis have been to analyze the data. The results revealed that frequency of visit has influenced the awareness on Interior designs, Mannequins, Point of purchase display and Seasonal displays while the satisfaction on point of purchase display and seasonal displays have not contributed towards the overall satisfaction of the customers towards visual merchandising.

**KEYWORDS :** Visual merchandising; awareness; satisfaction; impact; customers

### INTRODUCTION

Visual Merchandising is an art of drawing the attention of the customers. It is also helpful for the customers to identify goods easily. It is a psychological strategy that the customers could be attracted to buy the products displayed. The shopping culture has been changing from time to time. The shoppers would like to spend more time on shopping in large size shopping malls. These malls provide all types of goods under one roof and the shoppers have more choices and varieties of products and brands. They could enjoy the pleasant experience in shopping at the malls particularly with air condition, music, food court, movies, multi-storied building, elevator/lift, etc. These are the interior facilities provided by the shopping malls. However, these facilities are illustrative only and not exhaustive. Window display, store lay-out, interior displays, mannequins, lighting, etc. are certain other elements of visual merchandising.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Neha P. Mehta and Pawan K. Chugan (2013) conducted a study on "The Impact of Visual Merchandising on Impulse Buying Behaviour of Consumer: A Case study from Central Mall of Ahmedabad, India". They have selected 84 respondents under Mall-Intercept method. They have found that the impulse buying behavior of the customers have been influenced by window display, floor merchandising and promotional signage while mannequin display had no significant impact on the impulse buying behavior of the customers.

Vishaka and Himadri (2019) in their paper entitled, "Visual Merchandising: A tool to integrate Fashion, Retail and Consumer Buying Behaviour" examined the impact of Visual Merchandising elements on the consumers buying decision in Bhopal. The data have been collected from 96 shoppers who came out of shopping malls after having made purchases. The researchers have found that window display only drew the attention of 25 shoppers whereas other factors of visual display like lighting, ambience, store layout have influenced 26 shoppers. The influence of Offer, Scheme, and Display along with window display was found to be helpful for 46 shoppers. Around 60 per cent of the respondents agreed strongly that they were influenced by visual display and salesmen behavior. It was also observed that impulse buying was made by 56 per cent of the respondents.

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The review of previous literature reveals that many studies have concentrated on the impact of impulse buying behavior of the customers. However, it is imperative to know how do the customers feel or perceive about the elements of visual merchandising. The previous studies have focused on limited elements of visual merchandising only. There are so many elements of visual merchandising adopted by the shopping malls. With a view to draw the attention of the customers, these malls often introduce newer elements of visual merchandising. These elements of visual merchandising make the shopping experience of the customers pleasant and satisfied. The customers do enjoy these visual merchandising elements even without knowing that they are provided to them. Under these circumstances, the present study makes an attempt to find the answers to the following questions:

1. Are the customers aware of the elements of visual merchandising provided in shopping malls?
2. Whether the customers are satisfied with the elements of visual merchandising provided to them in shopping malls?

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study has been undertaken with the following objectives:

1. To assess the level of awareness of customers about the elements of visual merchandising provided in shopping malls.
2. To examine the level of satisfaction of customers towards the elements of visual merchandising provided in shopping malls and
3. To offer suggestions for enhancing the shopping experience with satisfaction at the shopping malls

### SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present study has made an attempt to understand the awareness and satisfaction levels of the customers towards the elements of visual merchandising in shopping malls. This study has been conducted in Reliance mall in Erode city. The shoppers who visited the Reliance mall have been surveyed for the present study. The awareness on the selected elements of visual merchandising and the satisfaction of customers towards these elements of visual merchandising has been examined in this study.

### NEED FOR THE STUDY

The previous studies have evinced that window display, lighting, ambience, store layout, etc were the major factors influencing the buying behavior of the customers. Despite several elements of visual merchandising provided by the shopping malls, only few factors have made impact on the buying behavior of the customers. Therefore, an exclusive study is required to understand the awareness and satisfaction of the customers towards the several elements of visual merchandising.

### HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

In order to fulfill the objectives of the study, the following hypotheses have been framed and tested:

1. There is no significant association between frequency of visit of the customers and their level of awareness about the elements of visual merchandising
2. There is no significant association between demographic variables of the customers and their level of satisfaction towards the elements of visual merchandising.

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology forms the basis for the conduct of a research study. It enables the researcher to carry out the study easily and smoothly. It includes the data source, data collection, sample size, sampling method and statistical tools used for analysis.

