



A STUDY ON SENSORY MARKETING AND ITS CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR IN AN APPAREL RETAIL OUTLET, TRICHY.

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ABSTRACT :

Particularly in the retail clothing industry, sensory marketing has become a potent tactic for influencing consumer purchasing decisions. This study investigates how consumers' decisions to buy at a Trichy clothing store are influenced by their senses of sight, sound, smell, touch, and taste. Retailers are using sensory components to increase customer engagement and brand loyalty as the importance of creating immersive shopping experiences grows. This study examines how different sensory cues impact consumer perceptions, emotions, and purchase intent using a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods. The study uses surveys, interviews, and observational studies to assess how customers react to fabric texture, music, fragrance, product presentation, and store atmosphere. Results show that sensory marketing has a big impact on consumer preferences, which raises purchase rates and increases

Keywords: human senses- sight ,sound, touch ,smell ,taste and consumer behaviour .

1.INTRODUCTION

The goal of this study is to comprehend how sensory marketing has shaped C, a rapidly expanding urban center in Tamil Nadu. Gaining a competitive edge requires knowing how sensory cues affect consumer psychology as local fashion shops and retail chains compete for customers' attention. This study intends to offer important insights into how Trichy retailers can strategically use sensory marketing to increase sales and improve customer satisfaction by investigating consumer experiences and preferences.

It takes more than just providing high-quality products to draw in and keep customers in the fiercely competitive retail sector, particularly in the clothing industry. Retailers are increasingly using sensory marketing as a strategic tool to affect consumer perceptions, emotions, and ultimately purchasing behavior as a result of the evolution of consumer expectations.

Sensory marketing takes advantage of the five human senses—sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch—to induce a memorable and emotive shopping experience. Clothing retail, by definition, is extremely experiential. Fashion consumers not only judge clothing on style and fit but are also unconsciously swayed by the store atmosphere, lighting, music, fragrance, textile touch, and even window dressing. These sensory inputs, properly coordinated, can make a material difference to a customer's mood, store loyalty, and purchasing behavior.

Sensory marketing is a marketing approach that involves using the five senses of sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch to affect consumer actions and build brand experience. Every sensory component has a distinctive role in influencing emotion, memory, and perception for a product or a brand.

2.REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Alsalihi (2021) investigated the influences of sensory marketing on Erbil supermarket consumers' purchase intentions using a fuzzy logic model. The outcome indicated that all senses of vision, hearing, smell, taste, and touch significantly influenced customer satisfaction with dominance of visual, olfactory, and tactile dimensions. Customer satisfaction acted as a mediator of sensory inputs-purchase behavior relations with implications on in-store sensory experience optimization.

Gulati and Roy (2021) examined sensory marketing conduct in Indian retail, finding that visual, sound, and smell dimensions have a considerable effect

on consumer experience and brand memory. A multisensory environment improves time spent and purchase likelihood, highlighting the significance of dense store atmospheres in influencing behavior.

Hamilton (2019) conducted an experiment with different retail presentations and discovered visual stimuli were the most effective, followed by touch and scent. Such sensory stimuli evoked unconscious pleasure responses and encouraged impulsive buying, confirming the importance of sensory integration in point-of-sale designs.

Krupka (2023) studied the frequency and amount of sensory inputs and their effects on brand perception. His study revealed that multisensory and frequent exposure consolidates consumer-brand relationships, though the strength of each sense was less influential. The study emphasizes the importance of stable sensory experiences in establishing emotional brand relationships.

Manchanda, Mittal, and Bansal (2023) focused on the emotional and cognitive impact of sensory marketing in retail. Their research identified that visual, auditory, and olfactory stimulation increases emotional connection to the retail setting, influencing purchase behavior and perceived product quality.

Nadanyiova, Klietkova, and Kolencik (2018) placed sensory marketing as a strategic brand-management tool, demonstrating that sensory stimulation enhances differentiation of the brand, customer loyalty, and emotional attachment, thus enhancing brand equity in the long run.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The Research design adopted for the study is descriptive study. A research design is to represent what how to approach and condition for collection and analysis of the data to continue relevance to research purpose. The research design is the conceptual structure with in which research is conducted. It constitutes the blue print for the collection measurement and analysis of data.

3.2 QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

The data was collected through a structured questionnaire, which was prepared based on the objectives and the variables that affects the study. The structured questionnaire consists of various types of questions like closed end questions and Likert scale has been used.

3.2.1 Pilot study

Pilot survey was conducted with 25 respondents. The reliability of the questionnaire was analyzed using Cronbach Alphas test. The results shows a value of .87 means has acceptable.

Reliability statistics

Cronbach's alpha	Cronbach's alpha based on Standardizes items	No. of. Items
.878	.878	112

A sample of 38 was taken to test the validity and reliability of the questionnaire.

3.3 STATISTICAL TOOLS USED

The data analysis and interpretation was used statistical tools such as chi square using IBM SPSS statistics version

3.3.1 Chi-Square Method

Chi-square test is used to access two types of comparison: tests of goodness of fit and test of independence test of goodness of fit establishes whether or not an observed frequency distribution differs from a theoretical distribution.

$$X-\Sigma (\text{Observed value} - \text{Expected value}) / \text{Expected value}$$

3.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The study limited to Trichy region.
2. Due to time limitations, the study was conducted among the 112 consumers in Trichy.

