IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL MERCHANDISING FOR APPAREL RETAILERS

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Abstract
Visual merchandises encompasses of several elements for any brand showroom to capture customer attention. Visual Merchandises for apparel brand showroom includes elements like interior design, lightning, music, retailer explanation about product and display in the brand showroom. Since most of the customer wants comfortable shopping experience visual merchandise plays significant role to keep them longer in the apparel brand showroom. Developing strong brand is provides significant development for financial development of brand firms. To achieve these many firms uses brand equity model to increase customer satisfaction level. These brand equity model contains brand awareness, brand association, brand loyalty and perceived quality of brand. The main objective of this research is to examine importance of visual merchandise on apparel brand. In this research previously studied about various elements of visual merchandises on selected apparel brand showroom. Advantages and disadvantages incorporated with visual merchandises on apparel brand are examined.

Key Words- Visual Merchandising, Apparel Brands, Brand Equity.

INTRODUCTION

Visual merchandisers create, convey and impart visual ideas and methodologies to advance retail brands, items and administrations in-store, in lists or on the web. They might likewise work with historical centers and exhibitions or make visual ideas for occasions. The greater part of visual promoting work force are utilized in retail locations, the most minimal level being partner visual merchandiser up to visual marketing/picture controller, utilizing a staff of fifty or more in a substantial association. Every Day to day activities will vary depending on the employer and on the level of visual merchandising work being undertaken. Visual merchandisers working at higher levels can be based within head office teams, with regional teams, or at larger or flagship stores. The overall significance of the visual merchandise is it pulls in the customers hence expanding the deals. It makes awareness in customer about the merchandise. It pulls in, draws in and inspires the customer towards buy also it helps the customers to find and self-select the merchandise.

Merchandisers consider four components key to accomplishing the objective of making a positive shopping knowledge for buyers:
- Storefront
- Store design
- Store inside
- Interior shows

Brand striking nature is an essential initial phase in building brand equity, yet more often than not adequate. For most customers by and large, different contemplations, for example, the importance or picture of the brand, likewise become an integral factor. Making brand significance includes building up a brand picture and what the brand is portrayed by and ought to remain for in the psyches of customers. Despite the fact that a bunch of diverse sorts of brand associations are conceivable, brand significance comprehensively can be recognized regarding more practical, execution related contemplations versus more unique, symbolism related contemplations. Therefore, brand significance is comprised of two noteworthy classifications of brand associations that exist in customers' psyches – identified with execution and symbolism – with an arrangement of particular sub-classifications inside of each. These brand associations can be shaped specifically from a customer's own particular encounters and contact with the brand – or in a roundabout way through the brand's portrayal in publicizing or by some other wellspring of data.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chenyi Jin (2009) investigated about the difference among visual merchandizing from the traditional offers of showcase is not the increment of presentation ways but rather the idea overhauling. The visual merchandizing shows the substance and society of a sure brand and stresses the significance of the visual merchandizing of design way of life in comparing to the market's situating, style, utilization and additionally debilitating pattern of the qualification among brands.**Fenmian Wang et al., (2011)** examined about the brand equity on developing acknowledgment about the brands and a standout amongst the most profitable impalpable resources in the organizations. This paper recognizes a percentage of the compelling work in the brand value region, highlighting what has been realized from a scholarly point of view on this essential theme. Getting

