TÜRKİYE CUMHURİYETİ
ADANA ALPARSLAN TÜRKEŞ SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE SCHOOL
MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS DEPARTMENT

EXPLORING CLOTHING STORE-RELATED VARIABLES INFLUENCING IMPULSE BUYING BEHAIVOR

MERİÇ CAN ANT

M.Sc.

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Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dilek PENPECE DEMİRER

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DECLARATION OF CONFORMITY

In this thesis study, which was prepared following the thesis writing rules of Adana Alparslan Türkeş Science and Technology University Institute of Graduate School, I declare that I provide all the information, documents, evaluations and results in accordance with scientific ethics and moral codes without resorting to any means or assistance that would be contrary to scientific ethics and traditions. I also declare that I refer to all of the articles I used in this study with appropriate references and accept all moral and legal consequences if a situation is found contrary to my statement regarding my work.

27/08/2024

[Signature]

Meriç Can ANT

ÖZET

ANLIK SATIN ALMA DAVRANIŞINI ETKİLEYEN GİYİM MAĞAZASI İLE İLGİLİ DEĞİŞKENLERİN KEŞFEDİLMESİ

Meriç Can ANT
Yüksek Lisans, Yönetim Bilişim Sistemleri Anabilim Dalı
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Bu tez, giyim mağazaları ile ilgili değişkenlerin müşteri anlık satın alma davranışları üzerindeki etkisini araştırmaktadır. Stratejik ürün sergilemelerini kapsayan görsel düzenleme, müşterileri çekmede ve mağaza estetiğini artırmada önemli bir rol oynamaktadır. Çalışma, vitrin düzenlemeleri, manken sunumları, kat tasarımı, promosyonel gösterimler, renk, aydınlatma, mağaza düzeni, koku, müzik, çeşitlilik, satış promosyonları, hedonik motivasyon ve anlık alışveriş gibi unsurların ve bunların anlık satın alma davranışları üzerindeki etkilerine odaklanmaktadır. Veriler, demografik bilgiler ve belirli görsel düzenleme faktörlerini kapsayan yapılandırılmış bir anket aracılığıyla 400 katılımcıdan toplanmıştır. Araçların geçerliliğini sağlamak için Keşifsel Faktör Analizi (EFA) kullanılmış ve güvenilirlik Cronbach Alfa ile değerlendirilmiştir. Bulgular, tüm görsel düzenleme unsurlarının anlık satın alma davranışını olumlu yönde etkilediğini, promosyonel gösterimler ve manken sunumlarının en büyük etkiye sahip olduğunu göstermektedir. Korelasyon analizi, görsel düzenleme faktörleri arasında güçlü karşılıklı ilişkiler olduğunu ve bunların alışveriş ortamını geliştirmede kolektif rollerini vurgulamaktadır. Çalışma ayrıca, görsel düzenlemenin algılanmasında cinsiyet, yaş, gelir, eğitim düzeyi ve meslek gibi demografik farklılıkları incelemiş ve bu faktörler arasında önemli farklılıklar ortaya koymuştur. Bu bulgular, perakendecilerin görsel düzenleme stratejilerini farklı demografik segmentlere göre uyarlamaları gerektiğini önermektedir. Bu araştırma, perakendecilerin müşterileri çekmek ve satışları artırmak için görsel düzenleme stratejilerini geliştirmelerine yönelik değerli bilgiler sağlamaktadır. Gelecekteki çalışmalar, daha geniş coğrafi alanları keşfedebilir, anlık satın almanın psikolojik yönlerini içerebilir ve görsel düzenlemede yeni teknolojilerin potansiyelini araştırabilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Görsel Düzenleme, Anlık Satın Alma, Müşteri Davranışı.

ABSTRACT

EXPLORING CLOTHING STORE-RELATED VARIABLES INFLUENCING IMPULSE BUYING BEHAIVOR

Meriç Can ANT
M.Sc., Department of Management Information System
Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dilek PENPECE DEMİRER
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This thesis investigates the influence of clothing store-related variables on impulse buying behaviors in clothing stores. Visual merchandising, encompassing strategic product displays, plays a pivotal role in attracting customers and enhancing store aesthetics. The study focuses on elements such as window displays, mannequin presentations, floor design, promotional displays, color, lighting, store layout, scent, music, variety, sales promotions, hedonic motivation, and spontaneous shopping, and their impact on impulsive buying behavior. Data was gathered from 400 respondents through a structured questionnaire covering demographic details and specific visual merchandising factors. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was employed to ensure the validity of the instrument, and reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. Findings indicate that all visual merchandising elements positively affect impulsive buying, with promotional displays and mannequin presentations having the most significant impact. The correlation analysis demonstrated strong interrelationships among the visual merchandising factors, highlighting their collective role in enhancing the shopping environment. The study also examined demographic differences in the perception of visual merchandising, revealing significant variations based on gender, age, income, education level, and occupation. These findings suggest that retailers should tailor their visual merchandising strategies to different demographic segments to optimize their effectiveness. This research provides valuable insights for retailers seeking to refine their visual merchandising strategies to attract customers and boost sales. Future studies could explore broader geographic areas, delve into the psychological aspects of impulsive buying, and investigate the potential of new technologies in visual merchandising.

Keywords: Visual Merchandising, Impulsive Buying, Customer Behavior.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIDA	: Attention, Interest, Desire, Action
AM	: Ante Meridiem
ANOVA	: Analyiss of Varince
AR	: Augmented Reality
d	: Margin of Error
DJ	: Disk Jockey
EFA	: Exploratory Factor Analysis
ELM	: Elaboration Likelihood Model
et al.	: Et Alia
etc.	: Et Cetera
FOMO	: Fear of Missing Out
n	: Targeted Sample Size
N	: Population Size
p.	: Paper
s	: Standard Deviation
t	: T Value Corresponding To Confidence Level
TPB	: Theory of Planned Behavior
TRA	: Theory of Reasoned Action
VR	: Virtual Reality
%	: Percentage

1. INTRODUCTION

In this part of the study, the conceptual framework, general information, definitions and relationships regarding the effect of visual merchandising method on customer purchasing behavior in clothing stores are included.

1.1. Visual Store Management

Retail management is recognized as a crucial element in material management, serving as a space where materials are both preserved and readily accessible when needed (Yoon, 2013). It can be argued that the storage of materials occupies a central role in the management processes that directly influence a store's success. Essentially, a store provides a general definition as a location where a variety of products are stored. Typically, these establishments feature designated sections for the orderly storage of goods. The storage process encompasses the reception of materials, their retention for a period deemed necessary, and their eventual preparation for sale. It is imperative for a store to execute specific activities requiring the efficient management of resources. Store management entails processes that must be conducted efficiently and economically with the assistance of staff, including stock management and inventory control. Among the functions of a store is the storage of consumer products and their successful distribution to end-users. Effective store management facilitates the capability to manage fluctuations in demand and pre-plan purchasing processes (Satyendra, 2015).

Product diversity, a central concept in management strategies, pertains to the number of products offered within a particular product category (Rook & Hoch, 1985), and shapes customer perception through factors such as product count, the store's total space, and product availability (Pham, 2019). Product availability is directly linked to issues of stockouts and represents a significant aspect of store management strategies. Pricing strategies have a profound impact on consumer perceptions and behaviors, also influencing perceptions of price fairness. Product presentation refers to the manner in which products are displayed, highlighting the retailer's and store owners' capacity to adapt to changing consumer preferences (Baker, Parasuraman, Grewal & Voss, 2002).

Customer service quality is defined in terms of product knowledge, advisability, respect, and the ability to assist without imposing pressure (Park, 2018). Lastly, customer satisfaction emerges as another key concept targeted by store management strategies, significantly influencing future customer behavior (Ramanathan & Sonia, 2018).

To enhance customer engagement with the retail environment, the practice of visual merchandising planning is utilized as a critical approach (Pillai, Iqbal, Umer, Maqbool & Sunil, 2011). The significance of visual attractiveness cannot be understated in the context of retail success. It is imperative for entrepreneurs to acknowledge the profound impact of visual allure in the retail sector. Strategies in visual merchandising encompass the assessment of overarching color schemes, necessitating retailers to devise a strategy concerning color usage within the retail space, thereby creating focal points to attract customers to specific sections (Pham, 2019). Moreover, it involves the coordination of highlighted items to establish a structured approach for a visual merchandising blueprint. The concept extends to the implementation of store themes that narrate the product story, using predominant colors in key areas such as entrances and exits, and integrating merchandising themes that reflect the essence of the product, inclusive of seasonal and special events. For example, the incorporation of floral arrangements during spring can significantly enhance customer engagement. Additionally, it incorporates promotional information for seasonal activities, effectively showcasing product utilization (Stevens, Lewis & Johnson, 2015).

A crucial aspect involves creatively featuring sale items to optimize product presentation in sales areas (Pillai et al., 2011), utilizing vibrant colors that complement the store's color scheme, arranging items to facilitate the desired display effect, and employing lighting to highlight featured products, thereby capturing customer attention. Finally, maintaining an innovative perspective in visual merchandising strategy is essential in today's competitive landscape, leveraging advertising to facilitate display creation and augmenting customer experience with new products, thereby refreshing traditional standards (Yoon, 2013). This includes using entertainment to educate customers on effective product usage (Davis, 2019).

In today's globalized and competitive environment, it is crucial for marketers and retailers to optimize their stores to attract a broader customer base (Yoon, 2013). Price sensitivity plays a pivotal role in shaping customer perceptions of products and services. Moreover, the delivery chain process significantly influences store growth in a highly competitive market. The emergence of diverse retail formats, including independent and traditional stores, flea markets, supermarkets, and departmental stores, intensifies competition among retailers. To thrive in organized retail settings, such as manufacturer retailing, stores must adeptly manage activities with a focus on consumer preferences and market segmentation. Thus, the process of visual merchandising becomes a vital tool for engaging customers on a large scale through various strategies, including window decorations, fixtures, design planning, and pricing strategies, enabling retailers to draw customers to their establishments (Solnick, Kannenberg, Eckerman & Waller, 1980).

To summarize, visual merchandising; It is neither a branch of interior architecture, nor a field of art, nor marketing, nor a branch of science that studies customer behavior. Visual merchandising is a whole. Creating a very good interior design is not visual merchandising. Putting up a showcase, such as a work of art, is not considered visual merchandising if it does not contribute to product sales. Both a good design and activities that will trigger sales need to be structured together. Both the storefront and the interior should look attractive; At the same time, the products should also be impressively displayed and look attractive and worth spending money on.