### DATA SOURCE

The data required for the present study have been collected from the primary sources. The primary data refers to the data collected from the sample respondents for the purpose of fulfilling the objectives of the study. Primary data are the first hand information obtained from the selected respondents with the specific objective of analysis to be made in the study. The present study depends on the primary data.

### DATA COLLECTION

The relevant data have been collected from the sample respondents using a structured questionnaire. The sample respondents were administered with the structured questionnaire which was prepared with utmost care to include all the relevant questions. The questionnaire so prepared has been pre-tested with 10 respondents to understand the relevance or otherwise of the questions and the order of the questions.

### SAMPLE SIZE

Sample size refers to the number of respondents selected for the study. For the purpose of the present study, 150 respondents have been selected from the visitors of the selected mall in Erode District.

### SAMPLING METHOD

In the present study, the sample respondents have been selected under mall intercept method. Under this method, the visitors of the Reliance Mall in Erode who exited after purchases have been selected.

### STATISTICAL TOOLS USED

The data collected for the present study have been analyzed using appropriate statistical tools like Chi Square Test and Multiple Regression Analysis.

### LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study is subject to the following limitations:

1. Having taken into consideration of the time and economic constraints, the sample size has been confined to 150 respondents only.
2. The present study has been conducted among the customers of Reliance Mall in Erode only.
3. Since the study depends on the primary data obtained

from the sample respondents, their tastes and preferences would change from time to time. Hence, the results of the study could not be generalized.

### ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The level of awareness and the level of satisfaction of the customers of Reliance Mall in Erode about elements of visual merchandising have been analyzed in the present study. For this purpose, the following elements of visual merchandising have been selected:

1. Window display
2. Store layout
3. Interior displays
4. Mannequins
5. Point of purchase display
6. Lighting design
7. Music
8. Graphics
9. Seasonal displays and
10. Product displays

### LEVEL OF AWARENESS

An attempt has been made in this study to examine the level of awareness of customers towards the selected elements of visual merchandising has been influenced by the frequency of visit. In this regard, the frequency of visit has been divided into four categories – monthly once, fortnightly once, weekly once and weekly twice or more.

**TABLE 1: AWARENESS ON ELEMENTS OF VISUAL MERCHANDISING**

Elements of VM	Chi square value	DF	p value	Result
Window Display	3.393	6	0.758	Accepted
Store Layout	11.699	6	0.069	Accepted
Interior Displays	13.662	6	<b>0.034</b>	Rejected
Mannequins	20.161	6	<b>0.003</b>	Rejected
Point of Purchase Display	12.692	6	<b>0.048</b>	Rejected
Lighting Design	8.872	6	0.181	Accepted
Music	5.434	6	0.489	Accepted
Graphics	8.819	6	0.184	Accepted
Seasonal Displays	24.181	6	<b>0.000</b>	Rejected
Product Displays	5.743	6	0.453	Accepted

From the Table 1, it is proclaimed that the frequency of visit has significantly influenced the awareness of customers towards Interior Displays as indicated by the p value of 0.034 which is less than 0.05. Since the p value stating the relationship between frequency of visit and level of awareness on Mannequins was found to be 0.003, it is concluded that the frequent visitors have significant awareness on Mannequins. The awareness of customers towards Point of Purchase Display and frequency of visit have been found to be significantly related as denoted by the p value of 0.048. It could be understood that there has been a significant influence of frequency of visit on the awareness of customers towards Seasonal Displays. It is revealed by the p value of 0.000. However, the frequency of visit did not have any significant impact on the level of awareness of customers towards Window Display and Store Layout. The awareness of customers towards Lighting Design and Music has not been influenced by the frequency of visit. There is no significant relationship between frequency of visit and level of awareness of customers towards Graphics and Product Displays.

### LEVEL OF SATISFACTION

The level of satisfaction towards the elements of visual merchandising has been assessed using Multiple Regression analysis. For this purpose, the overall level of satisfaction has been considered as dependent variable and the levels of satisfaction on the elements of visual merchandising have

been considered as independent variables.

