

IMPACT OF VISUAL MERCHANDISING ON CONSUMER IMPULSIVE BUYING BEHAVIOUR: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SUPERMARKETS IN WESTERN PROVINCE, SRI LANKA

I.H.M. Dilshani¹ * and D.M.D. Chathurika²

^{1,2}Department of Marketing Management, Faculty of Management Studies, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka, Mihintale, Sri Lanka

*Corresponding author (email: chathurikadmd@mgt.rjt.ac.lk)

INTRODUCTION

Over the past ten years, the retail sector has experienced rapid growth. Various retailers have evolved, including restaurant chains, clothes and textile businesses, and supermarkets. In Sri Lanka, several significant supermarket chains are active. Private grocery chains are rapidly expanding nationwide in rural locations. The supermarkets were initially in Sri Lanka in the 1980s (Habaragoda, 2021). The supermarket sector is currently in its growing phase of the industry life cycle. There are more than 900 supermarkets and supermarket chains in Sri Lanka (Central Bank of Sri Lanka, 2019).

Therefore, to clients and remain competitive in the market, every marketer pays attention to this factor. Marketing managers and merchants are constantly looking for strategies to enhance their customers' income share, dependent on increased sales, in an era of rising customer expectations and fierce competition. Moreover, of course, to increase sales volumes, today's tough rivalry and the similarity of sales in every store force all types of fashion stores to employ and push visual merchandising (Kumar, n.d.). The majority of scholars concur that visual merchandising is essential to retailing. Using an effective visual merchandising strategy, supermarkets may compete on a global scale (Mondol et al., 2021).

When a person immediately decides to buy a product without going through the typical consumer buying procedure, it is known as an impulse buy. As soon as the customer sees the product, they buy it. Impulsive purchases account for more purchases. Impulse buying is a more compelling hedonic type (Shrestha, 2018).

Retailers in Sri Lanka should manage the elements influencing customers' impulse buying behavior to attract customers, stand out from rivals, thrive in their respective industries, and give customers an outstanding shopping experience. On the other hand, customers may need to be made aware of the impact of the factors being used, which will prevent the sales forecast from being achieved. A visually appealing visual merchandising display can communicate clients' impulse purchases by evoking favorable feelings. There are two categories of trigger factors: external stimuli and internal cues. According to recent studies, ambient signals in the retail environment can significantly impact consumers' desire to make impulsive purchases. Customers' senses can be more strongly engaged through visual merchandising as external cues, leading to a more significant response from customers and more purchases. In addition to window displays, music, and floor merchandising are essential for eliciting favorable reactions from clients that may boost their propensity to make impulsive purchases.

Consequently, this study examined the impact of visual merchandising on consumer impulse buying behavior in the Western province of Sri Lankan supermarkets. Few studies have been done concerning the influence of reviews on consumer impulse buying behavior. The impact of visual merchandising on consumer impulse buying behavior in Sri Lankan supermarkets has been studied in many ways. Therefore, the researcher will study in this research "The

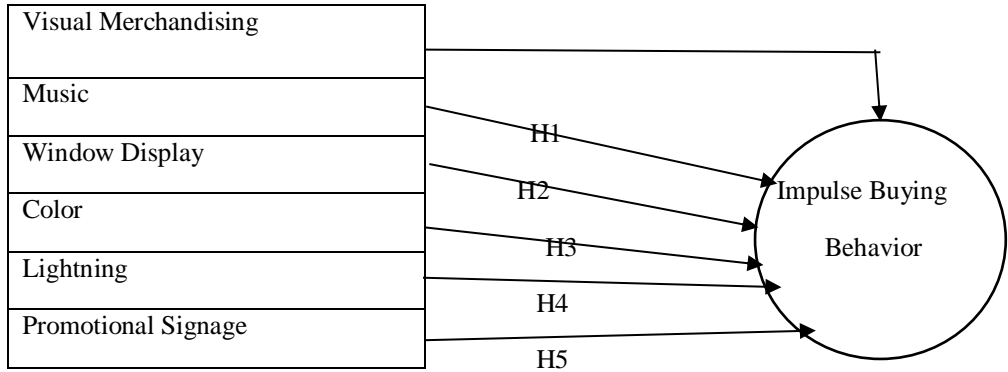
impact of visual merchandising on consumer impulse buying behavior in supermarkets in the Western province of Sri Lanka”.

