

A Study of Customer Perception on Signage and Graphics Used as Visual Merchandising Component at Apparel Outlet

Sana Ashraf .T¹, Dr.V.Savitha²

¹PhD Research Scholar, Bishop Appasamy College of Arts & Science, Coimbatore.

²M.B.A, M.phil, Ph.D, Assistant Director, Self-Finance Programmes- Campus II, Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Home Science and Higher Education for Women (Deemed to be University), Coimbatore.

Abstract

It is important to analyse the perception of customer shopping behaviour particularly at customer oriented retail stores. Visual merchandising has extreme impact on designing a well-structured store and through that increase the walking & sale. Visual merchandising plays a crucial function in luring and engaging customers in the ever-evolving retail sector. Signage and graphics are essential elements of visual merchandising that have a big influence on the appearance and usability of a shop. This study attempts to investigate and comprehend how working women customers perceive signs and graphics in retail establishments. Understanding their perspectives and preferences allows merchants to improve their store design and ensure their customers incredible shopping experiences, eventually resulting in more consumer satisfaction and loyalty.

Keywords: Signage, Graphics, Visual Merchandising, Retail, Customer Perception

Introduction

Retailing has been around since the beginning, in a way. Already, it may have been a direct exchange, a trade course of action, or an esteemed thing was exchanged. As innovation fuels and individual purchasing patterns change at an ever quicker rate, online commerce is becoming increasingly popular. An assortment of channels can currently be used by customers, including in person, via the Internet or through mobile devices. As a result of these developments, it is more important than ever for retailers to work together with one another in order to attract customers' inclinations and monitor the involvement of clients at retail outlets so that consumers choose physical stores over other channels (Michael & Johannes, 2020). It must be an extensive range of products, visible and easy to find. It is necessary for shops to have readily visible inventory because of the ability of customers to interact physically with their own goods and buy what they see. As a result of the emotional connection created by it, buyers are likely to purchase goods (Randhawa & Saluja, 2017). It is said that signs are an immediate and simple way of communicating about a product. In fact, they'd been split into two groups. It was claimed that fixed signs were put up to provide information on the area and establishments of a shop, such as outlets or payment facilities. The right signs are noted to increase the sale. They contend that at the point of

purchase signs, such as speaker cards, posters, and graphics, information about the product or establishment as well as encouragement to buy should be displayed (C.Saricam, et al, 2018).

Literature Study

Signs, graphics and lighting are the main factors influencing women consumers to buy products from organized outlets; therefore they should be taken into account that these attractive elements of a commercial space have attracted female customers' attention (Shabana & Radha,2018) . It has been discovered that appropriate signs have boosted sales of the product. Signs, which are the silent salesman of the retailer, must reflect the right image of the brand. Signage comes in a variety of forms. Advertising signs that alert customers about sales events or special offers are examples. The buyer is directed by location signs to particular items or departments. Details of the activities, rules and related matters are provided in the institution's signs. Informational signs provide details about the product such as its benefits, size, price and other information. Technological displays provide a more efficient way to show the features, functionality and appeal of products to buyers. Another advantage of the technology displays is that they occupy fewer spaces than other types of display advertising, in which products and scenes are used to give a story and encourage purchase by customers (Asirvatham & Mohan,2014).

Advertising signs play an important role in establishing the image of a store. With in-store signage, and information about products being presented above the shopping cart shelves, retailers will be able to attract more customers and increase sales. There is often more favourable reaction by consumers to advertising in stores. In particular, they noted that in the course of the shopping experience, the signs contributed to precise product selection, time savings and comfort. It was found that the vast majority of customers are coming in for a purchase on account of the store's design appeal and display of mannequins. Signs are an inexpensive way to reach customers and let them know of the products that they can buy from a shop. In-store displays are the primary variables influencing purchases since customers are driven to see things that are attractively organised and displayed within the outlet (Dixit & Singh, 2018).

