

Role Of Store Ambience And Visual Merchandising On Impulsive Buying Behavior: A Pls-Sem Approach

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Abstract

The business environment of today's has become very competitive wherein very less differentiation is there in the products being sold. The customers have also become very conscious about their shopping habits and they primarily have become need based customers. Thus, it becomes more imperative for the stores to bring the customers to their stores so that they can purchase the things which they tend not to. Thus, the present study intends to find the factors that can entice the customer to buy the things which are not in their shopping lists or that can force the customers to enter the stores. The conceptual framework for the present study is conceptualized on the previous studies wherein the combined effect of visual merchandising and ambience is studied on the impulsive buying behavior of the customers. The relationships between the antecedents of visual merchandising (window, mannequin and digital display) and ambience (color, light, décor and store layout) are also studied. Analysis of the data is done PLS SEM and smart PLS2.0 was used for the same. Analysis of the data established that impulsive buying behavior of the customers can be influenced both by visual merchandising and ambience and further on, ambience is more important in influencing the said behavior than visual merchandising. The relationships between antecedents and related constructs are also found to be significant.

Keywords: Impulsive buying, Visual Merchandising, Ambience, PLS-SEM, Mannequin display, Window display, Store layout, Color.

1. Introduction

Impulse buying also categorized as unplanned purchasing decision is often affected by various factors. The present study explores the affect of store ambience and visual merchandising on the impulse buying behavior (IBB) of the consumers. In today's competitive business environments, the marketers are looking to boost their sales and the study of customer's Impulsive buying

behavior will help them to enhance their sales. The store ambience, visual merchandising and impulse buying are related to the consumer buying behavior. It is well established that the rational customers respond to the core products which are more important for them but there are other factors like the surroundings that are also responsible for effecting the consumer's buying behavior. Thus, the store ambience also plays an important role in buying decisions. Keeping the same in mind, today's stores pay more emphasis and attention to store design, layout, architecture, texture, lighting and interior design.

Earlier, consumers were buying the products based on their functional aspects or attributes rather than any other factor. But in today's time, product attributes have become a notional and consumers are asking for added benefits while shopping or selecting the place to shop. Convenient store location has become one of the important attributes while shopping in a store. The store ambience and visual merchandising of the store are also important for the success of any retail outlet. The small traditional retailers or mom and pop stores are slowly and gradually being replaced by retail chain outlets.

1.1 Impulse Buying

In consumer buying decisions, impulse buying is always considered an important concept. The concept of impulse buying works on the principle of immediate satisfaction of internal arousal and internal urge which can be satisfied by buying a product. In other words, unplanned purchase is often called as impulsive buying. The same can be affected by many factors ranging from product packaging to colors of outer packages to store ambience to how products are placed to lighting in the store and many other factors. The act of unplanned and unstructured purchase has been regarded as impulse buying. Impulse buying effects the normal decision-making model in the consumer's brains.

Items that affect the emotional aspects of the consumers tend to be bought as impulsive buy outs. Thus, such items can be bought by the consumers that at present, are not required by them. The study titled "Issue of the Journal of Consumer Research" that got published in June 2008 suggests that the consumers show impulsive buying behavior for one brand over the other if they get distracted while shopping for those brands.

1.3 Store Ambience

Store Ambience is an integral part of the store design and is affected by the layout, coloring, lighting of the store and other visual aspects of the store. It plays an important role in enhancing

all the five senses of the consumers that entail their impulsive buying behavior. The store exterior as well as store interior comprising of coloring, lighting, flooring and product layout collectively produces and enhances the store ambience. The senses of sight smell and sound of the customers can be aroused by the store ambience that can lead to impulsive buying behavior. Vibrant colors, light fragrances, light music, and bright lighting, texture as well as art factual and architectural elements can enhance the store ambience.