1.2. Consumer Behaviour

The history of shopping traverses a complex and intricate journey from the Greek agoras to purchasing through a computer screen. In early civilizations, trade was conducted in gathering and meeting spaces. The Greeks engaged in their commercial activities in agoras, while the Romans did so in forums—both of which were expansive squares surrounded by shops, serving as the heart of the city. Initially, shopping activities took place in open spaces, around these squares (Coleman, 2006). It can be argued that the 19th century marked the emergence of the predecessors to today’s shopping centers and store formats. The efforts to create structure and volume in retail trade evolved alongside the industrial revolution. The development of major cities in Europe, advancements in communication and industry during the 19th century led to the emergence of unprecedented structures. The concept of wholesalers, facilitating distribution between producers and stores, came into existence with mass production (Aksaç, 2006). Early retailers showcased their names flamboyantly to attract customers to their stores, displayed their products on windows or tables on the sidewalk, thus indicating their openness and pride in their offerings. Butchers still use their display windows to attract customers and showcase the meats available for sale that day. Florists not only decorate their windows with flowers but also arrange them on sidewalks to captivate passersby with their colors and scents. Similarly, barbers occasionally place a chair in front of their shop window to demonstrate their skills with a customer (Morgan, 2008).

The industrial revolution saw the rise of department stores to meet the demands of increasingly consumptive masses. Initially, these spaces served as warehouses where goods were sold cheaply to retailers, necessitating well-lit, spacious areas for effective merchandising. The first department store made of glass and steel, featuring overhead glass roofs for lighting solutions, was BonMarche in Paris (Aksaç, 2006). Tony Morgan describes the history of visual merchandising in his book, Visual Merchandising, In-store Displays for Retail, noting that the widespread use of glass panels allowed large stores to advance their window designs. Modern designs often overshadow the products with color, light, and decorations, creating pieces of art that seek to evoke reactions, going beyond merely supporting the products as visual merchandising demands (Morgan, 2008). American Gordon Selfridge pioneered British retailing with the opening of Selfridge’s in London in 1909, making a mark in visual merchandising by leaving his display windows lit at night. This allowed people to enjoy the displays even after the store had closed. Selfridge also organized in-store events for customers. He famously displayed Louis Bleriout’s airplane, which had made the first flight across the English Channel and landed in a field at midnight, in his store by 10:00 AM the next morning, attracting 50,000 people to view it (Karmis, 2013).

The 1920s were explosive years for art and fashion, with many famous artists working as window designers during this time. Andy Warhol began his career in New York stores while still in college. This trend, starting in fashion stores, was adapted to a furniture store by Terence

Conran in 1964. His store in Chelsea, London, aimed to inspire customers with its white walls, spotlighted ceiling, checkered flooring, and café, continuing today as Habitat. With the advancement of technology in the 1990s and the emergence of superbrands like Gucci and Prada, display windows began to be used as propaganda machines. These stores placed photos of famous models printed on large, glossy paper and television screens showing runway shows in their windows, thereby creating an ambiance (Morgan, 2008). Today, as leading brands take control of main streets in major cities and expand into smaller towns, their competitors are also affected by this trend (Litosseliti, 2018).

In recent years, it has been understood that visual merchandising is not just about increasing sales with in-store designs, and new techniques have begun to be used; DJ performances in stores, creation of food and beverage areas, and fashion shows are some of these. With the widespread use of online shopping in the twenty-first century, with both easy and convenient price comparison opportunities, stores have been under pressure to ensure that their customers return to stores and spend money. The main task here is the visual merchandising. Shopping is a social activity. Customers may go shopping to discover a discount, find a product they have been looking for for a long time, or to meet friends. The retailer has to turn this situation into a positive shopping experience, and this is achieved thanks to the visual retailer (Goldfingle, 2011).

1.2.1. Impulse buying behavior

Impulse buying behavior, a phenomenon characterized by spontaneous and unplanned purchases, has garnered significant attention from researchers due to its prevalence and impact on consumer markets. Understanding the factors that drive impulse buying is essential for retailers aiming to optimize their strategies and enhance consumer experiences.

Visual merchandising plays a crucial role in influencing impulse buying behavior. Effective visual merchandising can create an engaging and stimulating environment that encourages spontaneous purchases (Kim, 2003, p. 76). Elements such as store layout, product displays, lighting, and color schemes are integral in creating an atmosphere that triggers impulse buying. For instance, the strategic placement of products at checkout counters or end-of-aisle displays can attract consumers' attention and prompt impulsive decisions (Mehta & Chugan, 2013, p. 76).

Store atmospherics, encompassing the overall sensory experience within a retail environment, also significantly impact impulse buying behavior. The ambience, music, and scent within a store can evoke emotional responses that lead to impulsive purchasing. Studies have shown that congruency between scent and music enhances the overall shopping experience, which in turn influences in-store evaluations and behavior (Mattila & Wirtz, 2001, p. 276). Retailers can leverage these sensory cues to create a pleasant and immersive environment that encourages impulse buying.

Sales promotions are another critical factor in driving impulse buying behavior. Limited-time offers, discounts, and special deals can create a sense of urgency, compelling consumers to make immediate purchases without prior planning (Ahmad, 2018, p. 3). These promotional strategies tap into consumers' fear of missing out (FOMO), leading to increased impulse buying.

The role of emotions in impulse buying cannot be overlooked. Emotional responses such as excitement, joy, and satisfaction can significantly influence purchasing decisions. For example, the excitement of discovering a great deal or the joy of finding a desired product can trigger impulsive purchases (Bagozzi, Mahesh, & Prashanth, 2016, p. 185). Retailers can harness these emotional triggers by creating experiences that resonate with consumers on an emotional level. Consumer characteristics and psychological factors also contribute to impulse buying behavior. Individuals with higher levels of impulsivity are more likely to engage in spontaneous purchases. Impulsivity, defined as the tendency to act on a whim without considering the consequences, is a key predictor of impulse buying behavior (Rook & Hoch, 1985, p. 23). Furthermore, the accessibility of attitudes towards products and the availability of disposable income also play a role in influencing impulsive purchasing decisions (Fazio, Martha, & Powell, 1989, p. 282).

Technological advancements and the rise of e-commerce have introduced new dimensions to impulse buying behavior. Online retailers use various strategies to induce impulsive purchases, such as personalized recommendations, limited-time offers, and flash sales. The convenience of online shopping, coupled with these targeted strategies, has made it easier for consumers to engage in impulse buying from the comfort of their homes (Park & Kim, 2003, p. 18).

In conclusion, impulse buying behavior is a multifaceted phenomenon influenced by a combination of visual merchandising, store atmospherics, sales promotions, emotional responses, consumer characteristics, and technological advancements. Retailers can strategically leverage these factors to create an environment that encourages impulse buying, ultimately enhancing sales and customer satisfaction. Understanding the underlying drivers of impulse buying behavior enables retailers to design effective marketing strategies that cater to the spontaneous nature of consumer decision-making, fostering a more engaging and profitable shopping experience.

1.3. Visual Store Organization and Planning

The combination of many factors such as consumers' need for convenience, their desire for comparison shopping, increased purchasing power in the marketplace and expansion of transportation facilities have led to the emergence of different types of retail locations. Retail stores should be located where market opportunities are best. Once the country, region, city or commercial area and neighbors have been identified, a specific location should be selected to best serve the target market. Consumers and their shopping behavior should be examined before choosing a location. The best place in the world won't mean anything if it's out of reach of consumers or if consumers don't come and shop there. Therefore, the primary purpose of the store is to attract shoppers to the store (Hasty & Reardon, 1997). In other words, retailers should place their stores where people are. What needs to be done next is to choose the design and layout elements of the store, taking into account the target audience of the store.

1.3.1. Store layout and design

The retailer should have three goals when designing or redesigning his store. These; The store atmosphere should be compatible with the store image and the company's entire strategy, a good store design helps influence the purchasing decision of consumers, and managers should keep the productivity of the retail space in mind when making design decisions. Productivity of store space is the amount of sales per square meter of the store (Levy & Weitz, 1998). The store is the most meaningful form of communication between the retailer and its customers. Most importantly, the store is the environment where the sale takes place or does not take place. The store, with its wide variety of elements, serves two important roles. These; To create a suitable store image and increase the productivity of the sales area. The retailer who wants to provide these needs to consider store layout and design as two very important components in its communication with its customers.

1.3.1.1. Elements of the store environment

The first decision retailers will make in planning the store; How they will allocate resources and space. The retailer must then create the store layout, which shows the placement of all products and the arrangement of aisle (aisle) circulation that allows consumers to move within the store. The product offering must be exciting enough to capture and engage consumers, be easy to understand, and encourage shoppers to search, evaluate, and purchase products. In addition, product presentation is a critical issue in the store's sales force and has a significant impact on the store image (Dunne & Lusch, 1999).

1.3.1.2. Goals of the store environment

Goals to be achieved by creating the store environment; Complementing the retailer's strategy, influencing consumers' purchasing behavior, providing flexibility and controlling costs in store design implementation and preserving the store appearance. To achieve its first goal, the retailer must define its target market and design its store to meet the needs of its consumers. In order for the retailer's store design to meet the needs of its target market and provide a sustainable competitive advantage, it must support and be compatible with its strategy (Levy & Weitz, 1998, 2009). To achieve the second goal, the retailer must concentrate on store layout and space planning. Retailers want the store environment to attract consumers to the store, to find the product easily, to make them make unplanned, sudden purchases, and to provide them with a satisfactory sales experience (Galsworth, 1997). Retailing is a dynamic field. At any time, competitors can enter the market and force the retailer to change the product mix they offer. When the product mix changes, the space allocated to product categories and the layout of the store will also change. Therefore, store designers should try to design stores with maximum flexibility. The retailer who wants to achieve the third goal must take into account every cost element related to the design element (Liker, 2014).

1.3.2. Store planning

The purpose of the store's layout is to arrange the limited space in a way that provides the most benefit (Hasty & Reardon, 1997). Retailers must first determine the basic layout of the store. They must then use techniques and signs to guide consumers through the store and assist them in locating and obtaining information about the product.

1.3.2.1. Separation of space

In space use, retailers seek to maximize the amount of productive space devoted to sales while minimizing the space devoted to non-selling activities. The area inside the store is divided into two. These; These are the areas where sales are made and where sales are not made (Berman & Evans, 2001). Areas where sales are not made; office areas, warehouses, toilets, etc. It covers areas. The initial stage of developing a floor plan is to analyze how the store space will be used. It is usually measured in square meters and divided into various sections. This allocation should be based on a mathematical calculation of the returns achieved by different product types. However, before describing this process, it is necessary to understand the various types of places within the store (Dunne & Lusch, 1999).

1.3.2.1.1. Types of spaces needed

There are five basic types of spaces needed in the store. These are (Dunne & Lusch, 1999, 466-469):

(1) Back room: When managing almost every retail store, some areas need to be reserved as back rooms. This area; It includes an area reserved for receiving incoming stocks and a warehouse used to store excess products. The percentage of space allocated for this section depends on the type of retailer. However, the size of this area is gradually shrinking for all retailers.

(2) Office and other functional areas: Every store needs a certain amount of offices and other functional areas. This area generally includes the break room for associates, the training room, the offices of the store manager and assistant, the cash office, the restroom for employees and customers, and other areas.

(3) Aisles, service areas, and major non-sales areas of the sales (ground) floor: Even on the main sales floor, some areas should be reserved for non-sales activities. The first thing the retailer should do, especially in large stores; They need to create the main corridor (aisle) that allows consumers to flow towards the store and the second corridor (aisle) that attracts consumers to the product. These aisles (aisle) must be large enough to avoid crowding and can be as wide as 4.57 meters in large stores. In addition to corridors (aisle), space should also be allocated for dressing rooms, break areas, service desks and other consumer service areas. Although retailers want to minimize product-free areas, the store's consumer service is an equally important part of the store and should not be short-lived.