METHODOLOGY

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework



Source: Based on (Saini, 2015)

Operationalization

Table 1

Operationalization of Dependent and Independent variable

Variable	Dimension	Indicator	Measurement	Source
Impulse Buying Behavior		I buy things that are not on my Shopping List	Five-point Likert scale	(KIM, 2015)
		When I go shopping, I buy things I had not intended to buy.		
Visual Merchandising	Window display	I am a Person who makes unplanned purchases.	Five-point Likert scale	(Sahni et al., 2014)
		When I see something that interests me, I buy it without considering the consequences.		
	It is fun to buy spontaneously.			
	Lightning	Feel compelled to enter the store when you see an exciting window display		
		Tend to enter the store when attracted by an eye-catching window display.		
		Tend to choose which store to shop in depending on eye-catching window displays.		
		Using lights in different brightness to decorate the		(Rahela Tabassum

	<p>store would attract the items seen and swing the mood towards buying.</p> <p>When they see ambient lighting in the shop, they tend to buy it.</p> <p>When I saw Task Lighting Method, I tended to buy it.</p> <p>When Accent Lighting highlighted specific areas, they tended to buy it.</p> <p>Feel Compelled with Decorative Lighting in the store.</p>	<p>& Ishaq Khan, 2015)</p>
Color	<p>Product items are placed according to color.</p> <p>Color coordination creates an appealing store atmosphere.</p> <p>A store with good color sense</p> <p>The choice of color used in the store is influenced by purchase choice.</p>	<p>(Merugu & Vaddadi, 2017)</p>
Music	<p>Listening to music creates a relaxed atmosphere in the stores while shopping.</p> <p>Music motivates customers to buy more.</p> <p>The pleasant environment created by the music makes you spend more time in the store.</p> <p>Music in the store makes waiting in the “Q” more comfortable.</p> <p>Recommend the stores to others.</p> <p>Revisit the store.</p>	<p>(Merugu & Vaddadi, 2017)</p>
Promotional Signage	<p>Signage in the form of tags offers customers more information about the product.</p> <p>If you see attractive promotional offers signs, customers tend to buy.</p> <p>Effective signs in the store help customers identify departments describing the merchandise and its price.</p>	<p>(Merugu & Vaddadi, 2017)</p>

The population of the research study was supermarket customers in the Western province of Sri Lanka who purchased goods from supermarkets from January to February of 2023. In this

research, the non-probability sampling method is preferred, and the sampling technique is convenience sampling. The sample size is 384 respondents from the Western province. The Morgan table estimated the sample size (McNaughton & Cowell, 2018). Pilot testing was carried out for this study in order to obtain feedback, minimize errors, and improve the questionnaire's content. The present study was conducted with the help of a structured questionnaire. Online mode was used to collect the data. A pilot survey was conducted to test the questionnaire's content reliability; the data were collected from 50 respondents.

Table 2*Reliability test of Pilot study*

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha Value	No of Items	Comment
Impulse Buying Behavior	0.747	5	Good
Window Display	0.744	3	Good
Lightning	0.797	5	Good
Music	0.749	6	Good

Method of Data Analysis

The researcher applied both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques to analyze the data. The descriptive statistics were used for analysis, the demographic data analysis, and the presenting mean and standard deviation. Cronbach's alpha technique and content validity measurement are used to test the reliability and validity of primary data. In this research, a regression technique is used to analyze the impact of variables. The researcher used SPSS version 23.0 to analyze the data collected from the sample.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**Table 3***Descriptive Statistics Analysis*

	Mean	SD	Skewness
IB	4.192	0.534	-2.216
WP	4.232	0.545	-2.195
L	4.290	0.523	-2.570
M	4.295	0.536	-2.356
C	4.320	0.489	-1.983
PS	4.288	0.515	-2.109

In the study, color exhibited the highest mean impact (4.320) on consumers, while window display had the lowest (4.232). The dependent variable had a mean of 4.192. Negative skewness was observed in the data distribution, indicating deviation from the bell curve.

Table 4*Reliability Test*

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha Value	No of Items	Comment
Impulse Buying Behavior	0.757	5	Good
Window Display	0.703	3	Good
Lightning	0.798	5	Good
Music	0.850	6	Good
Color	0.739	4	Good
Promotional Signage	0.704	3	Good

According to the result, it was emphasized that Cronbach's alpha is high for all the variables (higher than 0.7). This result shows that the questions in each portion of the survey satisfactorily meet Cronbach's required reliability and are appropriate for measuring the variables.