1.4 Visual Merchandising

Visual merchandising mean communicating the quality image and fashion value of the store to the customers. The main aim of visual merchandising is to show apparels and other store items with accessories, thus enhancing the image of store that lead to educate the customer and encourage them to have multiple sales. The display of a store and its merchandises that is visually appealing to the customer is defined as Visual merchandising. The same can be achieved by the combination of outdoor advertising campaigns of the store, beautiful window displays, organizing special events either in the store or outside the store, with the aim of selling the goods and services to the customers being offered by the respective stores. It comprises of engaging window displays, floor as well as wall display and promotion signage. It can also be enhanced by exclusive store logo. The main objective of visual merchandising is to influence the customers to enter the store by making both store exteriors and store interiors attractive. Both the exterior and interior of the store has a deep influence on the buying behavior of the consumers, and it is opined by various researchers that great visual merchandising arouses the interest and desire to purchase in such stores. It also helps in selling the right products to the right customers by displaying the products in a visual appealing way that are liked by the right customers.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 STORE AMBIENCE

2.1.1 Lighting

Asirvatham and Mohan (2018) in their examination has clarified that the proper and apt lighting can catch moment eye and encourage the making of that good first impression of the items and its environment. In-store lighting is an important but neglected part of visual marketing, but nowadays white lighting and LEDs have become first choice of brands for influencing clients. Soomro, Kaimkhani and Iqbal (2017) studied the importance of lighting in catching the eyes of the buyers and supporting them to start the purchase. Nell (2017) found that the participants would either immediately leave a store after entering or will not even enter a store that has a poor or insufficient lighting. The customers perception about the poorly lighted store would be that the store is not selling good quality merchandise. Arousal aroused by lighting can affect customers' perceptions of the store image and the image of the products (Lunardo & Roux, 2015).

Hultén, Broweus and Van Dijk (2009) stated that awareness and interest to buy the products among the consumers can be created by appropriate lighting. The appropriate lighting helps in creating a suitable and pleasing atmosphere within the store. They also found that that proper and appropriate lighting can form a positive impression of the merchandise that is displayed in the properly lit store. Different lighting arrangements help the retailers in creating difference atmospheric environments in stores by separating one area from another. The improvement in the store's atmosphere can also be done with the help of proper lighting. (Baker & Rewal, 1992) found that traditional music and delicate lights gives customers a signal to pay higher costs.

2.1.2 Color

Nell (2017) studied the importance of color in affecting the consumers' sight experiences. Certain thoughts, ideas and experiences can be aroused within the consumers because of Color. Cultural aspects related to colors shall be kept in mind while developing the color schemes of the stores as that will help in creating pleasant atmosphere within the store and the same will stimulate positive emotions among the customers. Buyer's attitude can be impacted by a perfect blend of color and lighting. Soomro, Kaimkhani and Iqbal (2017) observed that stores with cool colors are liked more by the customers than by the stores having warm shades. It was also observed that the customers can be influenced more by blue color rather than by red color. According to Nobbs, Foong and Baker (2015), color has different characteristics, namely shade

that signifies the name of the color, like "royal" blue and value which confirms the darkness or lightness of a color, like light green or dark green. As per the different researches, color plays the most important role in influencing the customers when they enter any store. While shopping, customers choose to be in a calming, soothing and relaxing environment (Nell & Cant, 2015).

2.1.3 Store Layout

Soomro, Kaimkhani and Iqbal (2017) opined that proper and good layout of the store increases the stay of the consumers in a store. They also highlighted that the layout of any big store should be such that on one hand, it can handle as well as generate large in-house traffic and on the other hand, it can also minimize the unnecessary movement of the customers within the store. Layouts like free flow, spine layout, and grid are adopted by big stores. Stores like Nike follow free flow layout that facilitates impulse buying whereas retail outlets or grocery stores or many other types of stores have grid layouts as they have counters and shelves. Harrell, Hutt and Anderson (1980) found that a buyer in a crowded store may engage in less exploratory shopping and may be more likely to go for a familiar brand. The products on the shelves should be placed in such a way, that the same can lead to the increase of the in-store traffic of the outlet. Easy visibility as well as accessibility of the products by putting the same on the shelves at the right height can increase the traffic for the outlets. Products having lower demand are placed at the altitude so that they can grab the attention of the consumers whereas the products having high demand are positioned at the lower end.