(4) Area of products on the floor: Looking at the sales area of the store, shoppers are more familiar with the area of products on the floor. There are many different types of fixtures used to display a wide variety of different products. In general, retailers use fixtures called "bulk" on the floor to carry large amounts of products. But increasingly, retailers are realizing that the best goal is not to cram as much product as possible onto the floor; It has realized that the largest quantity must be displayed effectively and attractively in a way that consumers can understand and shop for.

(5) Area of products on the wall: Walls are one of the most important elements of the store. In addition to serving as a visual backdrop for the product on the floor, the walls serve as fixtures that display a large amount of product.

1.3.2.1.2. Space allocation planning

To determine the most productive space allocation plan, the retailer must first analyze the profitability and productivity of various product categories. A wide variety of methods are used to measure these variables. Regardless of which method is used, it must be linked in some way to some measure of profitability performance (net sales, net profit, net margin)—to obtain an efficiency figure that will be used to determine the amount of space to be used in the store and the best square footage allocation. There are two different types of situations in which the retailer can fulfill these (Dunne & Lusch, 1999):

- Improving the space productivity of the existing store: The retailer can develop a “sales story” of its sales to evaluate product performance, redefine space allocation and increase space productivity. The best metric in use is the “space productivity index”.

Space Efficiency index; It compares the store's total gross margin in a particular product category to the percentage of the store's sales area.

- Allocation of space for the new store: When retailers create a new store format, there is no usable productivity and profitability data on which to base space allocation. In this case, the retailer is based on an industry standard space allocation.

1.3.3. Visual merchandise

Recently, as competition has increased and stores have tried to increase their sales per square meter, retailers' interest in product offerings has also increased. Two basic "merchandise" presentations; shelf and visual "merhandising". Shelf arrangement-display; It describes the organizational display displayed in and on counters, hangers, shelves and fixtures. This type of "merchandise" is where consumers touch the products, try the products, examine them, read them, understand them and hope to buy them. The shelf should not represent "merchandise" or merely "merchandise" activity in an attractive way; The product must be displayed in a way that is understandable and affordable to the shopper. Visual merchandise is the presentation of the store and its product in a way that attracts the attention of potential customers. Visual merchandising displays products in an artistic manner. Although shelf merchandise is necessary to support sales in the store, a store that only uses shelf merchandise can be very boring (Santos, Moser & Tookey, 2002).

1.3.3.1. Reinforcement types

Products to be used as fixtures in store interior design should be chosen carefully. Reinforcements; It is all kinds of goods used for the purpose of displaying, selling, protecting and keeping stock of products (Hasty & Reardon, 1997). Reinforcements consist of different shapes, colors, sizes and materials. However, when the types are examined, it is seen that only a few basic reinforcements are available. For example, while flat hangers, round hangers or four-arm hangers are used for clothes, gondola-style units are used for other products (Tezel, Koskela & Tzortzopoulos, 2009):

1. Straight hanger: It is formed by mounting a straight pipe on the wall or extending its legs to the floor. Clothes are displayed by hanging hangers on the pipe in question.

While this type of hangers allow a large amount of products to be displayed, it is difficult to distinguish the color and shape of each garment.

2. Round hanger: It consists of a round pipe standing on legs. Although it is not as large as a flat hanger, it allows a lot of products to be displayed. Since it can be easily moved from one place to another within the store, it is a very preferred type of hanger in stores selling clothes.
3. Four-way hanger: It consists of pipes standing on legs and extending in all directions. In the equipment in question, the clothes displayed on each extension are fully visible. It also allows a lot of clothing to be displayed. Its only disadvantage is that it is not very balanced. Therefore, it is difficult to store it in the store.
4. Gondola style units: These are self-service counters with island-like shelves, baskets or pool-like sections within the store. These types of exhibitions are very useful. It is frequently used in supermarkets and discount stores to display almost all types of products such as biscuits, dry foods, clothes and soft drinks. It is also used in department stores to display towels, linens, kitchen utensils and clothing.

1.3.3.2. Merchandise presentation techniques

Some presentation techniques are (Arnberg &Husz, 2018):

- Idea-driven presentation: Some retailers use idea-driven presentation, which is a method of presenting the product based on a specific idea or store image. For example, furniture is presented in a room arrangement to give consumers an idea of how the products will look in their home. This approach supports consumers making multiple complementary purchases.
- Style/item presentation: The most common technique for managing stock is by style or item. Discount stores, grocery stores, hardware stores, and pharmacies use this method for every product category, as do most retailers. When a consumer searches for a product, they want to see all products in the same place.
- Color Representation: The most striking “merchandise” technique is structuring with color. For example, during the winter months, women's clothing stores display all their white cruisewear at the same time to remind consumers to buy clothes for the winter holidays.

- Price variety: In price variety, the retailer offers a limited number of predetermined price points or price categories within a different classification. This approach allows consumers to purchase the product at the price they are willing to pay.
- Vertical “merchandise”: Another technique that brings products together is vertical “merchandise”. In this approach, the product is presented vertically using walls and high gondolas. Consumers buy products the same way they read newspapers (right to left, top to bottom). Stores also arrange the product to follow the natural movement of the eye. Retailers are taking advantage of this trend in a variety of ways. Many grocery stores place their national brands at eye level and store brands on the lower floors. Because consumers will scan below eye level.
- Tonnage "merchandise": As the name suggests, this presentation technique is an exhibition technique in which large quantities of products are displayed together. Consumers equate tonnage with low price. This technique is also used to strengthen and increase the price image of the store. The product itself that uses this display technique is the exhibit. The retailer hopes that the consumer will see the product and be attracted to it.
- Front-line presentation: It is often difficult to create an effective display and at the same time create efficient store elements. However, it is important for the retailer to display as many products as possible. One solution to this is front-line presentation. In this product display technique, the retailer highlights his product as much as possible to catch the eye of the consumer.

1.3.4. Store design

The primary goal of store design in planning the store environment is to create a distinctive and memorable store image. Store design includes the interior and exterior of the store. Exterior design; The store's front, signs and entrance constitute the store's front, signs and entrance, each of which is of critical importance in influencing shoppers as they pass by the store and persuading them to enter (Gazzola, Pavione, Pezzetti & Grechi, 2020). In addition, the materials used on the exterior of stores also have different effects on customers. Stores built using steel materials are perceived as more durable, glass buildings are perceived as modern, if marble and granite are used, they are perceived as expensive, and if concrete is used, the store is perceived as cheap and worthless (Nistorescu & Barbu, 2008). Store interior design; It includes architectural elements and other details. There are hundreds of details in store design. Each of these must act together to achieve the desired ambiance (Pillai et al., 2011).

1.3.4.1. Store front design

Store front design should be noticeable, easily recognized and remembered by those passing by. The store front should clearly define the general structure and name of your store and give clues about the products inside. In general, store front design includes exterior signage and the architecture of the store front. Generally, store front design consists of showcases that serve as advertising media for the store. Store windows should attract the attention of passing shoppers and invite them in. In addition, showcases containing visual displays should change frequently, be fun and exciting, and represent the product inside. Because showcases provide a visual message about the products inside and the store image (Opris & Bratucu, 2013).

1.3.4.2. Interior design

Many studies conducted on a wide range of product categories show that although customers have decided on the products they intend to buy before they come to the store, they decide to buy them after entering the store, mostly considering the specific products they will buy (Ghosh, 1994). Effective store layout should encourage customers to buy, and in order to achieve this, the interior design of the store should be inviting, comfortable and convenient for customers, and the space within the store should be designed adequately and effectively.

Interior design includes all elements from floor to ceiling (Roozen, 2019). The materials used on the floor of the store have different effects on it. The fact that the floor is concrete and covered with carpet also affects the store. The preferred materials for the floor include marble, granite, laminate, concrete, carpet and linoleum (Berman & Evans, 2001). Unpainted concrete is low cost and creates a parallel environment. The environment created by plastic varies depending on its quality, color and design. The carpet creates an environment reminiscent of home. Ceramics, and especially marble, create a high-class, luxurious and expensive shopping experience. Retailers have more options for walls (Diamond, 2006).

The colors and decorations used in the wall material have an important role in creating the store environment. For example, prestigious stores generally prefer expensive and embossed wallpapers as wall coverings. On the other hand, supermarkets use cheap and plain wallpapers. In discount stores, plain, undecorated and uncoated walls prevail (Berman & Evans, 2001). The ceiling is also a design element. Having papier-mâché conveys a luxurious image. Because doing this is expensive. In addition, suspended ceilings are very common and economical. Additionally, the use of pipes and wires on black paint reminds us of a warehouse. A wide variety of moldings are used in combination with the interior architectural design element of the store (Morgan, 2015).

1.3.4.3. Light design

Another element that is very effective in successful store design is lights. Although little research has been conducted measuring the effect of light inside stores, retailers are aware of the effect of light on store sales (Aguileta, 2020). There should be enough light throughout the store. However, by using the right lighting, the consumer's attention is more easily drawn to certain sections (White, 2012). Department stores have noticed that increasing the lighting level in clothing departments negatively affects sales. Because bright light conveys the image of a discount store. Brighter lights inside the store also influence shoppers in wine stores to examine and touch more products (Barrelet et al., 2023).

1.3.4.4. Sound and smell: Total sensory marketing

An effective store image must appeal to all human emotions. The majority of design activity focuses on the eye. Research reveals that other senses are also very important. Therefore, retailers have started to appeal to the senses of smell and hearing in their stores (Piedade, 2017). It is also known that the colors used in the store have an impact on consumers. Therefore, in fast food restaurants, red and yellow colors are predominantly used to make consumers move quickly, while pastel colors are preferred to make consumers move slowly. Stores where colors such as white, gray and beige are used create a perception of quality in the consumer (Grossman & Wisenblit, 1999). It is a known fact that scents attract consumers to the store, cause them to spend longer time in the store, and generally encourage them to purchase. For example, in a study conducted by Spanhgenberg, Crowley and Henderson, a change in the behavior of consumers was detected in a store environment where the scent was sprayed and not sprayed (Spangenberg, Crowley & Henderson, 1996).

It is known that the music played in the store affects the consumer's evaluations, purchase desire, mood and behavior (Herrington, 1996). Retailers play music because of its relaxing effect and its positive impact on consumers staying in the store longer. Today, a company called Muzak provides music broadcasts to retail stores in 50 different formats. Music has become an increasingly valuable tool. Because the right music has both a soothing effect and the effect of reflecting the products offered. Although researchers believe that the tempo of music affects how long consumers stay in the store, the type of music also has an effect on consumers' purchasing amounts (James, 2015).

1.4. Approaches in the Context of Visual Store Management and Sustainability

Visual store management and sustainability have emerged as critical aspects within the retail sector, addressing both the aesthetic appeal and environmental responsibility of retail spaces. This discourse delves into various methodologies employed in harmonizing visual merchandising with sustainable practices, aiming to foster an engaging shopping experience while minimizing ecological footprints.

