



AN ANALYSIS OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS VISUAL MERCHANDISE AT CAR SHOWROOMS (with reference to Jamanagar city)

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ABSTRACT

Visual Merchandising (VM) is the art of presentation, which puts the merchandise in focus. It educates the customers, creates desire and finally augments the selling process. Malls have to establish linkage between fashions, product design and marketing campaign by keeping the product in prime focus for marketers.

The main objective of the study is to identify the consumer behavior towards Merchandise in Showrooms. Sample of size of 500 was selected from city of Jamnagar and responses were collected online and offline. Various hypotheses are framed on basis of visual merchandising, store décor and demographic profile of customers. Appropriate statistical tests will be applied to collected data to come to the strong conclusions.

KEYWORDS

Marketing, consumer behavior, visual merchandising, store décor

Introduction

Consumer behavior is a study of how individuals make decisions to spend their available resources (time, money and effort) on consumption of related items (What, why, when, where and how they buy and use such products and services). Also we need to understand, why consumers make the purchases that they make? What are the factors that influence consumer purchases? What is the changing factors in our society that guide such purchase behavior.

Behavior occurs either for the individual, or in the context of a group (e.g., friends influence what kinds of clothes a person wears) or an organization (people on the job make decisions as to which products the firm should use).

Consumer behavior involves the use and disposal of products as well as the study of how they are purchased. Product use is often of great interest to the marketer, because this may influence how a product is best positioned or how we can encourage increased

Since many environmental problems result from product disposal is also an area of interest. Consumer behavior involves services and ideas as well as tangible products. The impact of consumer behavior on society is also of relevance

Influence of Perception on consumer decision making

Our perception is an approximation of reality. Our brain attempts to make sense out of the stimuli to which we are exposed

Factors of Perception Several sequential factors influence our perception. *Exposure* involves the extent to which we encounter a stimulus. For example, we are exposed to numerous commercial messages while driving on the freeway: bill boards, radio advertisements, bumper stickers on cars, and signs and banners placed at shopping malls that we pass. Most of this exposure is random—we don't plan to seek it out. However, if we are shopping for a car, we may deliberately seek out advertisements and "tune in" when dealer advertisements come on the radio.

Exposure is not enough to significantly impact the individual—at least not based on a single trial (certain advertisements, or commercial exposures such as the "Swoosh" logo, are based on extensive repetition rather than much conscious attention). In order for stimuli to be consciously processed, *attention* is needed. Attention is actually a matter of degree—our attention

may be quite high when we read directions for getting an income tax refund, but low when commercials come on during a television program. Note, however, that even when attention is low, it may be instantly escalated—for example, if an advertisement for a product in which we are interested comes on.

Interpretation involves making sense out of the stimulus. For example, when we see a red can, we may categorize it as a Coke.

Weber's Law suggests that consumers' ability to detect changes in stimulus intensity appear to be strongly related to the intensity of that stimulus to begin with. That is, if you hold an object weighing one pound in your hand, you are likely to notice it when that weight is doubled to two pounds. However, if you are holding twenty pounds, you are unlikely to detect the addition of one pound—a change that you easily detected when the initial weight was one pound.

Concept of VISUAL MERCHANDISING

Visual Merchandising (VM) is the art of presentation, which puts the merchandise in focus. It educates the customers, creates desire and finally augments the selling process. Visual Merchandising is first and foremost a strategic activity that requires planning and analysis.

Review of literature

Sonal Kureshi, Vandana Sood, Abraham Koshy (2007) conducted a research study on "Comprehensive Analysis of Exclusive Brand Store Customer in Indian Market". The objective of the research was (a) to provide insight about the profile of the consumers of exclusive brand store, based on their demographic and psychographic characteristics (b) to find out differences if any between the 'Browser' and 'Purposive' customers and (c) to examine the differences that emerge and draw implications for the retailer.

The findings of the research are as follows: 73.9 percent of the customers who visited the store were males. Three-fourths males belonged to the age group of 21-30. This clearly indicated that there was an under representation of women customers and people in the age group of above 40 years.

Nikhilesh Dholakia & Piyush Kumar Sinha (2005) observed customers tend to come to the stores with a choice set. This set varies according to the extent of planning that the customer undertakes before reaching the store. With more planning,

this choice set narrows. While buying from the traditional format (serviced) stores, the customers carry lists. These lists, in many cases, mention the brand name of the product. Generally, the retailer simply fetches the sought brands and collects them on the counter, ready for tallying and payment. Only in case of non-availability of the sought brand, the serviced-store retailer may mention alternative brands.