The model summary of Regression analysis revealed the following facts:

$R = 0.796$ ;  $R^2 = 0.633$ ; Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.607$ ; S.E. = 0.306

**TABLE 2: SATISFACTION ON ELEMENTS OF VISUAL MERCHANDISING**

Model	Elements of VM	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t value	p value
		B	S.E.	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-0.084	0.164		-0.513	0.609
	Window Display	0.067	0.028	0.137	2.391	<b>0.018</b>
	Store Layout	0.061	0.024	0.134	2.496	<b>0.014</b>
	Interior Displays	0.082	0.024	0.191	3.348	<b>0.001</b>
	Mannequins	0.085	0.024	0.211	3.608	<b>0.000</b>
	Point of Purchase Display	0.037	0.022	0.090	1.677	0.096
	Lighting Design	0.065	0.023	0.161	2.774	<b>0.006</b>
	Music	0.095	0.021	0.260	4.597	<b>0.000</b>
	Graphics	0.084	0.022	0.204	3.789	<b>0.000</b>
	Seasonal Displays	0.043	0.022	0.104	1.953	0.053
	Product Displays	0.067	0.021	0.176	3.198	<b>0.002</b>

According to the Table 2, the overall satisfaction of customers has been significantly influenced by satisfaction on Window Display and Store Layout. It is also noted that the satisfaction on Interior Displays and Mannequins has contributed significantly towards the overall satisfaction of customers towards elements of visual merchandising. There is a significant impact of satisfaction towards Lighting Design and Music on the overall satisfaction of customers towards elements of visual merchandising. The overall satisfaction of customers has been found to be influenced by the satisfaction of customers towards Graphics and Product Displays. On the other hand, the influence of satisfaction towards Point of Purchase Display on overall satisfaction of customers is not significant. There exists no significant association between satisfaction of customers towards Seasonal Displays and the overall satisfaction of customers towards the elements of visual merchandising.

### FINDINGS

The results showed that the frequency of visit has made an impact on the awareness of customers towards Interior Displays. It could be understood that there exists a significant impact of frequency of visit on the awareness of customers towards Mannequins. It is evinced that the frequency of visit and awareness of customers towards Point of Purchase Display are significantly related. It is found that there exists a strong relationship between frequency of visit and awareness on Seasonal Displays. However, the frequency of visit has no significant impact on the awareness of customers towards the other elements of visual merchandising.

It is observed that the overall satisfaction of customers towards the elements of visual merchandising has been influenced by the satisfaction towards Window Display, Store Layout and Interior Displays. The satisfaction of customers towards Mannequins, Lighting Design and Music has contributed significantly towards the overall satisfaction of customers on the elements of visual merchandising. It could be understood that the impact of satisfaction towards Graphics and Product Displays on the overall satisfaction of customers towards the elements of visual merchandising has been found to be significant.

### SUGGESTIONS

Based on the research findings, the following suggestions have been offered to increase the level of awareness and the level of satisfaction of the customers towards the elements of visual merchandising:

In order to enhance the level of awareness towards Window Display, it shall be made more attractive by installing the

Since the R square value is 0.633, it could be concluded that the overall of satisfaction has been influenced to the extent of 63.3 per cent by the satisfaction of customers towards the elements of visual merchandising.

rolling lights and designs in the Window Display. Store Layout shall be arranged spaciouly in such a way that the customers could identify and move from one section to another easily. Interior displays shall be made colourful in order to draw the attention of the customers. Mannequins shall be displayed in prominent places so that the customers could see the designs of dresses and the dresses of mannequins shall be changed frequently. Point of purchase displays shall be made in smaller sizes and visible to all the customers. Music shall be played in lower sound and in a soothing manner. Hangouts shall be arranged for seasonal displays and product displays.

### CONCLUSION

Reliance Mall is one of the popular and biggest malls in Erode District. The citizens of Erode City and surroundings visit the mall for the purchase of their requirements. It is situated in the heart of the city. It is accessible to all kinds of customers. The awareness level of customers towards visual merchandising has been found to be good and the frequency of visit has influenced the awareness level of customers towards Interior displays, Mannequins, Point of purchase displays and seasonal displays. The overall level of satisfaction has been influenced by the level of awareness of customers towards Window display, Store layout, Interior designs and Mannequins. The level of awareness of customers towards Lighting design, Music, Graphics and Products display also have contributed towards the overall level of satisfaction of customers on the elements of visual merchandising.

### SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Keeping in mind the limitations of the study, the following suggestions have been offered for the further research:

Future scholars shall undertake comparative study on visual merchandising strategies of more malls and retail outlets. An exclusive study shall be carried out on the cost and effect of visual merchandising. Impact of visual merchandising on impulse buying behaviour of rural and urban customers shall be studied by the future researchers.

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