The paradigm of visual store management encompasses a myriad of strategies designed to enhance product visibility, store layout, and overall ambiance, thereby influencing consumer behavior and sales performance. As Kozinets et al. (2014) elucidate, visual merchandising leverages the spatial, ambient, and aesthetic elements of a retail environment to craft compelling narratives that resonate with consumers' senses and emotions, ultimately driving purchase intentions. This synergy between product presentation and consumer perception underscores the significance of meticulously curated visual strategies in retail settings.

Concurrently, the imperative of sustainability within retail environments has gained unprecedented momentum, driven by escalating concerns over environmental degradation and consumer advocacy for eco-friendly practices. Min and Wolfinbarger (2005) assert that sustainable retailing transcends mere compliance with environmental regulations, embodying a holistic approach that integrates eco-conscious principles into all facets of retail operations, from sourcing and logistics to packaging and waste management. This holistic approach not only mitigates adverse environmental impacts but also aligns with the growing consumer demand for sustainable products and practices.

Integrating sustainability into visual store management presents both challenges and opportunities. Birtwistle and Moore (2007) discuss the concept of 'green visual merchandising,' which involves the use of sustainable materials, energy-efficient lighting, and minimalist designs to reduce environmental impact while maintaining or enhancing the aesthetic appeal of the retail space. Such practices not only contribute to environmental conservation but also signal a brand's commitment to sustainability, potentially enhancing brand loyalty among environmentally conscious consumers.

Moreover, the adoption of digital technologies offers innovative avenues for blending visual merchandising with sustainability. As noted by Dennis, Brakus, Gupta and Alamanos (2014), augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) technologies can create immersive shopping experiences that replicate or enhance the physical retail environment without necessitating extensive physical infrastructure or resource consumption. These digital solutions not only reduce the carbon footprint associated with traditional retailing but also cater to the digital-savvy consumer base, offering a seamless omnichannel shopping experience.

In this context, the integration of sustainability into visual store management represents a multifaceted endeavor that requires a delicate balance between aesthetic allure and environmental stewardship. As retail landscapes continue to evolve, the convergence of these domains will undoubtedly play a pivotal role in shaping future retail practices, underscoring the importance of innovative, sustainable solutions in crafting engaging, eco-conscious retail environments.

2. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

In this part of the study, an attempt was made to provide readings through the theoretical foundations and source research sections on the effects of the visual merchandising method on customers' purchasing behavior in clothing stores.

2.1. Theoretical Foundations

Visual merchandising is a field that examines how the way products are displayed, store layout and presentation in retail stores affect customers' purchasing decisions. In this theoretical foundations section, various psychological, sociological and marketing theories are included to understand the effects of visual merchandising on customer behavior.

- Psychological Effects

The psychological foundations of visual merchandising are based on how customers perceive their in-store experiences and how these perceptions shape their purchasing behavior. Gestalt psychology theory explains how customers perceive in-store visual elements as a whole. According to this theory, customers evaluate in-store visual arrangements as a whole, and this integrity affects their perceptions about products and purchasing decisions.

- Environmental Psychology

Environmental psychology studies the effects of the physical environment on human behavior. In the context of visual merchandising, elements such as store atmosphere, lighting, colors and music have significant effects on customer emotions and behavior. Mehrabian and Russell's (1974) "Environmental Psychology Model" explains how customers' reactions to the store environment affect their emotional states and thus their purchasing behavior.

- Marketing and Consumer Behavior Theories

Marketing and consumer behavior theories provide the foundation for understanding the impact of visual merchandising on customer purchasing processes. The AIDA model (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) describes the various stages in the customers' buying process and shows how visual merchandising can influence these stages. The ability of product presentation, store layout and atmosphere to attract customers' attention, increase their interest, create desire for the product and direct them to purchasing action is emphasized.

- Socio-Cultural Impacts

Sociocultural frameworks are also important for understanding the effects of visual merchandising. Consumer culture theory examines how consumers' purchasing behavior is shaped by social and cultural factors. Visual merchandising can use this theory to understand how it interacts with customers' values, beliefs, and expectations in a particular cultural and social context.

Visual merchandising management has profound and versatile effects on customer purchasing behavior. Psychological, environmental, marketing and socio-cultural theoretical frameworks are critical to understanding these impacts and developing effective strategies in the retail industry. These theoretical foundations provide a roadmap for a deep understanding of how visual merchandising strategies can enrich customer experience and shape purchasing behavior. Below are the details of the theories and approaches in question.

2.1.1. Costumer behaviour theories

When the literature on purchasing behaviors is examined, the Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) and the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1985, 1991) are identified as two theories with significant impact on "consumer behaviors" (Baumgartner & Pieters, 2008). Although various definitions of attitude have been proposed, many researchers argue that a person's attitude represents their evaluation of the said entity (James, David & Roger, 1968).

2.1.1.1. Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)

In the Theory of Reasoned Action, relationships between attitude, intention, and behavior are utilized to explain that behavior is determined by intention (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977; Atılgan, 2015; Torlak & Özkara, 2017). According to this theory, an individual's behavior towards a specific action is determined by their behavioral intention, which in turn is influenced by their attitude and subjective norms (Atılgan, 2015). Fishbein and Ajzen suggest that intentions are decisions towards an action in a particular direction.

According to Ajzen, intentions play a crucial role in the actualization of a behavior, containing motivational factors that influence the behavior (Atılgan, 2015). Attitude is the predisposition of an individual to respond in a favorable or unfavorable manner to objects, people, or situations (Odabaşı & Barış, 2006). Subjective norm is expressed as the social influence that affects an individual's performance of a particular behavior (Atılgan, 2015).

Ajzen and Fishbein (1977) propose that the strength of an attitude-behavior relationship largely depends on the degree of congruence between attitudinal and behavioral entities. Generally, when there is no congruence between attitude and behavioral entities, a high attitude-behavior correlation cannot be expected. It is stated that attitudinal and behavioral entities comprise four different elements: the action, the target towards which the action is directed, the context in which the action is performed, and the time of the action's execution. The behavioral criterion encompasses these four specific elements, implying that a specific action is carried out according to a specific target within a certain context and time.

2.1.1.2. Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

The Theory of Planned Behavior is an extension of the Theory of Reasoned Action (Ajzen, 1991). Similar to the Reasoned Action Theory (Ajzen, 1991), the Theory of Planned Behavior posits that for a behavior to emerge in an individual, an intention towards that behavior must first be formed (Kılıç & Soran, 2011). In other words, the central factor in the theory is the individual's intention to perform a certain behavior (Ajzen, 1991). In the Theory of Planned Behavior, "perceived behavioral control" is added to the model, in addition to attitude and subjective norm. Perceived behavioral control refers to individuals' perceptions of the ease or difficulty of performing the behavior in question (Ajzen, 1991; Çetin & Şentürk, 2016). According to this theory, even if an individual is motivated to perform a behavior by their attitudes and subjective norms, organizational conditions can intervene, potentially discouraging the individual from performing the behavior and affecting their intention towards it (Çetin & Şentürk, 2016).

Ajzen (1985, 1991) developed the Theory of Planned Behavior as an extension of the Theory of Reasoned Action to address situations where an individual does not have volitional control over the behavior. Ajzen argues that in such situations, perceived behavioral control serves as an additional determinant of intentions and possible behaviors (Baumgartner & Pieters, 2008). Consequently, under the assumption that there is a correlation between the attitude towards a specific behavior and the behavior itself, certain formations lead to the development of an attitude by the individual towards a behavior, influencing their decision to perform or not perform the said behavior (Çetin & Şentürk, 2016).

According to Fazio et al. (1989), individuals with highly accessible attitudes towards a specific product have exhibited greater attitude-behavior consistency compared to those with less accessible attitudes. Consequently, they have proposed a model of the process by which attitudes guide behavior, defining this process in terms of the strength of the association between the object and the individual's evaluation of that object in memory. According to the model, attitudes guide evaluations of such objects only if they are activated from memory upon observation of the object. The general proposition of the model and current findings suggest that when an attitude is highly accessible from memory, the desired behavior is likely to occur. Therefore, if the goal of advertising is to influence purchase behavior, then it is essential to concern not only with the value of the emerging attitude but also with its accessibility from memory.

2.1.1.3. Expected Utility Theory and Prospect Theory

Within the realm of decision-making, the psychophysical approach known as the Expected Utility Theory, originally introduced by Daniel Bernoulli in 1738, is considered a method for making decisions under risk (Kahneman & Tversky, 1984). This theory attempts to explain human behavior in uncertain conditions based on a measurable utility function. Expected Utility Theory is grounded not in how individuals actually behave, but how they should behave, adopting an approach that is generally accepted as a normative model of rational choice and is widely applied as a descriptive model of economic behavior. It assumes that all reasonable individuals would want to adhere to its axioms and often do so. However, it is argued that preferences systematically violate the axioms of expected utility theory (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979), suggesting that individuals may not always act rationally when making decisions, with biases, intuitions, preferences, and tastes influencing the decision-making process.

In response to the Expected Utility Theory, Kahneman and Tversky (1979) developed the Prospect Theory as an alternative, critiquing the then-prevailing theory for its lack of modern validity. Unlike Expected Utility Theory, Prospect Theory posits that individuals do not operate under the assumption of rational behavior when making decisions. Instead, it suggests that due to erroneous intuitions or preferences, individuals cannot be entirely rational (Bagozzi, et al. 2016). Prospect Theory asserts that motivation determining an individual's behavior is rooted in their expectations of the outcome of said behavior. A fundamental assumption of Prospect Theory is that "losses loom larger than gains," meaning investors are emotionally more affected by losses than by equivalent gains. For example, the sorrow felt by an investor over a loss of 1000 Dollars is greater than the joy of gaining 1000 Dolars indicating that losses are perceived as more significant than gains (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979).

Kahneman and Tversky (1979) discuss three significant effects in their development of Prospect Theory as an alternative model for decision-making under risk. Choices regarding expectations in risky situations demonstrate various common effects that are inconsistent with the fundamental principles of utility theory (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979). According to Bettmann et al., 2018 the "certainty effect" implies that outcomes perceived as certain are more valued than those seen as probable. The "reflection effect" indicates that while there is an aversion to risk for positive outcomes, taking risks is considered important in negative situations. Lastly, the "isolation effect" suggests that individuals tend to ignore common features and focus on distinctive features when choosing between alternatives.

2.1.2. Customer behaviour theories effects on the visual merchandising management

Visual merchandising management plays a pivotal role in shaping customer behavior in the retail environment. The interplay between customer behavior theories and visual merchandising practices offers a nuanced understanding of how visual cues can influence consumer decision-making processes, purchase intentions, and overall shopping experiences. This comprehensive analysis delves into the core of how theories of customer behavior exert a profound impact on the strategies employed in visual merchandising management.