2.1.4 Décor

While passing through any store, the décor of the store may entice the customer to wait for sometimes and later, may also motivate him/her to enter the store. Nell (2017) found that the background music or the usage of different colors or the outstanding and right placement of the merchandise in the store might develop a want to search a bit more. The customers' mood is the best judge of the atmosphere in a store. The mood of the customers can be bettered by different activities running in the store related to décor of the store. The importance of décor in bettering the mood of the customers lead to the beautification of the stores that changed the behavior pattern of the customer (Upadhyaya, 2017).

2.2 VISUAL MERCHANDISING

2.2.1 Window display

Asirvatham and Mohan (2018) stated that it is an artistic display of the products to attract the latent buyers, prompt them to buy and ultimately increase the sales of the store. Soomro, Kaimkhani and Iqbal (2017) observed that consumer behavior gets influenced by window displays that are attractive or store layouts that are properly designed, or visual merchandising that are attractive and appealing. Proper and appealing display of the products in the store can entice the customers to enter the store for further exploration of the store. Visual displays can be made more attractive by making effective use of colors and lighting around the display that can draw the attention of the customers. The same should be done in such a way that they (visual displays) shall arouse and hold consumers' interest rather than only increasing the awareness of the products to the passersby. They should also make consumers' ready to look for the displayed merchandise by entering the store and later lead the customers to try and buy the displayed merchandise (Nell, 2017). Window displays is used to create effect in retail outlets to carry out different roles such as to assist sales, to converse with consumers and to assist in communicating the shop's brand image (Singh & Srivastava, 2016).

2.2.2 Mannequin display

The main of Mannequin display is either to tell a sales story or to help the customers visualize themselves in those products, or just to showcase the latest offerings of the store. Retailers are now moving one step ahead wherein they are using the mannequin that have lifelike bodies, or celebrity faces or some latest retailers are using the latest techniques wherein customer can visualize themselves in mannequins. Asirvatham and Mohan (2018) found that latest trends n brands in store and brand's personality can be enhanced and communicated to the customers with the help of mannequin displays. A mannequin's display plays a vital role in affecting and influencing the customer to buy the product. Turley & Milliman (2000) found that excitement can be created with a prominent display that can influence quality sales.

2.2.3 Digital Display

Asirvatham and Mohan (2018) in their study came up with a result that a previous experience and/or memory helps the customers to recall an event or product once a consumer comes across that specific picture or object which they had encountered earlier or that brought a certain emotion to mind. Keeping the same in mind, the store outlets are coming up with either interactive graphics or beautiful video footages about the products or flat screen displays that help in creating a consistent brand image around multiple product offering. The graphics or video footages being displayed in the stores are in sacrosanct with what customers has witnessed in outdoor advertisements or television advertisements or in other sources of advertisements being done by the respective brands. As technology-based displays usually take up less space than physical merchandising props do, it brings more flexibility in the store layout. Nell (2017) indicated that visual stimuli leads to impulse buying as many customers do not always plan the items to be bought while visiting the stores. Some of the purchases are planned but some of the purchases are unplanned that are influenced by store layout or visual displays. Exposure to the visual stimuli creates a need in the mind of the customer that leads to unplanned purchases. In-store stimuli, including atmosphere of the store, also influences consumers emotionally that acts as a motivating factor for the spur-of-the-moment purchase. Internal and external stimuli also influence consumer behaviors. Internal stimuli can include person's emotional state, mood and self-feelings. External stimuli would include atmospheric cues in shopping environment and marketing mix stimuli (Moayery, Zamani & Vazifehdoost, 2014). External stimuli consist of exterior, interior design, lighting, and so on that influences the consumer behavior to go for an unplanned purchase (Turley & Milliman, 2000).

3. Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework is based on the concepts studied during the review of literature. The model is being conceptualized to study the relationship between impulsive buying behavior of the customers and the factors are responsible for such behavior. The study is conceptualized to establish the positive and significant effect of store ambience and visual merchandising on IBB (impulsive buying behavior). The relationship between ambience n visual merchandising and their antecedents is also established.

The conceptual model (Fig.1) to be tested in the present study is as:

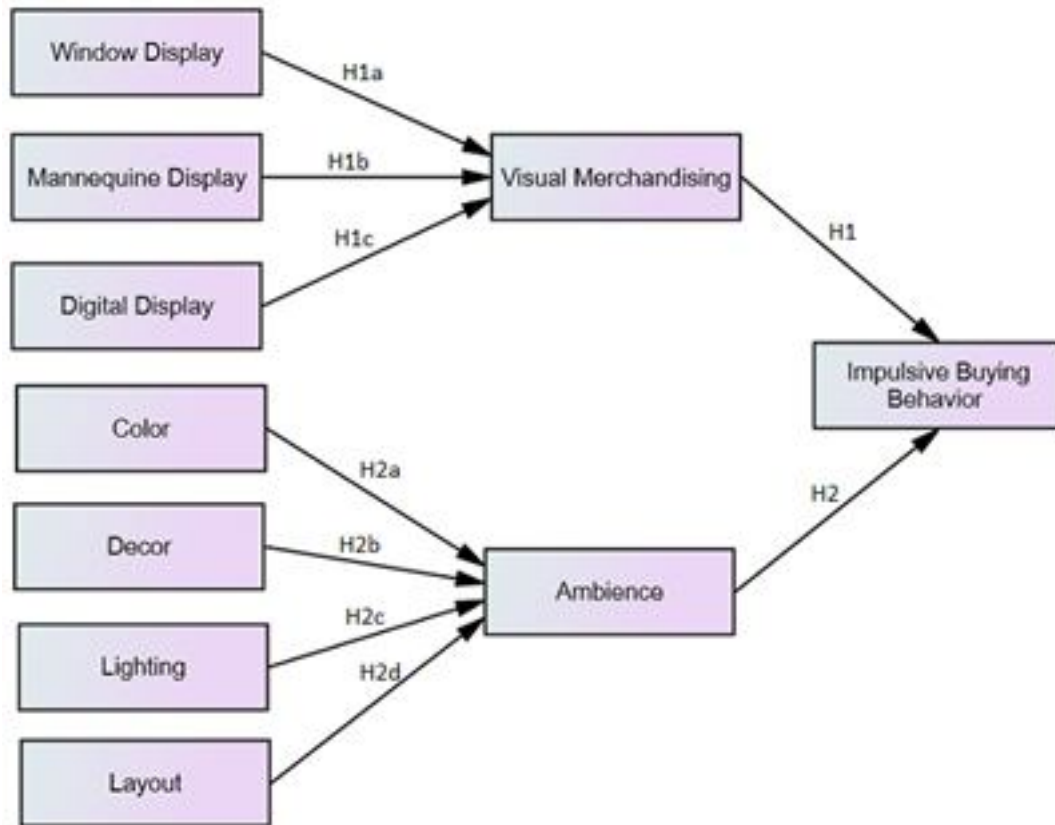


Fig.1 (Conceptual Framework)

3.1 Hypothesis

Hypothesis based on the conceptual framework and subsequent review of literature are as follows:

H1: Impulse buying behavior of the consumer has been positively and significantly influenced by visual merchandising of the store.

H1a: Visual merchandising of the store has been positively and significantly influenced by Window display in the store.

H1b: Visual merchandising of the store has been positively and significantly influenced by Mannequin display in the store.

H1c: Visual merchandising of the store has been positively and significantly influenced by Digital display in the store.

H2: Impulse buying behavior of the consumer has been positively and significantly influenced by Store ambience.

H2a: Store ambience has been positively and significantly influenced by Color.