knowledge into these accomplishments would altogether add to the further explores on brand value and brand assessment. The single dimensional or multi-dimensional assessment system can't reach to the characteristic instrument in a brand, or distinguish the quality creating procedure to assess adequately.*Zhang Xiangxiang et al., (2011)* investigated about the Brand equity is the reflection of business sector esteem. Its assessment and administration are taking into account psychological status furthermore relies on upon supervisor's thorough administration capacity. Rivalry in the business sector is additionally progressively inclining from homogeneity to rivalry in differential frameworks. In this paper, in the wake of abridging the past papers on brand value and proposed an element quality model in light of rivalry in differential frameworks. This model can broaden the procedure of brand value to the whole dissemination field and clarify the assessment of brand value values from amount estimation to subjective examination measurement definition process.*Zhou Huan et al., (2014)*investigated about the theory of Customer Equity administration in view of its hypotheses and practice need basics of viable and versatile administration models and devices to control the undertaking in their operations and administration of Customer Equity. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and Customer Knowledge Management (CKM) broke down the hugeness of customer information in CRM and pointed out is important to bring propelled learning disclosure innovations into the Customer Equity administration in order to mull over the attributes of customers' practices and pattern of Equity change, dissect of Voice of Customer (VOC) finish item/administration arranging, and behavior exact advertising.*V. Kumar et al., (2015)* studied about the brand equity among business-to-business (B2B) referral sources in the developing markets. Here consider the instance of strength therapeutic practices (SMPs) inside of these business sectors to accomplish this goal. In such manner this study carried out among the specialists/directors included in SMPs in a created business to comprehend the working of a SMP and watch the procedure of building brand value among referral sources. In light of the bits of knowledge, we propose a reasonable system to build up brand value for SMPs in the developing markets that spotlights on B2B connections.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
Objectives-
- To know the importance of visual merchandising for Apparel Retailers.
- To study limitations of visual merchandising for Apparel Retailers.
- To know the different elements of visual merchandising.

Hypothesis Formulation-
- H1- Visual merchandising is very important for apparel retailers.
- H2-Majority of customers makes their decisions mainly on the influence of visual merchandising.

Study area-The study would be carried out in the leading apparel brand showroom in the Bengaluru market.
Selected apparel brand- The apparel brands selected for this study are Levis, Louie Philippe, Benetton and Arrow.

Data collection procedures-Data collection procedure was done by analyzing the primary and secondary sources. The methods involved in the primary data collection were through focus group and cognitive interview methods. While it remains true that some of the information were collected via email and telephonic conversation, most of the data collection was carried out by conducting a field trip. Questionnaires prepared for the survey were both of qualitative and quantitative types, which included open-ended and close ended questions respectively. For analyzing the impact of visual merchandises in the brand equity a data are collected from the sample of 1500 customers of age group from 18 years and above with family income of 7 lacs of Bengaluru markets.

The research questionnaires are addressed through a structured schedule to fit in the objectives of the study. Besides the primary collection, data collection from review of literature and documents, research reports by scholars, government, websites, etc. provided the relevant information, many of which were collected through hard copy and soft copy online. The data collection was no doubt a rigorous process and the most challenging part of all the research work combined, but through cooperation from the respondents and availability of some secondary sources, this study was made possible.

Sampling Method-The probability sampling usually occurs when the sample frame is quite small. For instance, the every individual in the population is well known and each of them has definite probability of selection. A very random process will help to decide on a sample that would basically be based on individual probability.

In this research Stratified Random Sampling (Probability Sampling) technique will be used in when the data is collected in large quantity and when the data needs to be categorized by some of the expert's opinion which will be one key part of the research. For analyzing the randomly collected data from customers and the retailer the sample is separated into groups. Data

will be stored and analysed in tables in form of rows and columns along with proper formatting of the data. The missing variables in the research will be ignored as the sample is very large, the analysis of incomplete data will be done in later stages of the research.

Data analysis procedures-At the initial stage, data will be analysed by Stratified Random Sampling technique in which the samples will be analysed on basis of different region and different age group based on their experience. In the later from the conversation of the customers and the retailers the data are analyzed. Non-probability sampling technique will be used in when the data is collected in large quantity and when the data needs to be categorized by some of the expert's opinion which will be one key part of the research. Data will be stored and analysed in tables in form of rows and columns along with proper formatting of the data. The missing variables in the research will be ignored as the sample is very large, the analysis of incomplete data will be done in later stages of the research. Data representation will be done in the form of charts and graphs wherever possible. Correlation technique will be used as a main technique, which will find the relation between the variables of the data and will provide optimised output.