At the heart of visual merchandising lies the principle of creating a shopping environment that appeals to the senses, emotions, and cognitive responses of customers. The Theory of Planned

Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) suggests that an individual's behavior is driven by behavioral intentions, which in turn are influenced by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. This theory underscores the significance of visual merchandising in creating a positive attitude towards the shopping environment, thereby influencing consumers' intentions to purchase.

Furthermore, the Environmental Psychology Model (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974) elaborates on the impact of the physical store environment on customer emotions and behaviors. It posits that a pleasant shopping environment can evoke positive emotional states, leading to increased dwell time and a higher likelihood of purchase. Visual merchandising, through strategic use of lighting, color, layout, and displays, directly contributes to creating an ambiance that can positively affect consumer emotions and behaviors.

The Gestalt Psychology principles also provide insight into how visual merchandising management can optimize the presentation of products to influence consumer behavior. According to Gestalt theorists, consumers perceive visual elements as part of a greater whole, which implies that the overall arrangement and coherence of visual merchandising elements can significantly impact customer perception and behavior.

In addition to these theories, the Role of Aesthetics in Consumer Behavior (Bloch, 1995) highlights the importance of aesthetic appeal in consumer products and store environments. This perspective aligns with visual merchandising practices that focus on creating visually appealing displays and store designs that can attract consumers and influence their purchase decisions.

The Consumer Culture Theory (Arnould & Thompson, 2005) further enriches the understanding of how visual merchandising can resonate with consumers' cultural and social identities. By curating store environments and product displays that reflect consumer lifestyles, values, and identities, visual merchandising can foster a deeper connection with consumers, influencing their behavior and choices.

In this context, the integration of customer behavior theories with visual merchandising management provides a robust framework for understanding and influencing consumer behavior in the retail context. By leveraging insights from these theories, retailers can craft compelling visual merchandising strategies that enhance the shopping experience, influence consumer behavior, and ultimately drive sales.

2.2. Visual Merchandising Management and Relational Parameters

Visual merchandising management encompasses a strategic approach to presenting products and services in a way that maximizes their appeal to potential customers, influencing their perception, behavior, and ultimately, their purchasing decisions. This multifaceted discipline integrates aspects of psychology, design, aesthetics, and marketing to create environments that enhance the consumer shopping experience. The relational parameters within visual merchandising management involve the dynamics between visual merchandising strategies and customer responses, which are crucial for retailers aiming to foster positive customer relationships and drive sales.

The core of visual merchandising management lies in its ability to communicate with customers without verbal interaction. According to Bell and Ternus (2002), visual merchandising serves as a silent salesman, where the store layout, design, and display techniques speak volumes about the brand's identity and values. This silent communication influences consumers' perceptions and attitudes towards the store and its products, affecting their buying behavior (Kerfoot, Davies, & Ward, 2003). The strategic placement of merchandise, use of color, lighting, and signage are all elements that can significantly impact consumer emotions and encourage purchasing behavior.

The concept of the retail atmosphere plays a pivotal role in visual merchandising management, as it encompasses the physical characteristics of the retail space that influence buyer behavior. Kotler (1973) introduced the idea of atmospherics as a marketing tool, suggesting that the design of a retail environment could manipulate the senses of the consumer, affecting their perceptions, spending time, and ultimately, their purchase decisions. The retail atmosphere is a critical relational parameter in visual merchandising, as it directly relates to how consumers feel about the shopping environment and their willingness to engage with it.

Moreover, the application of environmental psychology to visual merchandising management offers insights into how physical settings can influence human behavior. Mehrabian and Russell's (1974) framework posits that environments can elicit emotional responses that, in turn, influence behavior. This theory suggests that a well-designed store layout and ambience can create pleasurable shopping experiences, leading to positive emotional states among consumers and encouraging them to make purchases.

Consumer culture theory (Arnould & Thompson, 2005) also provides a valuable lens through which to examine the relationship between visual merchandising and consumer behavior. This theory explores the ways in which consumers engage with and give meaning to the marketplace and its products. Visual merchandising, from this perspective, not only serves to attract attention and encourage sales but also to communicate cultural values and narratives that resonate with consumers' identities and lifestyles, strengthening the relational bond between the consumer and the brand.

In summary, visual merchandising management is a critical component of the retail marketing strategy, influencing consumer perceptions, emotions, and behaviors through strategic store design and product presentation. The relational parameters between visual merchandising and consumer responses underline the importance of creating engaging, aesthetically pleasing, and meaningful shopping environments that resonate with consumers on a personal and emotional level. Taking all these into consideration, comprehensive evaluations of the relevant parameters are given below.

2.2.1. Relationship between visual communication and retail marketing

Visual communication and retail marketing are intrinsically linked, creating a symbiotic relationship that shapes consumer perceptions, influences purchasing decisions, and enhances the overall shopping experience. Visual communication in retail encompasses a broad spectrum of elements, including store design and layout, window displays, signage, product packaging, and in-store promotions. These elements work collaboratively to capture the attention of consumers, communicate brand messages, and create an immersive shopping environment. The effectiveness of visual communication in retail is grounded in the principles of visual merchandising, which leverage aesthetic appeal to influence consumer behavior and decision-making processes.

The theoretical framework for understanding the impact of visual communication on retail marketing is rooted in the Psychology of Advertising, which examines how visual stimuli affect consumer attitudes and behaviors (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010). The use of colors, lighting, and spatial arrangements plays a critical role in creating atmospherics that evoke emotional responses from consumers, subsequently affecting their perception of products and willingness to purchase (Kotler, 1973).

Moreover, the Concept of Brand Identity strongly relies on visual communication to differentiate brands in a crowded marketplace. Through consistent use of logos, color schemes, and visual motifs, retailers can establish a distinct brand image that resonates with consumers, fostering brand loyalty and enhancing brand recall (Aaker, 1996).

The importance of visual communication in creating effective retail marketing strategies is further highlighted by the Consumer Decision Process Model, which suggests that visual cues can influence each stage of the consumer's journey, from awareness and information search to evaluation, purchase, and post-purchase evaluation (Blackwell, Miniard, & Engel, 2006).

Empirical studies support the notion that visual merchandising techniques can significantly impact consumer purchasing behavior. Research by Sen, Block, and Chandran (2002) found that strategically designed store environments can enhance product evaluation and increase purchase intention. Similarly, a study by Mehta and Chugan (2015) demonstrated the positive effects of window displays on attracting customers and encouraging impulse buying behaviors. In the era of digital retail, the role of visual communication extends beyond physical stores to online platforms, where website design, product photography, and virtual reality experiences contribute to a comprehensive visual strategy that engages customers in the digital realm (Vrechopoulos, O'Keefe, Doukidis & Siomkos, 2004). So, the relationship between visual communication and retail marketing is multifaceted and dynamic, influencing consumer perceptions, behaviors, and purchasing decisions. By strategically leveraging visual elements, retailers can enhance brand identity, improve customer engagement, and drive sales, highlighting the critical role of visual communication in the success of retail marketing strategies.

2.2.2. The relationship between brand perception and visual store management

The relationship between brand perception and visual store management is a multifaceted area of study that intertwines the intricacies of brand identity with the tactical execution of store presentation and design. This interconnectedness plays a crucial role in shaping consumer perceptions, influencing purchasing decisions, and ultimately determining the success of a brand in the competitive retail landscape. Visual store management encompasses a wide range of practices, including the strategic arrangement of products, the design and layout of the retail space, lighting, color schemes, and signage. These elements work collectively to create a shopping environment that reflects the brand's identity and values, thereby shaping consumer perceptions and experiences (Keller, 1993). The concept of the store as a brand ambassador suggests that every visual and aesthetic decision within the store is a direct communication with the consumer, conveying messages about the brand's quality, personality, and position in the market (Ailawadi & Keller, 2004).

The theoretical foundation for understanding the relationship between brand perception and visual store management is rooted in Environmental Psychology, which examines how physical surroundings influence individuals' feelings, behaviors, and attitudes (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). According to this perspective, a well-managed visual store environment can evoke positive emotional responses from consumers, leading to increased satisfaction, loyalty, and word-of-mouth promotion.

Additionally, the Retail Image concept underscores the importance of a cohesive visual management strategy in creating a positive store image, which is a critical component of overall brand perception (Martineau, 1958). A positive retail image, bolstered by effective visual store management, can differentiate a brand from its competitors, enhance consumer trust, and foster a strong emotional connection with the target audience.

Empirical research supports the notion that visual store management significantly influences brand perception. Grewal, Levy, and Kumar (2009) found that consumers' perceptions of value and quality are directly affected by the visual presentation of the store, which in turn influences their loyalty and purchasing behaviors. Furthermore, a study by Bloch, Ridgway, and Dawson (1994) demonstrated that the physical attributes of a store, including its design and atmosphere, contribute significantly to the consumer's overall assessment of the brand.

The integration of technology in visual store management, such as the use of digital displays and augmented reality, offers new avenues for enhancing brand perception. These innovative visual elements can provide immersive experiences that enrich the consumer's interaction with the brand, leading to deeper engagement and a more favorable perception (Pantano & Viassone, 2015). So the relationship between brand perception and visual store management is pivotal in the realm of retail marketing. A strategic approach to visual store management that aligns with the brand's identity and values can profoundly influence consumer perceptions, driving brand loyalty and success. Theoretical insights and empirical findings underscore the significance of creating a visually appealing and coherent store environment as a means of enhancing brand perception and achieving competitive advantage in the marketplace.

2.2.3. Psychological effects and effects on purchasing behaviors

The intricate relationship between psychological effects and their impact on purchasing behaviors encompasses a wide array of factors, including emotions, perceptions, cognitive processes, and social influences. Understanding how these psychological elements influence consumer decision-making is crucial for businesses aiming to optimize their marketing strategies and enhance the customer experience. At the core of consumer psychology is the concept that purchasing decisions are not solely based on rational analysis but are profoundly influenced by emotional responses and psychological triggers. The Affect Theory posits that emotions can significantly impact consumer behavior, with positive emotions potentially leading to increased purchasing intent and negative emotions possibly deterring it (Isen, 1984). This theory suggests that creating a positive emotional environment through marketing and retail experiences can foster a conducive atmosphere for purchasing.

Cognitive psychology offers insights into how information processing, perception, attitudes, and beliefs influence consumer behavior. The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) proposes two routes to persuasion: the central route, where consumers are motivated and able to process information deeply, and the peripheral route, where consumers are influenced by superficial cues due to low motivation or ability to process information (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). This model underscores the importance of tailoring marketing messages to the consumers' level of engagement and processing capacity.

Social psychology also plays a critical role in shaping purchasing behaviors through the concepts of social proof and normative influence. Consumers often look to the behaviors and opinions of others when making purchasing decisions, especially in situations of uncertainty (Cialdini, 2001). Marketing strategies leveraging testimonials, reviews, and influencer endorsements can capitalize on this tendency by providing social proof that influences purchasing behaviors.

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) integrates individual attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control to predict how likely an individual is to engage in a specific behavior (Ajzen, 1991). In the context of consumer behavior, this theory suggests that a consumer's intention to purchase can be influenced by personal attitudes towards the product, perceived social pressure, and the ease with which the purchase can be made.