H2b: Store ambience has been positively and significantly influenced by Decor of the store.

H2c: Store ambience has been positively and significantly influenced by Lighting in the store.

H2d: Store ambience has been positively and significantly influenced by Store layout.

4. Research Methodology

4.1 Sampling Design and Sample Size

The respondents for the present study were all the people who usually go to stores for purchasing. The statements representing different constructs were adopted from previous researches. Thorough Review of literature was done to pen down the structure of the questionnaire for this study. Face validity of the questionnaire was done by incorporating the suggestions of the five academicians from the stream of retail as well as general marketing. The data was collected from 207 respondents as the duration for collecting the data was short. Sampling technique of purposive sampling was followed to collect the data from the respondents. The structured questionnaire was designed and the link for the said questionnaire was provided to respondents through e-mail or WhatsApp. Data for the said study was collected Online.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

Information about the gender, age, level of education and monthly income of the respondents was collected at the end of the questionnaire. The anonymity about the information collected from the respondent was also promised. The sample size for the present study comprised of 207 respondents with 60.4% males and 39.6% females. 78.7% of the respondents had age below 30 years whereas age of 15.0% respondents ranged from 31 years to 45 years wherein rest of the

respondents had age more than 46 years. 33.80% of the respondents were graduates wherein the educational level of 53.60% respondents was PG or above establishing the high level of understanding of the respondents wherein very less respondents (8.7%) had the educational level of the secondary level. 25.1% of the respondents were having the monthly income of more than 30K wherein 14.5% had monthly income ranging from 20K to 30K and 14.5% were having income ranging from 10k to 20K whereas rest of the respondents had income less than 10K.

5. Analysis and Results

The technique of PLS-SEM was used to test the proposed hypotheses in the present study. Thus, different steps were followed involving the development of the conceptual model (both inner and outer models) followed by examination of the data collected, the model estimation, and the conclusion/managerial implications of the results. Steps like model specification, evaluation of outer model and evaluation of inner model were used to confirm the construct validity of the scale that involved the confirmation of convergent validity among the individual construct (relationship between indicators/items and construct) and discriminant validity among the constructs. The above steps were also used to confirm the internal reliability of the scale (Cronbach alpha) and the overall significance of the relationships between indicators & their constructs and between different constructs were also established. The internal reliability, construct validity (convergent validity as well as discriminant validity) and relationship establishment between items and construct and between different constructs were confirmed using Smart PLS 2. The detailing of every stage of PLS-SEM approach to be followed while undergoing the said approach was provided by (Hair et al., 2014).

1) Model Specification: At the stage of model specification, inner as well as outer models are developed. The structural model (inner model), underlines the relationships between the constructs that are conceptualized based on the theory or the logic whereas, the outer models, or the measurement models, studies the relationships between the items/indicator variables and their corresponding construct (Hair et al., 2014). Once the inner model establishing the relationship between constructs was designed, the outer models were conceptualized, establishing the relationship between indicators/items and their respective constructs by either using a single item scale or multi item scale (Diamantopoulos et al., 2012).

2) Outer Model Specification (Measurement Model): After developing the inner as well as outer models initially, analysis of the measurement model was done by PLS-SEM algorithm (Henseler et al., 2012). The reliability and validity of the constructs was established by this step.

- a) While assessing the validity and reliability of the different constructs, the first step was to check the composite reliability of all the constructs. Table 1 showcased the composite reliability as well as the internal consistency measured through Cronbach alpha of all the constructs. As the values of composite reliability as well as Cronbach alpha (internal reliability) for all the constructs were more than 0.7, the internal reliability for all the constructs was being established through both the reliability measurements.
- b) Once the internal reliability of the constructs was established, the second step involved the establishment of constructs' validity. To examine the validity of all the constructs, the constructs' convergent validity and discriminant validity were to be established. AVE (average variance extracted) of any construct is the measurement of convergent validity and if AVE value for any construct is more than 0.5, the convergent validity of that construct is established (Hair et al., 2014). The value of convergent validity (AVE) for all the constructs are given in table 1. As per table 1, the convergent validity (AVE more than 0.5) of all the constructs is established. (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Table 1 (Measurement Model: Composite & Internal Reliability and Convergent Validity)