Statistical methods-The analysis uses following statistical tools to identify the significance between means and variance, following tests were conducted that includes: To find the association between the variables Non parametric Chi-square test is used. To identify the relationship between an independent and dependent variable multiple regression analysis is used and to analyze the degree of association, Correlation coefficient is used. Finally to find the variation between and among group ANOVA is used.

Scope of the study
- The study is limited to the premium apparel brands (Louis Philippe, Benetton, Levis, and Arrow) only in markets of Bangalore.
- Industries to be explored for the research is only Apparel segment of retail industry.
- Researcher has focused only on 2 elements (Merchandise Presentation, Store Atmospherics) of VM.

Limitations of the study
- The study is limited by the resource constraints.
- The accuracy of the data collected may not be assured.
- Due to resource constraints may not be able to have a repetitive process.
- The study population is restricted to Bengaluru only.

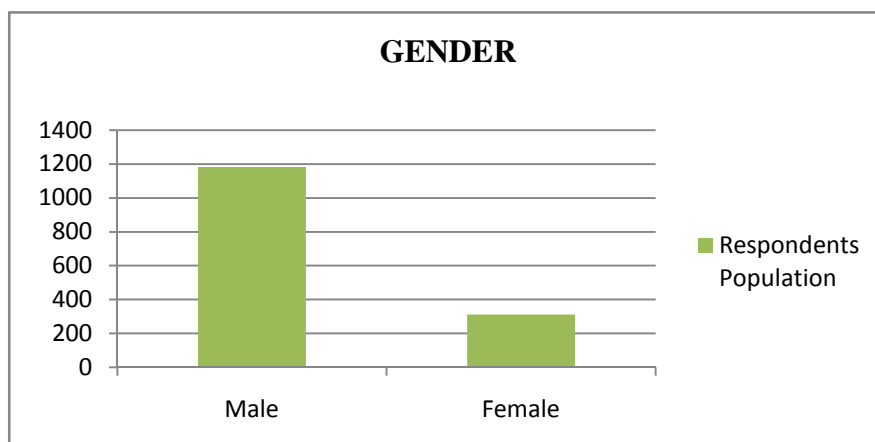**ANALYSIS & FINDINGS**
Genders of Respondents

Figure represents the gender of the respondent. As per the survey there are 1183 male respondents which cover 79% of population and 312 female respondents which cover 21% of the given population. Therefore, the majority of the participants are male due to selected apparel brands are comes under the men's wear.

AGE -his research is limited by the respondent's age like respondents below 18 years are not included for data analysis.

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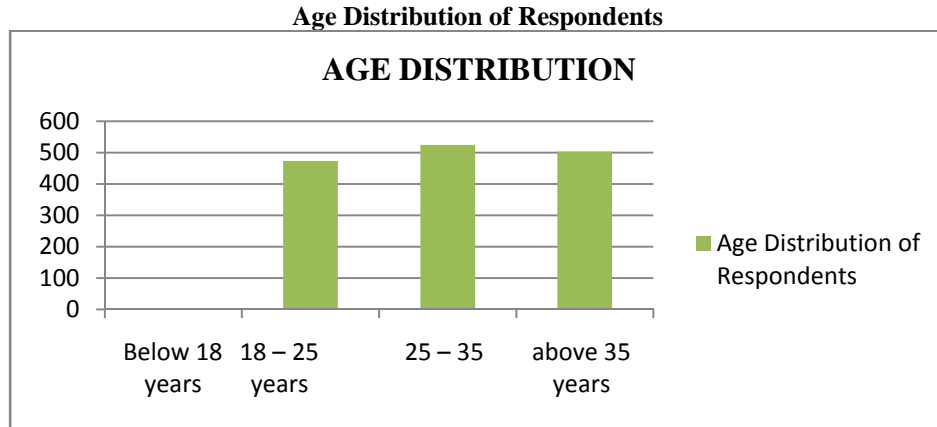*ISSN -2348-0653*

Age Distribution of Respondents

Figure represents the age distribution of the respondents. This research is carried out to the persons above the age of 18. As per the survey, 473 respondents are in the age group of 18-25 years which cover 31% of the population. 524 respondents are in the age of 25-35 which cover 35% of the population. 503 respondents are in the age group of above 35 years which cover 34% of the population. Therefore, majority of the respondents are in the age of 25-35 years.