Research has also explored the psychological effects of visual elements in retail environments, including store design, branding, and product presentation, on purchasing behaviors. The concept of visual merchandising encompasses strategies to make stores and products more appealing to consumers' psychological and emotional states, enhancing the likelihood of purchase (Meadows, 2008). The psychological effects on purchasing behaviors encompass a broad spectrum of emotional, cognitive, and social factors. Businesses that understand and leverage these psychological insights can create marketing strategies and retail environments that positively influence consumer perceptions and behaviors, ultimately driving sales and fostering customer loyalty.

2.2.4. The effect of cultural and social factors on visual store management

The effect of cultural and social factors on visual store management underscores the intricate relationship between societal norms, cultural values, and the strategic presentation of retail spaces. Cultural factors play a pivotal role in visual store management by dictating the aesthetics, symbols, and motifs that resonate with the local consumer base. According to Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory, societal values such as individualism versus collectivism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance can significantly influence consumer preferences and expectations (Hofstede, 1980). Retailers, therefore, must tailor their visual merchandising strategies to reflect these cultural nuances, ensuring that store designs, displays, and promotional materials align with local cultural values and norms.

Social factors, including social class, family, reference groups, and social status, also impact visual store management. The concept of social identity theory suggests that individuals' purchasing choices are often influenced by their desire to belong to certain social groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Retailers can leverage this insight by designing store environments and visual displays that appeal to the aspirational qualities of targeted social groups, thereby enhancing the store's attractiveness to specific consumer segments.

Moreover, the role of cultural and social factors in visual store management extends to the globalization of retail brands. As retailers expand into new markets, understanding and integrating into the local cultural and social fabric becomes essential for success. This includes adapting visual merchandising elements to meet local tastes and expectations while maintaining brand identity. Studies have shown that global brands that successfully localize their store design and visual merchandising efforts can achieve higher levels of consumer engagement and loyalty (Alden, Steenkamp, & Batra, 1999).

Consumer behavior theories further illuminate how cultural and social contexts influence the effectiveness of visual store management strategies. The Theory of Cultural Capital (Bourdieu, 1984) posits that individuals' tastes and preferences are shaped by their cultural upbringing and social environment, impacting their responses to visual merchandising cues. Retailers can utilize this theory to design store environments and visual elements that cater to the cultural and social backgrounds of their target market, enhancing the relevance and appeal of their stores.

In the digital age, the influence of cultural and social factors on visual store management is also evident in online retailing. The visual presentation of products and the user interface design of e-commerce platforms must consider cultural preferences in color schemes, layout, and imagery to effectively engage consumers from diverse cultural backgrounds (Cyr, 2008). Cultural and social factors significantly influence visual store management, dictating the strategies that retailers must employ to engage effectively with consumers. By understanding and integrating these factors into their visual merchandising efforts, retailers can create store environments that resonate with consumers' cultural and social identities, fostering a connection that goes beyond the transactional, to build brand loyalty and drive sales.

2.2.5. The relationship between visual store management and competitive strategies

The relationship between visual store management and competitive strategies is a vital area of study in the retail sector, underscoring how effective visual merchandising can be leveraged as a competitive tool in today's market. This intricate relationship explores how visual store management not only enhances the aesthetic appeal of a retail space but also serves as a strategic element to attract customers, differentiate from competitors, and ultimately drive sales and profitability.

Visual store management, encompassing the strategic layout, design, and presentation of retail spaces and product displays, plays a crucial role in creating a compelling shopping environment. It influences consumers' perceptions, encourages engagement, and can significantly impact their purchasing decisions. As part of a broader competitive strategy, visual merchandising aims to create a unique store identity and shopping experience that sets a retailer apart from its competitors. In the context of Porter's Five Forces model, visual store management can be seen as a differentiation strategy aimed at mitigating the intensity of competitive rivalry (Porter, 1980). By creating a distinctive and engaging store environment, retailers can attract more customers, foster brand loyalty, and reduce the comparative appeal of competitors' offerings. This unique differentiation helps in establishing a competitive edge in a saturated market, where consumers are presented with numerous choices.

Moreover, visual store management is closely linked to the concept of brand identity. A well-executed visual merchandising strategy reflects and reinforces a brand's identity, values, and promise to its customers (Keller, 1993). Through consistent and innovative visual presentation, retailers can communicate their brand's unique attributes and values, further distinguishing themselves in the competitive landscape.

The impact of visual store management on consumer behavior further illustrates its role in competitive strategies. According to the Environmental Psychology Model (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974), the store environment can elicit emotional responses that influence consumers' approach or avoidance behaviors. Retailers that effectively utilize visual merchandising techniques to create pleasant and stimulating shopping environments can enhance customer satisfaction, encourage repeat visits, and increase sales, thereby gaining a competitive advantage.

Empirical research supports the effectiveness of visual merchandising as a competitive strategy. A study by Berman and Evans (1995) highlighted that strategic visual merchandising could lead to increased consumer spending and store loyalty, critical factors for competitive success in the retail industry. Furthermore, innovative use of technology in visual store management, such as virtual reality displays and interactive digital signage, offers new avenues for creating immersive shopping experiences that can significantly differentiate a retailer from its competition (Grewal et. al., 2009). The relationship between visual store management and competitive strategies is multifaceted and profound. Effective visual merchandising not only enhances the aesthetic appeal of a retail space but also serves as a crucial component of a retailer's competitive strategy. By creating distinctive and engaging shopping environments, retailers can differentiate themselves from competitors, attract and retain customers, and ultimately achieve a sustainable competitive advantage.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

In the scholarly discourse on visual merchandising, researchers such as Mehta and Chugan (2013), alongside Walters and White (1987) and Mills, Paul and Moorman (1995), have highlighted its critical role in shaping consumer purchasing decisions through strategic product presentation. Visual merchandising not only ensures that products are appropriately showcased to potential buyers but also emphasizes the timing and context of these presentations, facilitating the connection between products and their ideal consumers (Mehta & Chugan, 2013). Furthermore, visual merchandising extends beyond mere product arrangement, encapsulating the overall aesthetic and thematic representation of both the store and its brand, achieved through collaborative efforts among store personnel. This multifaceted approach incorporates advertising displays designed to augment sales by enhancing the visibility and appeal of the store's offerings to its clientele. Pillai and colleagues (2011) argue that visual merchandising encompasses elements from the store's exterior design to internal displays, all contributing to the formation of a positive initial impression on customers.

The significance of both the interior and exterior aspects of visual merchandising has been corroborated by researchers like Darden, Erdem, and Darden (1983), Kim (2003), Omar (1999), and McGoldrick (1990), who assert that the store's facade and its window displays play a pivotal role in attracting consumers by creating inviting first impressions. Upon entering, customers encounter various types of displays—merchandising, point-of-sale, and architectural—that collectively enhance the shopping experience and influence purchasing behavior. Pham (2019) further underscores the importance of a well-designed store interior, including factors such as signage, layout, and overall ambiance, in drawing customers into the store and shaping their expectations.

Additionally, the role of visual merchandising in eliciting sensory, affective, and cognitive responses from consumers has been explored. Chung (2019) suggests that these responses not only facilitate immediate purchases but also impact the likelihood and extent of impulsive buying behaviors. This interplay between store presentation and consumer response underlines the complexity of visual merchandising as a field that intersects with customer psychology.

The broader context of consumer behavior, as explored by scholars like Loudon and Della (1993), and Blackwell, Miniard, Engel and Ching (2001), further enriches the discussion on visual merchandising. These studies delve into the nuanced understanding of consumers as rational decision-makers, whose purchasing patterns are influenced by a myriad of factors including but not limited to information processing, alternative evaluation, and the eventual disposition of products. Budiman and Wijaya (2016) emphasize that consumer behavior encompasses the entire journey from need recognition to post-purchase actions, highlighting the intricate processes through which individuals and groups make purchasing decisions. This body of work suggests that consumer behavior is shaped by both conscious and unconscious needs, indicating that customers may purchase items they did not initially intend to buy, underscoring the profound impact of visual merchandising strategies on consumer decision-making processes.

Contemporary retail spaces are characterized by their self-sufficiency and expansive retail areas, as noted by Park and Kim (2003). These establishments serve as comprehensive hubs where consumers can find a wide array of products tailored to meet their diverse needs and preferences. A pivotal aspect of these retail environments is visual merchandising, a core marketing strategy employed to draw customers into stores. The decision-making process of consumers regarding store selection is influenced by multiple factors, including but not limited to the store's ambiance, location, the variety of products offered, lighting, background music, floor layout, availability of children’s play areas, pricing policies, promotional activities, convenience, and more (Pillai et al., 2011; Pham, 2019).

Research has revealed a preference among a majority of shoppers for stores that are easily accessible and proximate to their locations. Furthermore, stores offering amenities such as play areas for children are highly favored, allowing parents the opportunity to shop undisturbed while their children are engaged. The presence of parking facilities also plays a critical role in the store selection process, with a preference for stores offering convenient parking solutions. Another significant factor impacting consumer choice is the ambiance of the store, which encompasses both the spatial layout and the range of products available. Despite the availability of a broad spectrum of products in many stores, a lack of proper organization can hinder customers from locating the desired products promptly. Therefore, a well-thought-out store design, including efficient product organization and clear product categorization, significantly influences consumer preferences.

Pricing policies further dictate consumer choices, emphasizing the notion of the customer as the ultimate authority. Retailers are thus encouraged to align their pricing strategies with the needs and preferences of their clientele, ensuring that high-quality products are offered at reasonable prices. Promotional activities represent another crucial factor, incorporating a variety of marketing tactics such as advertising campaigns, distribution of pamphlets, and digital marketing strategies aimed at captivating potential buyers (Chung, 2019). Such promotions are instrumental in disseminating product information effectively, thereby attracting a larger customer base. So, the overall attractiveness of the store, including aspects such as color schemes, layout, and architectural design, significantly impacts consumer decisions. These elements collectively influence customer preferences, highlighting the multifaceted nature of factors that contribute to the appeal and success of modern retail environments.

Visual merchandising encompasses a variety of elements such as online marketing strategies, the use of fixtures, color schemes, design principles, effective pricing policies, and the provision of higher quality products compared to competitors (Solomon, Bamossy, Askegaard & Hogg, 2009). These factors collectively play a crucial role in enhancing customer satisfaction and promoting products within the marketplace, acting as powerful influencers on consumers' intentions to make repeat purchases. In a marketplace marked by intense competition, the necessity for retailers to devise and implement robust marketing strategies cannot be overstated, as these strategies are instrumental in capturing consumer interest efficiently.

Conversely, the deployment of ineffective marketing strategies can lead to detrimental outcomes for retailers, including the tarnishing of brand image and diminished levels of customer satisfaction, ultimately impeding their success. This research paper seeks to explore the discrepancies that arise between visual merchandising and store management strategies and consumer preferences. Such mismatches often result from the implementation of inappropriate strategies aimed at boosting sales, thereby highlighting the critical importance of aligning marketing efforts with consumer expectations (Rook, 1987). This alignment is imperative for retailers seeking to optimize their market presence and achieve sustained success by fostering a positive shopping experience that encourages repeat patronage.