Signs and graphics shall be provided within the premises of the store. An adequate indication sign in the store as well as local language must be part of a sign and display system. The signs must be informative and clear. Most large retailers have signs including size, location of the store and prize. Visual signals can be classified as stimuli, leading customers to take a look at all the shops and often result in impulse purchases. Lighting targeted advertising in front of shops should be used as well as regular updating of the signs, with a view to attracting customers at night (Rajeev Kumar, 2022).The same effect on influencing consumers to make a purchase can also be achieved by promoting retail stores. By focusing on the shop fragrance and fine-tuning advertising signs, it is necessary to establish a strategic balance between the visual merchandising aspects in the super market stores (Rathnayaka & Madhuhansi,2017).

Nearly 94 % of consumers when entering a retail outlet first saw all displays and promotional signs that were available in the store. Displays in the windows are a way to get the customer's attention and get them to the shop. The retailer should always take into account the fact that the consumer has only spent a few seconds at the display, so that it is important for the retailer to place such a display to attract and attract the customer, or to make the customer visit the store or provide the required information to the consumer (Kapil Shankhwar,2017). Even though the purchasing decision has already been made before entering the store, using digital signs for displays can help to persuade customers to buy a product. Digital displays provide quick, cost-effective, and time-efficient creation of fresh material for the

audience (Swarnalatha & Soundhariya, 2019). Signage may be found indoors or outside. When a consumer enters store, interior signage makes it easier for them to find their way around without having to contact a store employee for assistance (A. Upadhyay, et al, 2023). The customer experience will be enhanced through promotional signs and displays on the floor. In order to prevent customers from having difficulties and also not requiring the assistance of sales persons, promotion posters should be clearly marked (Mehta & Chugan, 2013). In the study, 93 % of customers were found to be interested in all display and marketing signs on store premises when entering a shop. The purpose of windows displays is to draw customers' attention to the shop and entice them inside. The retailers should be aware that customers only spend a few seconds at the display and it is important for them to have such displays in place so they can attract clients or force them to visit their shops, or provide customer with necessary information (Amandeep .K,2013). A shortage of sales staff may be overcome by store signs communicating a sale message to the customer. In order to provide customers with a clear understanding of what is in stock, signs relating to different product sections shall be clearly displayed in designated areas. To make it easier for the customer to find his favourite brands, there are also brand signs placed in sections of products where various brands have their own pull. The signs also contribute to informing customers about the various promotional schemes that could be present in the store within the product sections (Emmanuel & James,2022).

Objectives of Study

1. To study the impact of signage & graphics on working women customer
2. To analyse the customer perception on organising signage & graphics at retail store.

Research Methodology

The present study was carried out in the city of Coimbatore and 50 samples were gathered. Surveys are conducted using a simple random sample method Well-structured questionnaire surveys were used to acquire the data. Five-point Likert scales have been used as a measurement tool to examine how much customers anticipate from retail merchandising and how they perceive it. Google form was used to collect responses. For the survey, only working women are enrolled. Customer Perception considered as dependent variable and Signage & Graphics taken as independent variable.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Demographic Detail

Demographics	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Age	21 – 30	27	54
	31 – 40	16	32
	41 – 50	4	8
	51 – 60	2	4
	60 - Above	1	2
	Total	50	100
Marital Status	Married	27	54
	Unmarried	22	44
	Divorced	1	2
	Total	50	100

Educational Qualification	School Level	1	2
	Graduate	26	52
	Post Graduate	23	46
	Total	50	100
Occupation	Govt Employee	4	8
	Private	43	86
	Retired	1	2
	Business	2	4
	Total	50	100
Monthly income In Rupees	Below 10000	1	2
	10001- 15000	4	8
	15001- 20000	8	16
	20001- 25000	19	38
	25001- Above	18	36
	Total	50	100
Area of residence	Urban	43	86
	Rural	7	14
	Total	50	100

Table 1 shows that from 50 responses, 54% of working women are comes in 21-30 age group, 32% of respondents are 31-40, 8% are 41-50, 4% women are 51-60, 2% belongs above 60 age. 54% working women are married, 44% are unmarried, 2% respondents are divorced. Educational qualification of 2% Working women are school level, majority of working women 52% are graduate, 46% respondents are post graduate. 8% are government employees, high majority 86% women working in private companies, 2% got retired, 4% women are doing business. 2% respondents earns below Rs.10000 per month, 8% receives Rs.11000-15000 salary, 16% earns Rs.15001-20000, 38% women salary is Rs.20001-25000, 36% respondents income is above 25000. 86% majority of respondents are resident at urban area and 14% are from rural region.