Organization

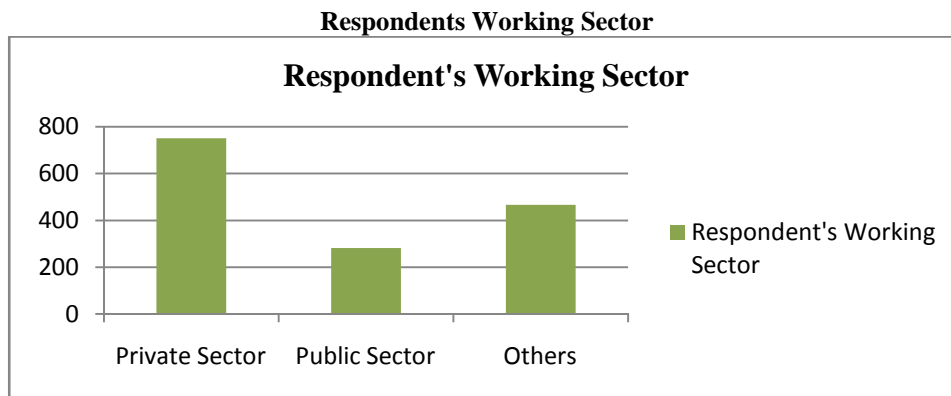**Respondents Working Sector**

Figure represents the occupation of the respondent. As per the survey, 751 respondents are in private sector organization which covers 50% of the population. 282 respondents are working in public sector organization which covers 19% of the population. 467 respondents are in other work which covers 31% of the population. Therefore, majority of the respondents are working in the private sector.

Family Annual Income

Respondents Family Income
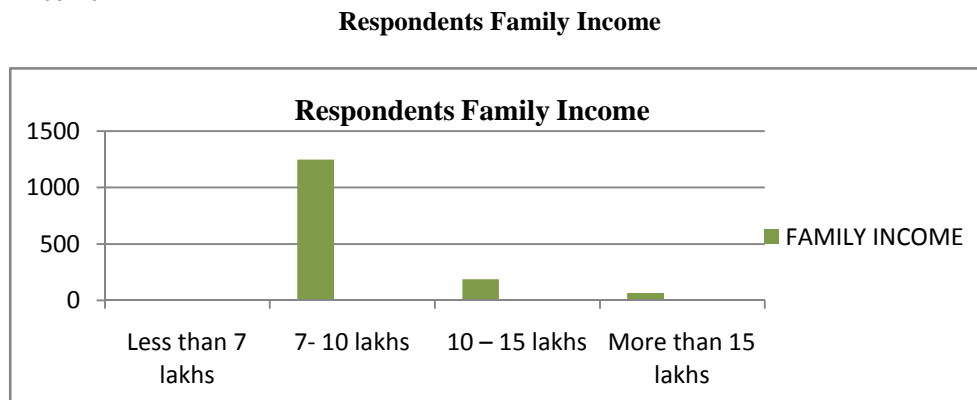
The above demonstrates the annual family income of the respondents. Since this research is limited to respondents with