Constructs	Items	Loadings	Composite Reliability	Cronbachs Alpha	AVE
AMBIENCE	AMB1	0.7421	0.871	0.8016	0.629
	AMB2	0.7432			
	AMB3	0.844			
	AMB4	0.8369			
BEHAVIOR	Beh1	0.6073	0.7474	0.6178	0.519
	Beh4	0.7708			
	Beh5	0.7308			
COLOR	Col1	0.8496	0.8477	0.7297	0.6501
	Col2	0.792			
	Col3	0.7754			
DÉCOR	Deco1	0.8171	0.8474	0.7301	0.6493
	Deco2	0.8108			
	Deco3	0.7892			
DIGITAL	Dig1	0.7846	0.8368	0.7083	0.631

	Dig2	0.8038			
	Dig3	0.7945			
LAYOUT	Lay1	0.6935	0.8522	0.768	0.5912
	Lay3	0.8066			
	Lay4	0.7811			
	Lay5	0.7894			
LIGHTING	Lig2	0.8615	0.8899	0.8143	0.7293
	Lig3	0.8688			
	Lig4	0.8312			
MANNEQUIN DISPLAY	Mann1	0.7947	0.8539	0.7433	0.6609
	Mann2	0.8309			
	Mann3	0.813			
VISUAL MERCHANDISING	Vis_Mer1	0.7433	0.8283	0.6905	0.6168
	Vis_Mer2	0.7983			
	Vis_Mer3	0.8129			
WINDOW DISPLAY	Wind2	0.7948	0.8463	0.728	0.6475
	Wind3	0.8309			
	Wind4	0.7877			

Discriminant validity showcases that how much one construct is empirically different from all other constructs. Fornell and Larcker (1981) provided one criterion for assessing the discriminant validity wherein the AVE of the construct should be higher than squared correlation with any other construct. The value of discriminant validity for all the constructs are given in table 2. As per table 2, the discriminant validity of all the constructs is established as per the criterion suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981) was established.

Table 2 (Discriminant Validity)

	AMB	BEH	Color	Decor	Digital	Layout	Light	Mann	VIS_MER	Wind
AMB	0.793									
BEH	0.365	0.720								
Color	0.764	0.264	0.806							
Decor	0.729	0.340	0.493	0.806						
Digital	0.655	0.278	0.562	0.560	0.794					
Layout	0.722	0.336	0.538	0.561	0.643	0.769				
Light	0.730	0.331	0.597	0.569	0.541	0.610	0.854			
Mann	0.540	0.236	0.511	0.432	0.555	0.499	0.495	0.813		
VIS_MER	0.615	0.335	0.543	0.502	0.757	0.588	0.532	0.754	0.785	
Wind	0.525	0.252	0.403	0.413	0.522	0.566	0.474	0.531	0.679	0.805

AMB: Ambience, BEH: Impulsive Behavior, COLOR: Color, DECOR: Décor, DIGTIAL: Digital, LAYOUT: Layout, LIGHT: Lighting, MANN: Mannequin Display, VIS_MER: Visual Merchandising, WIND: Window Display

- c) **Evaluation of Inner model:** Once the reliability and validity were established of the outer models, the next step was to evaluate the significance of the hypothesized relationships of the inner models. For facilitating the model's assessment, assessment of path coefficients, coefficient of determination (R^2) and cross-validated redundancy (Q^2) was done. But before the above-mentioned steps, the potential collinearity issues among the constructs of the inner model was also tested. Since the tolerance value was '>' 0.2 and the value of VIF was '<' 5, there was no issue of collinearity among the constructs in the inner model. (Table 3a, 3b, 3c).