Table 2: Reliability Test

Dimension	No.of Items	Cronbach's Alpha Value
Signage & Graphics	18	0.901

Table 2 shows the Cronbach's alpha value of signage& graphic attained value (0.901), which means research instrument ensured high level of acceptance in stability and consistency. Hence data is reliable and can be accepted.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics: customer perception of signage & graphics

	Statement	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Images have a greater ability than just words to narrative message.	50	1	5	3.66	1.000

2	Signs are strategically placed outside the establishment to attract the attention of potential customers and guide them to the right place.	50	1	5	3.82	0.919
3	Retailers may use sale sign boards to draw consumers, improve foot traffic, and enhance sales while running special promotions.	50	1	5	3.74	0.944
4	Short, memorable, and convincing advertising captions are effective.	50	1	5	3.7	0.839
5	Mindful color combinations for readability, especially when using text on a colored background.	50	1	5	3.82	0.983
6	Large banners can serve as a powerful branding tool.	50	1	5	3.8	0.948
7	A wider audience, including people with visual impairments, can be more inclusive and accessible with larger fonts.	50	1	5	3.90	0.814
8	Awareness of offers and discounts ensure that thoroughly check the relevant sections before proceeding to the billing counter.	50	1	5	4.16	0.681
9	Phrases that inspire action, such as "save," "buy," "get," or "try," to motivate to browse the section.	50	1	5	4.06	0.74
10	The design and colour scheme of offer board ensure that the minimal caption stands out and is visually appealing.	50	1	5	3.82	0.661
11	A strong visual impact from well-designed graphic graphics may help an advertising stand out and attract the attention of viewers	50	1	5	3.78	0.84
12	Signages at high-traffic areas to attract attention and inform	50	1	5	3.88	0.849

	people about ongoing sales events.					
13	An advertisement that is properly timed and placed is more likely to get people's attention.	50	1	5	3.90	0.839
14	An effective picture, video, or headline may have a big impact on how quickly a viewer's attention is captured by an advertisement.	50	1	5	4.04	0.807
15	Bigger screen may improve the shopping experience, entice people, and communicate key messages or deals.	50	1	5	4.02	0.742
16	The store's branding, emblem, and essential messaging may be displayed in a prominent manner on barricade graphics.	50	1	5	4.06	0.89
17	Videos may successfully highlight any special characteristics or capabilities of new products.	50	1	5	4.00	0.857
18	A store's visually appealing signage may entice consumers by causing them to pause and investigate the space.	50	1	5	4.32	0.653

Table 3 shows the customer perception about influence of signage & graphics at store outlet. Highest mean value score (4.32) support: A store's visually appealing signage may entice consumers by causing them to pause and investigate the space, second highest mean value (4.16) indicate: Awareness of offers and discounts ensure that thoroughly check the relevant sections before proceeding to the billing counter, lowest mean value (3.66) statuses: Images have a greater ability than just words to narrative message. All the variables has mean value above (3.00), it means all variables have influence on signage&graphics.

Table 4: ANOVA Test for Significant difference on customer perception of signage & graphics

ANOVA						
Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
Between Groups	25.1022	17	1.4766	2.0922	0.0059	
Within Groups	622.48	882	0.7057			

H0: There is no significant difference on customer perception of signage and graphics.

H1: There is significant difference on customer perception of signage and graphics.

Table 4 explains the significance test for signage & graphics, one way- ANOVA test used here to determine statistically significant value (p value - 0.005), thus value is lesser than 0.05, signage & graphics has significant difference. H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted. Working women customers shows different perception upon influence of signage & graphic in buying apparels at retail store. Present retail brands are highly focused on customer orientated merchandising to accomplish customer satisfaction and loyalty. Here study describes the significant differences on perception of signage & graphics on purchasing apparels from retail store.