Kerfoot et al. (2003) examine how visual merchandising affects how consumers perceive their in-store experiences and how these perceptions have an impact on purchasing decisions. The authors state that store atmosphere and layout can increase customers' interest in products and strengthen their purchasing intentions.

Sen et al. (2002) investigated how visual merchandising elements, especially color and lighting, affect consumers' emotional responses and therefore purchasing behavior. What they found is that certain colors and lighting patterns make customers feel more positive about products and tend to buy more.

Berman and Evans (2001) emphasize how store design and layout affect customer traffic and in-store circulation. An effective store layout can improve customers' shopping experience and increase sales by allowing them to easily find and explore products.

Mehta and Chugan (2015) revealed that visual merchandising strategies have long-term effects on brand image and customer loyalty. This study shows that visual merchandising can positively impact not only short-term sales but also long-term brand equity.

Visual merchandising transcends mere product presentation, engaging with the consumer's emotions, perceptions, and psychological triggers. Mattila and Wirtz (2001) highlight the impact of store atmosphere on consumer emotions and subsequent behaviors, suggesting that a strategically designed store environment can significantly influence the amount of time and money customers are willing to spend. The interplay between ambient conditions, such as lighting and music, with spatial layout and display design forms a holistic atmosphere that can either attract or repel potential buyers.

In the realm of color psychology, Bellizzi and Hite (1992) examine the effect of color in marketing contexts, finding that certain colors can elicit specific emotional responses, which in turn can affect purchasing decisions. Their research underscores the importance of color in creating a compelling visual merchandising strategy that resonates with the target audience's emotional states.

The configuration of a store's physical space plays a crucial role in navigating consumer flow and enhancing product visibility. Vrechopoulos et al. (2004) explore the concept of optimal store layout, arguing that the arrangement of merchandise can facilitate or hinder the shopping experience, affecting consumer satisfaction and sales. An intuitive and shopper-friendly layout can lead to increased exploration, prolonged store visits, and elevated purchase likelihood.

Moreover, the role of technology in enhancing visual merchandising practices cannot be overlooked. Pantano and Viassone (2015) investigate the integration of digital technologies within physical store environments, suggesting that interactive displays and augmented reality can enrich the shopping experience, offering personalized and immersive encounters that potentially drive sales and loyalty.

Visual merchandising extends beyond immediate sales effects, contributing to brand perception and customer loyalty. Brakus, Schmitt and Zarantonello (2009) delve into the experiential aspects of brand interactions, demonstrating how sensory, affective, and intellectual stimulation through visual merchandising can foster a deeper emotional connection between the consumer and the brand, cultivating long-term loyalty.

In conclusion, the literature suggests that visual merchandising management in clothing stores plays a pivotal role in shaping customer buying behavior. The strategic use of atmosphere, store layout, color, and technology in visual merchandising not only influences immediate purchasing decisions but also contributes to building a strong, enduring brand image and loyalty.

In the light of all these literature studies and within the framework of general information, in the continuation of the study, the direction of the relationship was evaluated by analyzing the relationship in question with a quantitative analysis method.

4.METHODOLOGY

4.1. Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this research is to examine the impact of visual merchandising management in clothing stores on customer behaviors. Specifically, the aim is to understand the effects of visual merchandising management, store atmosphere, and sales promotions on impulse buying behavior.

4.2. Scope of the Study

This study examines shopping experiences in clothing stores operating in the fashion industry. Within the scope of the research, participants' reactions to factors such as visual merchandising management, store atmosphere, and sales promotions are analyzed, along with the impact of these factors on impulse buying behavior. The objective of the study is to understand the factors influencing customer behaviors in clothing stores and to contribute to future research in this area.

4.3. Research Strategy

In this thesis, a quantitative-based research strategy has been pursued to identify relationships and patterns in order to make sense of the collected data and formulate a theory. Regarding the use of the quantitative approach, this method has been employed in gathering numerical data, which was later analyzed statistically.

4.4. Research Methods

The research method used in this study is quantitative. This approach involves the systematic empirical investigation of observable phenomena via statistical, mathematical, or computational techniques. The primary data for the research were collected through a survey derived from the literature. A five-point Likert scale has been utilized, ranging from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree,' with a neutral midpoint also present. The quantitative data collected were then analyzed to identify patterns and relationships.

4.5. Sampling

Given limited resources and time constraints, a non-probability, convenience sampling technique has been used to instantly acquire necessary information from participants. This method has been preferred for its time and cost effectiveness, as well as the relatively easy collection of samples.

Sample frame has been chosen as Adana center because it may assist in generalizing the results due to its inclusion of customers/consumers with various cultural backgrounds. The sample frame consists of consumers and customers who shop at malls located in central Adana.

To find the sample size for the research, the sample formulation was used (Cochran, 1977). Since the population value is 26,000 and considering the presence of a heterogeneous structure in the population, and assuming that the population may exhibit heterogeneous characteristics, the sample size has been calculated by computing a margin of error of ±5% with a 95% confidence interval (Thompson, 2012).

Sample size is obtained by using the following formula:

$$n = \frac{n_0}{1 + \frac{n_0}{N}} \qquad n_0 = [(txs)/d]^2 \tag{3.1}$$

n: Targeted Sample Size
N: Population Size
t: t value corresponding to Confidence Level
s: Standard Deviation
d: Margin of Error

Population size N = 26,000. The population size of 26,000 is based on estimates of the number of regular shoppers in central Adana's shopping malls. This estimation considers local demographic data, previous market research studies, and foot traffic records from the malls in the area (Aziz, 2013; Keller, 1993; Mehta & Chugan, 2013). These sources collectively suggest that approximately 26,000 individuals frequently engage in shopping activities in central Adana, providing a relevant and diverse sample frame for the study.

For a accepted error level of 95%, the t value corresponds to 1.96. s value is taken as 0.5; d value is also taken as 0.5. According to the result obtained from the formula, a minimum of 384 individuals should be reached. However, considering the margin of error, the research aims to reach 400 individuals. Purposive sampling method has been preferred as the sampling method. In this sampling method, the researcher collects the required data from individuals or objects in their proximity. This type of sampling facilitates access to the sample group within the population, providing an advantage due to the ease of accessing data from their surroundings (Aziz, 2013). In the study, accessing the purposive sample group within the population will be advantageous due to the ease of accessing data from their surroundings.

4.6. Research Model and Hypotheses

This research employs a quantitative research strategy. The main objective of the research is to evaluate the effects of visual merchandising management, store atmosphere, and sales promotions on impulse buying behavior. In this context, research data has been collected through primary sources and using a questionnaire adopted from the literature. The data has been analyzed using various statistical techniques.

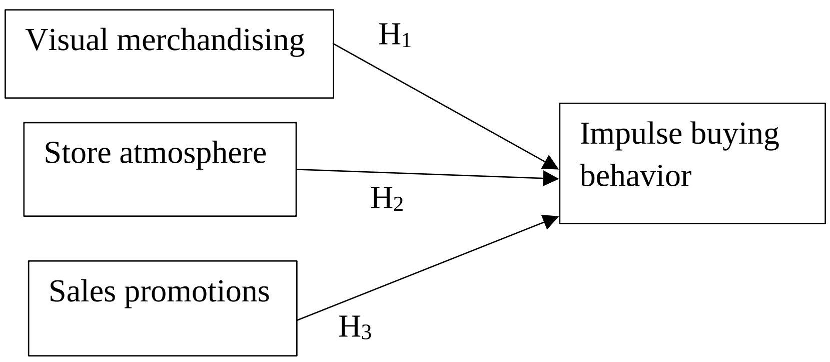

Figure 3.1. Research model

This diagram visualizes the main components and relationships of the research. In the diagram above, the independent variables (visual merchandising management, store atmosphere, and sales promotions) indicate their effects on impulse buying behavior.

The dependent variable is impulse buying behavior. The research model is utilized to explain the relationships and interactions among these variables. In this research, a quantitative research strategy has been followed. Data will be collected from primary sources. The data will be gathered using a survey method, and the survey has been expanded using the relevant literature (see Appendix: Survey Form). The survey questions have been developed based on studies found in the literature (Sahni et al., 2014; Merugu & Vaddadi, 2017; Soomro et al., 2017; Hussain & Ali, 2015; Mehta & Chugan, 2014; Santini et al., 2015; Chang et al., 2011; Dash & Akshaya, 2016). The survey is divided into two parts. The first part includes questions about visual merchandising and consumers' responses to visual merchandising. The second part contains questions about consumers' demographic and subjective information. The first part consists of 48 questions and will be measured using a 5-point Likert scale. The second part includes multiple-choice and open-ended questions. Research model was shown in Figure 3.1. Hypotheses are listed as follows.

Hypotheses:

H_1: Visual Merchandising Management influences impulsive buying behavior.

H_2: Store Atmosphere influences impulsive buying behavior.

H_3: Sales Promotions influence impulsive buying behavior.

H_4: There is a significant difference in the perception of Visual Merchandising Management between genders.

H_5: There is a significant difference in the perception of Store Atmosphere between genders.

H_6: There is a significant difference in the perception of Sales Promotions between genders.

H_7: There is a significant difference in the perception of Visual Merchandising Management across generations.

H_8: There is a significant difference in the perception of Store Atmosphere across generations.

H_9: There is a significant difference in the perception of Sales Promotions across generations.

The research model presented in this thesis is designed to investigate the factors influencing impulsive buying behavior, specifically focusing on the roles of Visual Merchandising Management, Store Atmosphere, and Sales Promotions. The model posits that these three elements are critical drivers of impulsive buying, a behavior often exhibited by consumers in retail environments. The study adopts a quantitative research strategy, employing primary data collected through a structured questionnaire. The data is analyzed using various statistical techniques to test the relationships between the independent variables (Visual Merchandising Management, Store Atmosphere, and Sales Promotions) and the dependent variable (Impulsive Buying Behavior).

The hypotheses are divided into two main categories: direct effects and group comparisons. The first three hypotheses (H_1, H_2, H_3) focus on the direct influence of the independent variables on impulsive buying behavior. Specifically, H_1 proposes that Visual Merchandising Management positively influences impulsive buying behavior. H_2 suggests that Store Atmosphere has a significant impact on impulsive buying behavior, while H_3 asserts that Sales Promotions are a critical factor in driving impulsive purchases. These hypotheses are directly aligned with the research model and are tested using regression analysis to quantify the strength and significance of these relationships.

The remaining hypotheses (H_4 to H_9) explore potential differences in the perception of these independent variables across different demographic groups, specifically gender and generation. Although these factors are not included as direct predictors in the research model, the study recognizes their potential influence. H_4, H_5, and H_6 examine whether there are significant differences in the perception of Visual Merchandising Management, Store Atmosphere, and Sales Promotions between genders. Similarly, H_7, H_8, and H_9 investigate differences across generational cohorts.