Dr. Gursharan Singh Kainth & Mr. Divakar Joshi (2008) studied the Perception of Customer & Retailers towards Malls in Jalandhar in Punjab. The study was undertaken to learn about people’s knowledge, beliefs, preferences & satisfaction. The locale of the study was The Malls in Jalandhar region of Punjab. Little more than one half of (52.5 per cent) respondent-consumers visited Malls/Stores once a month, 28 per cent twice a month and 12.5 per cent visited the Mall/Store thrice a month. Only 7 per cent visited more often. Newspapers (37.5 per cent) were the major source of information about Shopping at Mall/Store. 32 per cent of consumers came to know about Malls/Store through Television. Remaining 22 per cent consumers rely mainly on their friends and relatives.

Statement of the Problem

It is felt that even in purchase decisions for high end products like cars, the consumers tend to be influenced to high extent by the final décor and presentation of the products.

Objectives of the Study:

The main objective of the study is to identify the consumer behavior towards Merchandise in car showrooms.

Sample size

The sample size for this research paper is 500. The questionnaire was filled and required data analysis was done after applying statistical tests.

Hypothesis of Research

There is no significant relationship between Marital status and influence on buying decision based on visual merchandise at showroom

There is no significant relationship between Occupation and influence on buying decision based on visual merchandise at showroom

Limitations of the study

- This study is restricted to city of Jamnagar only.
- This evaluation is based on primary data generated through questionnaire and collected from the respondents visiting different car showrooms.
- The sample consists of 500 urban consumers from Jamnagar city. The sample is selected conveniently and in single phase so as the opinion suggested by the executives is situation based.
- As the primary data and observational method of research has its own limitations and based on the respondent the study is limited to and it cannot be applicable to the consumers of the other states of India or at International Level.
- The study is based on the response of the customer who is highly subjective in nature and hence generalization made may not be totally true.

Hypothesis testing:

Ho 1:- There is no significant relationship between Marital status and influence on buying decision based on visual merchandise at showroom

(Table 1)

strongly agree		Mall atmosphere and décor are appealing				Total
		agree	disagree	no response		
Marital Group	Married	87	261	15	12	375
	Unmarried	57	142	7	3	209
Total		144	403	22	15	584

The cross tabulation shows that only 22 respondents (3.767%) of respondents disagree that car showroom atmosphere & décor are appealing, 261(69.6%) married respondents & 142 (67.94%) unmarried respondents agree that car showroom atmosphere and décor are appealing. Thus we can say that majority of the respondents agree or strongly agree that car showroom are appealing.

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.734 ^a	3	.434
Likelihood Ratio	2.882	3	.410
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.519	1	.112
N of Valid Cases	584		

From the chi-square output table we see that significance level of 43.4% has been achieved. This means that chi-square table is not showing systematic association between the above two variables at 55% level of confidence. Hence Null hypothesis is accepted and at 95% level of confidence we conclude that there is no significant relationship between marital status of respondents & influence on buying behavior towards cars.

Ho 2:- There is no significant relationship between Occupation and influence on buying decision based on visual merchandise at showroom.

(Table 2)

		Mall atmosphere and décor are appealing				Total
		strongly agree	agree	Disagree	no response	
Occupation	Service	27	58	2	3	90
	Business	11	15	2	1	29
	Student	8	13	0	0	21
	House wife	3	6	3	0	12
	Professional	93	307	14	11	425
Total		142	399	21	15	577

The cross tabulation shows that only 21 respondents (3.64%) of respondents disagree that car showroom atmosphere & décor are appealing, 307 (72.23%) respondents occupied as professionals & 93 (21.88%) respondents in the same category strongly agree that car showroom atmosphere and décor are appealing. Thus we can say that majority of the respondents agree or strongly agree that car showroom are appealing.

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	27.348 ^a	12	.007
Likelihood Ratio	19.898	12	.069
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.341	1	.126
N of Valid Cases	577		

From the chi-square output table we see that significance level of 7% has been achieved. This means that chi-square table is not showing systematic association between the above two variables at 93% level of confidence. Hence Null hypothesis is accepted and at 95% level of confidence we conclude that there is no significant relationship between Occupation and influence on buying decision based on perception towards the car showroom. In the above case no systematic association exist between two variables and hence test for strength of association (Phi correlation coefficient, Cramer’s V & contingency coefficient) are not required.

Conclusion

Consumer behavior is the field of study that expands the marketer’s horizon for gaining a strong foot hold in market. Visual merchandising as a tool for influencing consumers is time

tested and a proved strategy at the disposal of marketers. However from the limited above research, we can conclude with stating a point that the effect of Visual Merchandise and décor is not affecting much when consumers are looking for purchase of high end products like cars.

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