Table 5*Validity Test*

Variable	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	Approx. Chi-Square	df	Sig value
Impulse Buying behavior	0.797	379.354	10	0.000
Window Display	0.667	176.234	3	0.000
Lightning	0.816	480.999	10	0.000
Music	0.869	762.149	15	0.000
Color	0.755	284.938	6	0.000
Promotional Signage	0.673	186.635	3	0.000

According to Table 5, the KMO value must be more than 0.05, indicating the survey's validity. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy is more significant than 0.05. Hence, the questionnaire is valid. Accordingly, sample adequacy is satisfied.

Regression Analysis

Table 6*Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error
1	0.819 ^a	0.671	0.666	0.309

a. Predictors: (Constant), PS, M, WP, C, L

The analysis shows that 67% of the impact of visual merchandising on consumer impulse buying behavior in Western province, Sri Lanka, is explained by factors like a window display, lighting, music, color, and promotional signage. Additionally, the R-value indicates an 82% influence from these variables on changing buying behavior, leaving 31% attributed to unexamined factors.

Table 7*ANOVA Table*

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	66.724	5	13.345	139.663	0.000 ^b
Residual	32.774	343	0.096		
Total	99.498	348			

a. Dependent Variable: IB

b. Predictors: (Constant), PS, M, WP, C, L

The ANOVA analysis in the multiple regression analysis is shown in Table 7. It means the regression model foresees a significant dependent variable. The F-value of the analysis is 139.663, which indicates that the overall regression model matches the data well.

The sig. value reflects whether the regression model predicts the outcome statistically. The significance (P) value must be less than 0.05 for the standardized beta values. Consequently, in this study, the sig. value is less than 0.05. As a result, the regression model is statistically significant in predicting the outcome.

Table 8
Coefficients Table

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	β	Std. Error	β		
(Constant)	0.167	0.163		1.025	0.306
WP	0.041	0.020	0.099	2.060	0.040
L	0.085	0.014	0.357	6.193	0.000
M	0.051	0.011	0.266	4.718	0.000
C	0.042	0.016	0.126	2.543	0.011
PS	0.037	0.017	0.086	2.181	0.030

a. Dependent Variable: IB

According to the above table, all variables have positive values, significantly impacting consumer impulse buying behavior in supermarkets in the Western province of Sri Lanka.

Hypotheses Testing

H₁: Music has a significant impact on consumer impulse buying behavior.

H₂: Window display has a significant impact on consumer impulse buying behavior.

H₃: Lightning has a significant impact on consumer impulse buying behavior.

H₄: Color has a significant impact on consumer impulse buying behavior.

H₅: Promotional signage has a significant impact on consumer impulse buying behavior.

Table 9

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Variable	B value	B Sign	value Sig value	Conclusion
<i>H₁</i>	Music	0.051	0.051	0.000	Accepted
<i>H₂</i>	Window Display	0.041	0.041	0.040	Accepted
<i>H₃</i>	Lightning	0.085	0.085	0.000	Accepted
<i>H₄</i>	Color	0.042	0.042	0.011	Accepted
<i>H₅</i>	Promotional Signage	0.037	0.037	0.030	Accepted

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

When a consumer makes an immediate, impulsive purchase without prior plans, this is called buying behavior. It simply refers to an impulsive, unexpected purchase made immediately. This research examined how visual merchandising impacts consumers' rapid, impulsive buying without any consideration beforehand. The results demonstrated that window display, lighting, music, color, and promotional signage impacted customers' impulse buying behavior.

Thus, these visual merchandising activities, which function as triggers that generate an impulse that ultimately pushes a customer to make an impulsive purchase decision while entering the shop, significantly impact consumers' purchasing behaviors. The study showed that retailers may use visual merchandising to make things more desirable, raise customer awareness of products, and build positive attitudes toward them.

In addition to promoting the store's image, visual merchandising supports its promotional strategies and encourages customers to buy impulsively. Retailers should focus more on visual merchandising because the store can provide a distinctive atmosphere or environment that may impact the customer's choice. An impulse purchase is intimately associated with emotions and behavior, even if it may have been more frequently linked to outside events.

Keywords: Consumer impulse buying behavior, visual merchandising, retail industry, super markets

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