

A Study on Customer Perception and Attitude Towards Visual Merchandising with Special Reference to Coimbatore City

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Abstract: *This study analyses customer perception and attitude towards visual merchandising practices in retail stores with reference to Coimbatore city. Visual merchandising plays a vital role in influencing customer buying behaviour by enhancing store ambience, product display, lighting, and layout design. The research aims to examine how demographic factors and visual elements impact customer satisfaction, revisit intention, and purchase decisions. The study adopts a descriptive research design and uses convenience sampling to collect primary data from 50 respondents through a structured questionnaire. The study concludes that effective visual merchandising strategies can enhance customer experience, increase impulse buying, and strengthen brand image in competitive retail environments*

Keywords: Visual Merchandising, Customer Perception, Buying Behaviour, Retail Stores

I. INTRODUCTION

Visual merchandising has evolved as a strategic retail tool that integrates store layout, window displays, lighting, colour combinations, signage, and product arrangement to enhance customer experience. In modern retail environments, customers are increasingly influenced by visual stimuli that shape their perception and buying behaviour. Retailers invest significantly in creating attractive store presentations to differentiate themselves from competitors and to increase sales performance. The perceptions influence attitudes, satisfaction levels, and purchase decisions. Positive visual merchandising creates emotional engagement, encourages longer store visits, and stimulates impulse buying. In a rapidly growing retail city like Coimbatore, understanding customer perception towards visual merchandising becomes essential for improving store performance and competitive positioning.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To analyse customer perception towards visual merchandising practices in retail stores.
- To examine customer attitudes towards various elements of visual merchandising.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

With the rapid expansion of organized retail formats in Coimbatore, retailers are increasingly adopting visual merchandising techniques to attract customers. However, many retailers are uncertain about the actual effectiveness of these strategies in influencing customer perception and purchase behaviour. Customers are exposed to various visual elements such as lighting, layout design, signage, and product displays, but the extent to which these elements impact satisfaction and revisit intention remains unclear. Therefore, it becomes essential to systematically analyse customer perception and attitude towards visual merchandising to provide actionable insights for retailers.



SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study examines customer perception and attitude towards visual merchandising in retail stores in Coimbatore city. It analyses how elements like store layout, lighting, displays, and product arrangement influence buying behaviour. The study also evaluates the relationship between demographic factors and customer perception. The findings will help retailers improve store presentation, increase customer satisfaction, and enhance sales performance.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is a systematic and scientific way of gathering, examining, and understanding data, whether it is in numerical or descriptive form, to address research questions or validate hypotheses.

Sample Size and Sample Technique

Sample Size: 50 respondents

Sampling Method: Convenience sampling.

Statistical Tools:

Percentage analysis

Chi-Square analysis

Anova analysis

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kotler & Keller (2012)¹ explained that sales promotion, including discounts and limited-period offers, act as short-term incentives that strongly stimulate consumer buying behaviour, especially in online environments where consumers can easily compare prices and make quick purchasing decisions. The authors emphasized that time-limited offers create urgency and perceived value, accelerating decision-making and often leading to impulsive purchases. The research also suggested that promotions must align with brand image and target audience, highlighting the role of psychological triggers such as scarcity and exclusivity, and reinforcing the importance of integrating promotional tactics with broader marketing strategies.

Mehta & Singh (2024)² analyzed the effectiveness of personalized festival offers and app-based notifications in enhancing customer engagement and purchase frequency in online retail. Their study revealed that targeted promotions increase impulse buying and overall satisfaction by providing relevant, timely incentives. They emphasized the importance of data analytics in delivering customized offers aligned with individual preferences. The study highlighted that personalization strengthens emotional connection with the brand, fosters repeat purchases, and that combining digital merchandising with festive promotions maximizes revenue. Overall, the research confirmed that integrating technology, personalization, and psychological triggers is essential for successful online retail strategies.

Bastianpillai & Marasinghe (2023)³ conducted a study in Sri Lanka exploring the role of visual merchandising elements on supermarket customers' impulse buying decisions. Researchers found that product placement, window displays, signage, and store layout strongly influenced unplanned purchases. The study highlighted that visual cues create immediate emotional responses, increasing engagement and encouraging spending. They emphasized integrating merchandising strategies with overall store design to enhance customer experience. The research demonstrated that impulse buying is moderated by individual shopper characteristics, including impulsivity and purchase motivation. Findings suggested that small adjustments in display and layout significantly impact sales, reinforcing the importance of visual merchandising in shaping purchasing behavior in contemporary retail.



III. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS

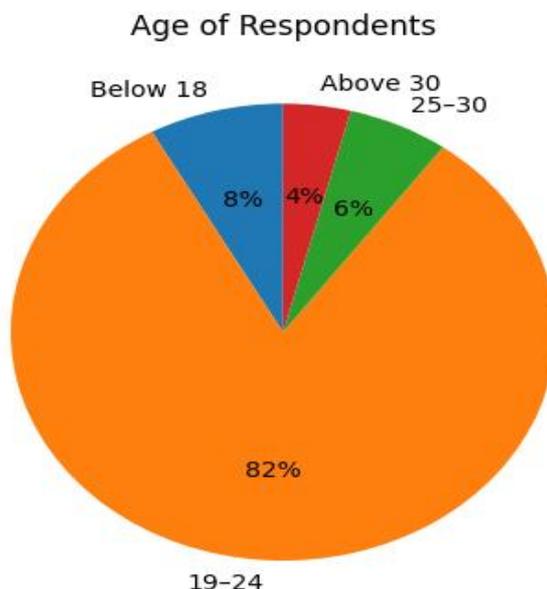
Table 1 Age of Respondents

Age	Respondents	Percentage
Below 18 Years	4	8%
19–24 Years	41	82%
25 – 30 Years	3	6%
Above 30 Years	2	4%
Total	50	100

Source data: Questionnaire

Interpretation:

The above table presents that the majority **82%** of the respondents are in the age group of **19–24 years**. **8%** of the respondents belong to the below 18 age group, **6%** are in the age group of 25-30 years and only **4%** are above 30 years.



CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS

Hypothesis Statement:

H₀: There is no significant association between Age of Respondents and Satisfaction Level.

H₁: There is a significant association between Age of Respondents and Satisfaction Level.

TABLE 2: AGE OF RESPONDENTS AND SATISFACTION LEVEL

Chi-Square Tests	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	13.84	9	0.128
Likelihood Ratio	14.52	9	0.105
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.36	1	0.243
N of Valid Cases	50		

Source: Calculated Data



INTERPRETATION:

The Pearson Chi-Square value is 13.84 with 9 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.128. Since the p-value (0.128) is greater than the significance level of 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted. This indicates that there is no significant association between age of respondents and satisfaction level. Satisfaction levels do not significantly vary across different age groups.

ANOVA ANALYSIS

Hypothesis Statement:

H_0 : There is no significant difference in the mean perception scores of respondents across different Age groups.

H_1 : There is a significant difference in the mean perception scores of respondents across different Age groups.

TABLE NO.3: PERCEPTION SCORE ON VISUAL MERCHANDISING AND AGE GROUPS

ANOVA	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig. (p-value)
Between Groups	142.36	3	47.45	4.28	0.009
Within Groups	497.14	46	10.81		
Total	639.50	49			

Source data: Calculated Data

INTERPRETATION:

Since the p-value (0.009) is less than 0.05, there is a statistically significant difference in the perception of visual merchandising among respondents belonging to different age groups. This indicates that age plays a vital role in shaping customer perception towards store ambience, layout, and visual appeal. Younger respondents exhibit comparatively higher sensitivity towards visual merchandising elements.

FINDINGS

Majority of the respondents (82%) belong to the age group of 19–24 years.

The Chi-square analysis reveals no significant association between Age of Respondents and Satisfaction Level ($p = 0.128 > 0.05$), indicating that satisfaction levels do not significantly vary across different age groups.

There is a significant difference in perception of visual merchandising across different age groups ($p = 0.009 < 0.05$), indicating that age significantly influences how customers perceive store ambience, layout, and visual appeal.

SUGGESTIONS

Retailers should prioritize attractive product displays and effective lighting systems.

Store layouts should be neat, organized, and spacious to enhance customer comfort.

Retailers should focus on age-specific visual strategies targeting younger consumers.

IV. CONCLUSION

The study confirms that visual merchandising significantly influences customer perception and buying behaviour in retail stores of Coimbatore city. Key elements such as product display, lighting, and store layout play a critical role in shaping shopping experience and satisfaction. While demographic factors like gender and education show limited influence, age emerges as a significant determinant of perception differences.

Effective visual merchandising enhances store attractiveness, increases impulse purchases, and strengthens brand positioning. Retailers who strategically invest in visually appealing environments can achieve higher customer engagement and improved sales performance. Therefore, visual merchandising should be treated as a core retail strategy rather than merely a decorative element.



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