4.Result and Discussion

4.1 CHI SQUARE TEST

HYPOTHESIS 1

Null hypothesis (H₀): There is no association between Age and Store atmosphere

Table No: 4.1.1

Table Name: Age and Store atmosphere

	Value	df	Asymptotic Sig. (2-tailed)
Pearson Chi-Square	91.38	12	.000
Likelihood Ratio	96.93	12	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	21.24	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	112		

Table value (T.V) (0.05,12) = 21.026

Chi-square value = 91.38, C.V > T.V

So, we accept the alternative hypothesis (H₁).

Inference

Since p value is less than 0.05. Hence, null hypothesis is rejected and accept alternate hypothesis. Therefore, there is an associated between Age and Store atmosphere.

HYPOTHESIS 2

Null hypothesis (H₀): There is no association between Gender and Easy to locate

Table No: 4.1.2

Table Name: Gender and Easy to locate

	Value	df	Asymptotic Sig. (2-tailed)
Pearson Chi-Square	25.44	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	27.47	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	9.27	1	.002
N of Valid Cases	112		

Table value (T.V) (0.05,4) = 9.488

Chi-square value = 25.44, C.V > T.V

So, we accept the alternative hypothesis (H₁).

Inference

Since p value is less than 0.05. Hence, null hypothesis is rejected and accept alternate hypothesis. Therefore, there is an associated between Gender and Easy to locate

HYPOTHESIS 3

Null hypothesis (H0): There is no association between Educational Qualification and Brand identity

Table No: 4.1.3

Table Name: Educational Qualification and Brand identity

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Sig. (2-tailed)
Pearson Chi-Square	25.05	8	.002
Likelihood Ratio	26.97	8	.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.52	1	.061
N of Valid Cases	112		

Table value (T.V) (0.05,8) = 15.507

Chi-square value = 25.05, C.V > T.V

So, we accept the alternative hypothesis (H1).

Inference

Since p value is less than 0.05. Hence, null hypothesis is rejected and accept alternate hypothesis. Therefore, there is an associated between Educational Qualification and Brand identity.

HYPOTHESIS 4

Null hypothesis (H0): There is no association between Monthly income and Touch & Feel

Table No: 4.1.4

Table Name: Monthly income and Touch & Feel

	Value	df	Asymptotic Sig. (2-tailed)
Pearson Chi-Square	125.74	16	.000
Likelihood Ratio	126.71	16	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.86	1	.091
N of Valid Cases	112		

Table value (T.V) (0.05,16) = 26.296

Chi-square value = 125.74, C.V > T.V

So, we accept the alternative hypothesis (H1).

Inference

Since p value is less than 0.05. Hence, null hypothesis is rejected and accept alternate hypothesis. Therefore, there is an associated between Monthly income and Touch & Feel

HYPOTHESIS 5

Null hypothesis (H₀): There is no association between Occupation and Store cleanliness.

Table No: 4.1.5

Table Name: Occupation and Store cleanliness.

	Value	df	Asymptotic Sig. (2-tailed)
Pearson Chi-Square	102.07	12	.000
Likelihood Ratio	77.49	12	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.23	1	.013
N of Valid Cases	112		

Table value (T.V) (0.05,12) = 21.026

Chi-square value = 102.07, C.V > T.V

So, we accept the alternative hypothesis (H₁).

Inference

Since p value is less than 0.05. Hence, null hypothesis is rejected and accept alternate hypothesis. Therefore, there is an associated between Occupation and Store cleanliness

5. FINDINGS OF CHI-SQUARE

- The calculated p-value is less than 0.05. Hence, null hypothesis is rejected and accept alternate hypothesis. Therefore, there is an associated between Age and Store atmosphere.
- The calculated p-value is less than 0.05. Hence, null hypothesis is rejected and accept alternate hypothesis. Therefore, there is an associated between Gender and Easy to locate.
- The calculated p-value is less than 0.05. Hence, null hypothesis is rejected and accept alternate hypothesis. Therefore, there is an associated between Educational Qualification and Brand identity.
- The calculated p-value is less than 0.05. Hence, null hypothesis is rejected and accept alternate hypothesis. Therefore, there is an associated between Monthly income and Touch & Feel.
- The calculated p-value is less than 0.05. Hence, null hypothesis is rejected and accept alternate hypothesis. Therefore, there is an associated between Occupation and Store cleanliness.

6. SUGGESTIONS

- **Target Marketing for Young Adults:** Focus marketing efforts on the 24-26 age group with trendy, youth-oriented campaigns and products to align with their preferences.
- **Enhance Store Lighting:** Upgrade lighting to create a warmer, more inviting atmosphere, addressing customer dissatisfaction with the current store ambiance.
- **Revamp Product Displays:** Redesign product displays to be more visually appealing and well-organized, using clear signage and thematic arrangements to improve engagement.

- **Improve Store Cleanliness:** Implement rigorous cleaning schedules to ensure the store meets high hygiene standards, addressing mixed customer perceptions.
- **Strengthen Exterior Appeal:** Redesign the store exterior with modern signage and attractive features to make it more inviting and draw in customers.
- **Optimize Window Displays:** Create eye-catching window displays with trending products or seasonal themes to encourage more customers to enter the store.

7. CONCLUSIONS

This study on sensory marketing in apparel retail outlets in Trichy concludes that sensory stimuli, including visual merchandising, ambient music, tactile experiences, and pleasant scents, significantly influence consumer buying behavior by enhancing emotions, perceptions, and shopping experiences. These elements create an immersive environment that encourages longer store visits, fosters brand loyalty, and drives purchases. Retailers in Trichy can leverage tailored sensory marketing strategies to differentiate themselves in a competitive market, though effectiveness varies across demographics, suggesting the need for customized approaches to maximize customer satisfaction and sales.

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