Table 3a: Tolerance and VIF Values for Collinearity

Coefficients ^a								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	8.758E-06	.039		.000	1.000		
	WIND	.324	.051	.324	6.402	.000	.597	1.674
	DIGITAL	.152	.049	.152	3.067	.002	.625	1.600
	MANN	.506	.048	.506	10.509	.000	.660	1.515
a. Dependent Variable: VIS_MER								

Table 3b: Tolerance and VIF Values for Collinearity

Coefficients ^a								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-5.609E-06	.019		.000	1.000		
	COLOR	.280	.025	.280	11.189	.000	.581	1.722
	DECOR	.310	.025	.310	12.477	.000	.589	1.699
	LAYOUT	.307	.026	.307	11.782	.000	.534	1.871
	LIGHT	.280	.027	.280	10.260	.000	.488	2.049
a. Dependent Variable: AMB								

Table 3c: Tolerance and VIF Values for Collinearity

Coefficients ^a								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.783E-07	.065		.000	1.000		
	AMB	.256	.082	.256	3.129	.002	.622	1.609
	VIS_MER	.177	.082	.177	2.158	.032	.622	1.609
a. Dependent Variable: BEH								

d) **Coefficient of determination (R^2)**. The predictive accuracy of the model is established by the value of R^2 . The value of R^2 represents the collective effect of exogenous variable(s) on the endogenous variable(s). For the following study, the mentioned criterion (rule of thumb) wherein R^2 value above the values of 0.75, 0.50, 0.25, respectively, illustrating substantial, moderate, or weak levels of predictive accuracy was used (Hair et al., 2011). Table 4 provides the R^2 value mentioning the collective effect of exogenous variables on endogenous variables. Since, the value of R^2 is all three cases is more than 0.4, we can substantiate that the predictive accuracy for all the three relations is between weak and moderate.

e) **Cross-validated redundancy (Q^2)**. The value of Q^2 represents the predictive relevance of inner model. The value of Q^2 builds on the technique of sample re-use. The smaller difference between predicted and original values indicates the more value of Q^2 which represents the high predictive accuracy of the model. Q^2 value greater than zero for an endogenous construct established the predictive relevance of the path model for that construct. As the value of Q^2 (Table 4) is more than zero for all the endogenous variables, predictive relevance of the inner model was proved (Ringle et al., 2012).

Table 4: Values of R^2 (co-efficient of Determination) and Q^2 (Predictive Relevance)

Total	R^2	Relationship	SSO	SSE	1-SSE/SSO	Predictive Relevance
AMB	0.9271	Substantial	824	352.5059	0.5722	High
BEH	0.4512	Weak to Moderate	618	481.597	0.2207	Medium
VIS_MER	0.8222	Substantial	618	307.1498	0.503	High

f) **Path Co-efficients:** After running a PLS model, estimates (T-stats) were studied for the path coefficients. The value of the t-stats (estimates) determines the significance of the relationship between the endogenous and exogenous and constructs or the hypothesis proposed for the different relationships. The estimate of value more than 1.96 signifies that the relationship between the constructs is significant at 95% level of confidence and estimate more than 1.645 signifies that the relationship is significant at 90%. Table 5 illustrates the path-coefficients of all the relationships of the conceptual model.

Table 5: Path Co-efficient (Path Model)

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	Standard Error (STERR)	T Statistics (O/STERR)	Relationship
AMB -> BEH	0.2564	0.2662	0.0824	0.0824	3.1105**	Significant
Color -> AMB	0.2796	0.2789	0.0251	0.0251	11.1517**	Significant
Decor -> AMB	0.3096	0.3092	0.0226	0.0226	13.7046**	Significant
Digital -> VIS_MER	0.4848	0.4843	0.0461	0.0461	10.5167**	Significant
Layout -> AMB	0.3069	0.3078	0.0255	0.0255	12.036**	Significant
Light -> AMB	0.2796	0.2784	0.0256	0.0256	10.9428**	Significant
Mann -> VIS_MER	0.3609	0.3625	0.0387	0.0387	9.3198**	Significant
VIS_MER -> BEH	0.1768	0.1747	0.0922	0.0922	1.9178*	Significant
Wind -> VIS_MER	0.234	0.2357	0.0471	0.0471	4.9645**	Significant