Conclusion

This study conducted to understand the working women customer perception on visual merchandising component signage & graphics. From the result of study it shows that there is significant difference in the perception of signage & graphics on influencing customers to buy the apparels at retail store. Present women are well updated in awareness of apparel purchase. Study supports the brand's visual merchandising tool which is signage & graphics as abundant level of contribution. Purchase behaviour of every women varies and challengeable in apparel market. The main purpose of signage & graphic like (Informational, seasonal, festival and promotional) are to convey the messages to customer. Customers perceive merchandising ideas in different phases. From this study resulted that majority customers agreed store's visually appealing signage may entice them to pause and investigate the space. Awareness of offers and discounts through signage & graphics ensure that thoroughly check the relevant sections before proceeding to the billing counter. Present day Ai design installations on signage & graphics helps retailers to alter the transformation of traditional visual merchandising techniques to modernized medium.

Reference

1. Amandeep Kaur , Effect Of Visual Merchandising On Buying Behavior Of Customers In Chandigarh, International Journal Of Engineering Science And Innovative Technology (Ijesit) Volume 2, Issue 3, May 2013.
2. A.Prabu Asirvatham & Dr.N.Mohan , Effect Of Visual Merchandising On Consumer Buying Behaviour, Ijsr - International Journal Of Scientific Research Volume : 3 , Issue : 12, December 2014.
3. C Saricam , N Okur , D. Erdem , S. Akdag And B.E. Kilikci , Analyzing The Visual Merchandising Elements For The Apparel Retailers, 18th World Textile Conference (Autex 2018) Iop Conf. Series: Materials Science And Engineering 460 (2018) 012010 Iop Publishing.
4. Dr. Aditya Upadhyay , Dr. Sangeeta Jauhari , Dr.Vijay Singh , Visual Merchandising Elements: In-Store Vs. Online A Comparative Study To Explore Online Counterparts Of In-Store Visual Merchandising Elements, International Journal Of Novel Research And Development, | Volume 8, Issue 6 June 2023.
5. Dr.C.Swarnalatha, S.Soundhariya , Technological Innovations And Visual Merchandising In Retail Stores, Journal Of Emerging Technologies And Innovative Research (Jetir), R February 2019, Volume 6, Issue 2

6. Emmanuel Nyagba & James Tersoo Tsetim, Visual Merchandising And Consumer Buying Behaviour Among Retail Stores In Makurdi Metropolis, *Quest Journals Of Research In Business And Management* Volume 10- Issue 1(2022) Pp: 77-88.
7. Kapil Shankhwar, Influence Of Visual Merchandising On Buying Behavior Of Consumers In Gwalior, *Ijariie-Issn(O)-2395-4396*, Vol-3 Issue-3 2017.
8. Komaldeep Randhawa & Rajni Saluja, Does Visual Merchandising Have An Effect On Consumer Impulse Buying Behavior? A Study With Special Reference To Apparels In Punjab, *Journal Of General Management Research*, Vol. 4, Issue 2, July 2017, Pp. 58–71
9. Manas Dixit & Dr.V.B.Singh, The Impact Of Visual Merchandising On Consumer Impulsive Buying Behaviour, *International Journal Of Creative Research Thoughts (Ijcr)* Volume 6, Issue 1 January 2018 , Issn: 2320-2882
10. Michael Colin Cant & Johannes Arnoldes Wiid, Visual Merchandising Elements: Drivers Of Retail Strategies, *The Journal Of Applied Business Research – October/November 2020* Volume 36, Number 5.
11. Neha P. Mehta & Pawan K. Chugan , The Impact Of Visual Merchandising On Impulse Buying Behavior Of Consumer: A Case From Central Mall Of Ahmedabad India, *Universal Journal Of Management* 1(2): 76-82, 2013.
12. Rajeev Kumar, Facets Of Visual Merchandising, *International Journal Of Research Publication And Reviews*, Vol 3, No 6, Pp 2524-2536, June 2022
13. R.M.U.R.K. Rathnayaka & W.H.T Madhuhansi , The Impact Made By Visual Merchandising Elements On Purchase Intension: With Special Reference To Supermarket Industry In Western Province, *International Journal Of Scientific And Research Publications*, Volume 7, Issue 9, September 2017.
14. Shabana K A, Dr S Radha, Factors Of Visual Merchandising And Store Image And Its Correlation With Purchase Decision Of Women, *International Journal For Research In Engineering Application & Management (Ijream)* Issn : 2454-9150 Special Issue - Icbsrti – Dec 2018.