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family income of below 7 lakhs so respondent with family income below 7 lakhs are not considered for analysis hence their percentage is 0. Out of 1500 samples 1248 respondents have the family income of 7-10 lakhs at the percentage of 83%. 13% of respondents have the family income of 10 – 15 lakhs with 186 respondents. More than 15 lakhs of family income is for the 66 respondents at the 4%. On the whole majority of the respondents are with the family income of 7-10 lakhs which also includes the retailers with family income above 7 lakhs.
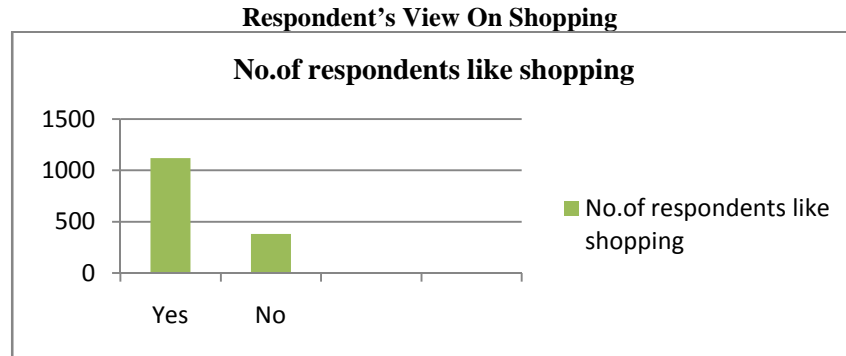
Respondent's View On Shopping

Figure describes that number of respondents like shopping from the collected data 1118 people like shopping which covers 75% of population and 382 samples not like the shopping as shown in figure 4.5 which means in 1500 samples most of them like shopping.

Shopping Per Month

Respondents Shopping Behavior

Above Figure shows the respondents shopping per month. From the table 4.7 and figure 4.6 demonstrate that 694 respondents have the habit of 2 times shopping per month which covers the 46%. 639 respondents are used to shop for 2 to 5 times shopping per month which covers the 43% of total population and 167 respondents have the habit of shopping more than 5 times per month which covers the overall percentage of 11%. So the above results demonstrate that most of the respondents have the shopping habit of 2 times per month.

Preferable Place For Shopping

The Figure shows that regular shopping place for the respondents. Among the 1500 respondents 524 are preferred to shop at malls which cover the 35% of total population. 518 respondents are selected shop at brand oriented shop of 34% and 458 respondents like to shop at other places which cover the 315 of population.

Visual Merchandise Makes Urge to Buy
Impact of Visual Merchandise

Visual merchandise make urge to buy	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	689	46
Agree	523	35
Neutral	103	7
Disagree	97	6
Strongly Disagree	88	6
Total	**1500**	**100**

On the total of 1500 respondents 689 customers strongly agree that visual merchandise is the most influencing factor to buy the product. Also 35% of the population agrees that visual merchandise makes urge to buy the product. On the whole 6% of the population disagree with the visual merchandise is the influencing factor to buy the product. From this analysis it is demonstrate that most of the population agrees that Visual merchandise is the most influencing factor in the showroom.

Quality is the influencing factor
Impact of brand quality

Quality of brand is influencing factor	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	708	47
Agree	623	42
Neutral	76	5
Disagree	52	3
Strongly Disagree	41	3
Total	1500	100

The impact of the quality is examinedwhere 708 of the respondents agree that quality is the influencing factor to buy the brand. On the whole 6% populations disagree with the brand quality is the influencing factor to buy the product. This analyzes shows that most of the respondents agree with the quality is also the influencing factor to buy this product.

Merchandise Explanation

Merchandise Explanation Makes Urge to buy

Merchandise explanation makes urge to buy	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	486	32
Agree	464	31
Neutral	349	24
Disagree	123	8
Strongly Disagree	78	5
Total	1500	100

From the above table itis observed that 32% of the population strongly agreed that merchandise explanation makes urge to buy the product which has the frequency of 486 about 1500 samples. 31% of the respondents also agreed that merchandises have the significant impact on buying product. From above table it is also noted that 123 respondents disagreed that merchandise explanation is the urging factor ad 5% of population strongly disagreed that visual merchandise makes urge to buy the brand. From the above analysis it is conclude that merchandise explanation is the one the important factor which influence on buying.