* Significant at 90%

** Significant at 95%

AMB: Ambience, BEH: Impulsive Behavior, COLOR: Color, DECOR: Store decor, DIGTIAL: Digital display, LAYOUT: Store layout, LIGHT: Store lighting, MANN: Mannequin Display, VIS_MER: Visual Merchandising, WIND: Window Display

6. Findings and Discussion

As the present study was conceptualized to study the factors responsible for Impulsive buying behavior, factors like visual merchandising and ambience were found to be responsible for IBB. The relationship of the antecedents of visual merchandising and ambience were also found to be significant with their respective constructs. Out of the three antecedents of visual merchandising, mannequin display ($r=0.506$) was the most important followed by window display ($r=0.324$) and the least important was store layout but all the three were significant (Table 3a). In case of

ambience, décor was found to be most important ($r=0.310$) closely followed by layout ($r=0.307$) and rest of the two i.e. color and light had same importance ($r=0.280$) (table 3b). Studying the final model revealed that ambience played an important role in inciting the impulsive buying behavior ($r=0.256$) rather than visual merchandising ($r=0.177$) but both found to be significant and important for entailing the impulsive buying behavior in the consumers. As per Table 5, all the hypothesis proposed were found to be significant and positive stating that IBB has been affected by visual merchandising and ambience. The customer tends to buy the things impulsively if the store has pleasant and soothing ambience and the store also has appealing merchandising. Visual merchandising is important to bring the customers inside the store, for that, mannequin as well as window displays are the most important since these are the factors which are forcing the passersby to enter the store. The next important factor for impulsive buying behavior is the ambience of the store. Once the customer is inside the store, lighting in the store, color combinations of the store, how and where products are placed (Store layout) and décor of the store influences the customers to buy the products which they are supposed not to buy. These all combine to make the ambience of the store pleasant as well as soothing and relaxing, thus, influencing the impulsive buying behavior of the customers.

The present study highlights the importance of ambience and visual merchandising in increasing the sales of the stores as well as various brands. In today's competitive environment wherein, there is not much of a difference in the products being sold, the presentation and the place where such products are sold make a lot of difference. The store managers should make their store well-lit with bright lights that enhances the visibility of the product, on one hand and on the other hand, makes the customer feel good. The right product placements also increase the sales of the products. The chocolates and candies near the cash counter are placed keeping the same in mind as the children as well as their parents spend some time near the cash counters and the children can force their parents to buy such things that are still not in the shopping list of the parents. Window, digital and mannequin displays entices the customers to enter the stores where such displays are attractive and well organized, and the customers don't want to enter those stores where such displays are not present. Such displays also ensure the customers that the subsequent has the availability of products which are in demand and are according to latest trends. Such displays assure the customers that the store has wide range of products available with it. Since

ambience is more important in enticing the impulsive buying behavior than visual merchandising, the stores shall pay more attention in making their stores lively, full of music with bright lighting, beautiful décor and proper product placements as it is the ambience which is more important for impulsive buying behavior. Visual merchandising can play a role in bringing the customer inside the store but it the store ambience which will compel the customer to buy the things that are not in his/her shopping list.

7. Limitations and Future Scope

As every study is conceptualized with limited resources and limited information, the present research is also conceptualized with limited information. The present research has studied only two factors i.e. visual merchandising and ambience being responsible for impulsive buying behavior. There would be other factors that can have positive affect on IBB but the same are still unexplored. Thus, future research would be done with more unexplored factors after studying more literature. The present research was quantitative in nature which may be somewhat biased wherein the same research can be administered with different qualitative techniques that may explore the factors responsible for IBB in an unbiased way. The sample size for the present study was 207 which was on the lower side. The results would be elaborative if the sample size would have been on the higher side.

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