Merchandise Explanation Makes Urge to buy

Merchandise explanation makes urge to buy
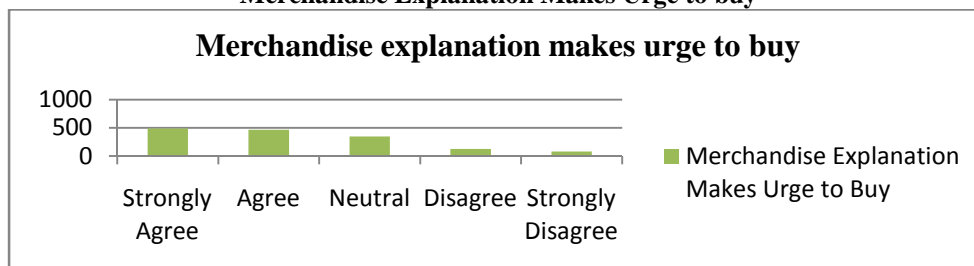
Lighiting Gives Good Display
From the table it is observed that 6% of the respondents which is 97 respondents strongly disagreed that lighting gives the good display to product. About 27% of respondents of 398 people neutral about their view on display about the impact of lighting on product. People of 28% strongly agreed that lighting gives good display to the product with 425 respondents.

Lighting as Advantageous Factor

Lighiting Gives Good Display	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	425	28
Agree	477	32
Neutral	398	27
Disagree	103	7
Strongly Disagree	97	6
Total	1500	100

Respondents of 32% agreed that lighting gives good display to the product.It is reveals that most of the respondents express that lighting gives good display to the product.

Customer Brand Awareness
From the questionnaire brand awareness among the customers are examined for that collected data are analyzed in this section.

Influencing Factor of Brand to Buy
Influencing Factor in Brand

Influencing Factor of Brand to Buy	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Quality of the cloth	669	45
Affordable Price	521	35
Suitable to wear at all type of occasions	107	7
New designs	129	9
Suggestion given by others	74	4
Total	1500	100

Above analyzed about the whole influencing factor to buy the apparel product. The respondents show that 669 respondents show that quality of the cloth is most important reason to buy the product. 35% of the population shows that affordable price is the important factor to buy the product. 129 respondent's shoes that availability of the new product makes urge to buy. On the whole 4% of population buying this brand based on the suggestion given by others.

Disinterest Towards Brand
From all the respondents limiting factor in the selected brand showroom are examined which are shown below-

Disinterest Towards Brand

Reason For Disinterest Towards This Brand	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Poor Quality Product	326	22
No proper Merchandise Presentation	446	29
Display is not proper	354	24
Other	374	25
Total	1500	100

From the table, it is observed that out of 1500 respondents 326 samples have suggested that quality of the brand is poor and 446 respondents which means 29% of respondents shows that merchandise explanation are not proper. About 24% of the population expressed that display is not proper for the brand showroom and 25% of population shows that they are disinterest towards this selected brand due to other reasons. From the above table it is observed that merchandise explanation need to improve in the selected brand showroom since it is the most disinterest factor in the selected apparel brand showroom.

CONCLUSION

This research analyzed about the importance of visual merchandise for apparel retailers. For selected apparel brand previously studied about various element of visual merchandise. From study it is observed that visual merchandise has the elements like merchandise presentation, lighting, music, showroom atmosphere and display which is concentrated area of retailers. The presentation of the merchandise, exterior designs as well as the interior and the brand name are fascinating factors in the showroom in which majority of the respondents chose the quality of product as the enthralling factor in a show room. Also exterior graphics attracted people where as the brand name is another factor that is liked by the respondents. The data analysis reveals that quality of product setting is the most fascinating factor in the selected brand showroom and elements of visual merchandising are add-on to this.

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