4.7. Data Analysis

The analysis of data will be conducted using the SPSS program (SPSS 29) , applying basic statistical tools and techniques. As part of the analysis, the fundamental characteristics of demographic features and survey questions will be examined using basic statistical tools, and frequency distributions will be obtained. Subsequently, descriptive statistics will be derived for the focused variables, and characteristics such as mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis of these variables will be determined. Correlation and regression analyses will be used to analyze the impact of visual merchandising, store management, and sales promotions on impulsive buying behaviors. Finally, in the last step of the analysis, ANOVA and t-tests will be applied to highlight differences between variables.

5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section details the outcomes of the comprehensive data analysis performed using the SPSS software, where basic and advanced statistical tools were utilized to interpret the collected data. The primary objective of this analysis was to understand the impact of visual merchandising, store management, and sales promotions on impulsive buying behaviors, as well as to examine the influence of demographic variables such as gender and generation on these relationships.

Initially, the analysis involved exploring the basic characteristics of the demographic data and the responses to the survey questions through frequency distributions. This step helped in summarizing the data and provided a clear overview of the sample's composition and response patterns. Following this, descriptive statistics were computed for the key variables of interest. Measures such as the mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis offered insights into the central tendencies and dispersions within the data, as well as the shape of the distribution of responses, which are critical for further inferential analysis.

The core of the analysis consisted of applying correlation and regression techniques to assess the relationships between the variables related to marketing elements (visual merchandising, store atmosphere, and sales promotions) and impulsive buying behaviors. These analyses helped in determining the strength and direction of these relationships, providing evidence for or against the proposed hypotheses.

Finally, to explore the differences among various demographic groups, specifically between different genders and generations, ANOVA and t-tests were conducted. These tests were crucial in identifying significant differences in how various groups perceive and react to marketing strategies implemented in retail settings.

The findings from these analyses are discussed in the following sections, where each hypothesis is addressed in detail, supported by the statistical evidence gathered through the application of the aforementioned techniques. This discussion integrates the empirical results with theoretical perspectives from relevant literature, providing a nuanced understanding of consumer behavior in retail environments.

5.1. Demographics

The sample consists of 43.75% males and 56.25% females. It is shown in the following Table 5.1.

Table 5.1. Gender distribution

Gender	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Male	175	43.75%
Female	225	56.25%

Age distribution is shown in Table 5.2 and income distribution is shown in table 5.3. Education Level Distribution is shown in Table 5.4 and Occupation Distribution is shown in Table 5.5.

Table 5.2. Age group

Age Group	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
18-24 years	240	60%
25-34 years	100	25%
35-44 years	40	10%
45+ years	20	5%
Total	**400**	**100%**

The concentration of participants in the 18-24 age group (60%) aligns with the target demographic that many retailers focus on, especially those dealing in trendy and fast-fashion sectors. This age group is likely to be highly responsive to innovative marketing tactics and may exhibit higher rates of impulsive buying, driven by social trends and peer influence.

Table 5.3. Monthly income distribution

Monthly Income	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Below 17,000	80	20%
17,000-30,000	120	30%
30,000-57,000	100	25%
57,000-77,000	60	15%
77,000-100,000	20	5%
Above 100,000	20	5%
Total	**400**	**100%**

The income distribution among the participants was assessed to provide a broad spectrum of consumer purchasing power. The classification of lower to middle-income groups, which represents 55% of the participants, was determined based on an income range of 17,000 to 57,000. This classification is grounded in commonly accepted thresholds for middle-income brackets within the socio-economic context of the study. These groups are particularly relevant to the research as they may be more responsive to promotions and discounts, making these factors critical in their purchase decisions. The economic constraints and opportunities within this income range highlight how financial factors can either limit or enable impulsive buying behavior. The predominance of students and employed individuals in the sample provides insight into two distinct types of consumers: one that might be more price-sensitive and influenced by peer trends (students), and another that might have more disposable income and stability (employed), which influences their response to store atmospheres and merchandising.

Table 5.4. Education level distribution

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Primary/Elementary	40	10%
High School	160	40%
Associate's Degree	100	25%
Bachelor’s Degree	80	20%
Postgraduate	20	5%
Total	**400**	**100%**

With a significant number of participants having at least a high school education, and many being students (50%), the influence of educational background on consumer awareness and susceptibility to marketing ploys can be crucial. Higher education levels often correlate with more critical thinking and a better understanding of marketing tactics, which might reduce the susceptibility to impulsive buying (Mehta & Chugan, 2013).

The occupation distribution in Table 5.5 provides an insightful overview of the sample population's employment status, revealing significant trends and demographic characteristics that can influence consumer behavior and purchasing patterns. The largest segment of the sample comprises students, who make up 50% (n=200) of the total respondents. This substantial representation suggests that the sample is heavily influenced by younger individuals who are likely to have distinct shopping habits and preferences. Students typically have limited disposable income and are often driven by trends and promotions, making them a key demographic for retailers to target with cost-effective and appealing visual merchandising strategies (Mehta & Chugan, 2013).

Table 5.5. Occupation distribution

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Student	200	50%
Employed	100	25%
Self-Employed	40	10%
Unemployed	20	5%
Homemaker	20	5%
Retired	10	2.5%
Other	10	2.5%
Total	400	100%

Employed individuals account for 25% (n=100) of the sample, representing the second-largest group. This segment is crucial for retailers because employed consumers generally have a stable income, which can lead to higher purchasing power and more frequent shopping activities. Retail strategies for this group might focus on quality and convenience, catering to their often busy lifestyles and higher disposable incomes (Berman & Evans, 2001).

Self-employed respondents make up 10% (n=40) of the sample. This group is likely to have varied income levels and might prioritize value and investment in their purchases. Retailers could attract self-employed consumers by offering versatile products and flexible payment options that cater to their entrepreneurial needs and financial variability (Keller, 1993).

Unemployed individuals and homemakers each constitute 5% (n=20) of the sample. These groups may exhibit more cautious spending behavior due to limited or no personal income. Retailers could engage these consumers through promotions, discounts, and products that emphasize affordability and essential value (Mehta & Chugan, 2013).

Retired individuals and those categorized as 'Other' each make up 2.5% (n=10) of the sample. Retirees might have fixed incomes and could be more selective with their spending, often prioritizing comfort, quality, and health-related products. Marketing strategies for this group could highlight reliability, longevity, and health benefits of products (Aziz, 2013).

The distribution reveals a diverse sample, with a broad range of occupations represented. This diversity is beneficial for understanding how different employment statuses influence consumer behavior, particularly in relation to impulse buying and responses to visual merchandising. The relatively high percentage of students indicates a need for retailers to focus on youthful, trendy, and cost-effective marketing approaches, while the employed and self-employed segments suggest opportunities for strategies that emphasize quality, convenience, and flexibility (Mehta & Chugan, 2013).

Table 5.6. Features

Feature	**Percentage (%)**
Quality	35
Price	30
Style/Design	20
Comfort	10
Brand	5

The findings are shown in Table 5.6. These findings indicate that the primary feature consumers consider when buying clothes is quality, followed closely by price. This suggests that while cost-effectiveness is significant, consumers are willing to invest in higher-quality items. This is consistent with previous research which indicates that consumers often perceive quality as a long-term saving, as high-quality items tend to last longer (Berman & Evans, 2001). Additionally, style and comfort are also important, reflecting the consumers' desire for clothing that not only looks good but also feels good to wear.

Table 5.7. Store type

Store Type	**Percentage (%)**
Department Stores	40
Boutiques	25
Online Stores	20
Outlet Stores	10
Supermarkets	5

The findings are shown in Table 5.7. Department stores emerged as the most popular shopping destination among the participants, indicating that consumers appreciate the variety and convenience offered by such stores. This is in line with findings by Aaker (1996) who suggested that department stores attract consumers by providing a wide range of products under one roof. Boutiques and online stores also play a significant role, indicating a trend towards personalized shopping experiences and the growing importance of e-commerce (Dennis et al., 2014).

Table 5.8. Purchase location

Purchase Location	**Percentage (%)**
Shopping Malls	50
Online Stores	30
Department Stores	15
Boutiques	5

The findings for purchase location are given in table 5.8. Shopping malls are the preferred location for buying global brands, followed by online stores. This highlights the continued relevance of physical retail spaces in providing an experiential aspect to shopping that online stores cannot fully replicate (Mehta & Chugan, 2015). However, the significant percentage of online shopping indicates a shift in consumer behavior towards convenience and accessibility offered by e-commerce platforms.

Table 5.9. Brands

Brand	Percentage (%)
Nike	60
Adidas	50
Zara	45

Findings of first three global clothing brands that come to customer' mind are Nike, Adidas, and Zara that are the top three global clothing brands recalled by participants, showcasing the strong brand recognition and market presence of these brands. Nike and Adidas, both sportswear giants, dominate due to their extensive marketing and broad product ranges that cater to various consumer needs (Keller, 1993). Zara's presence reflects the impact of fast fashion on consumer consciousness, emphasizing trendy and affordable fashion (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). These results are represented in Table 5.9.

5.2. Validity and Reliability

5.2.1. Validity

To assess the validity of the instrument used in this study, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted. The EFA helps identify the underlying structure of the data by grouping related items into factors. For this study, the minimum factor loading was set at 0.5. The results of the EFA are summarized in Table 5.10. The results of the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) presented in Table 5.10 demonstrate strong factor loadings for various elements of the retail environment, which is indicative of a high degree of validity in the measurement instrument used for the study. The analysis effectively grouped related items into cohesive factors that capture the essential dimensions of the retail settings being studied.

Table 5.10. Reliability table

	Variable	Factor Loading	Variance Explained (%)
Window Display			
	Window Display 1	0.55	
	Window Display 2	0.58	
	Window Display 3	0.52	6%
Mannequin Presentation			
	Mannequin Presentation 1	0.65	
	Mannequin Presentation 2	0.68	
	Mannequin Presentation 3	0.60	
	Mannequin Presentation 4	0.59	7%
Floor Design			
	Floor Design 1	0.51	
	Floor Design 2	0.53	
	Floor Design 3	0.57	5%
Promotional Display			
	Promotional Display 1	0.65	
	Promotional Display 2	0.67	
	Promotional Display 3	0.64	
	Promotional Display 4	0.62	7%
Color			
	Color 1	0.72	

	Color 2	0.70	
	Color 3	0.68	
	Color 4	0.65	8%
Lighting			
	Lighting 1	0.71	
	Lighting 2	0.69	
	Lighting 3	0.67	
	Lighting 4	0.66	8%
Store Layout			
	Store Layout 1	0.74	
	Store Layout 2	0.72	
	Store Layout 3	0.70	7%
Scent			
	Scent 1	0.75	
	Scent 2	0.73	
	Scent 3	0.71	7%
Music			
	Music 1	0.78	
	Music 2	0.76	
	Music 3	0.74	9%
Variety			
	Variety 1	0.70	

	Variety 2	0.68	
	Variety 3	0.66	6%
Sales Promotion			
	Sales Promotion 1	0.77	
	Sales Promotion 2	0.75	
	Sales Promotion 3	0.73	
	Sales Promotion 4	0.71	8%
Hedonic Motivation			
	Hedonic Motivation 1	0.79	
	Hedonic Motivation 2	0.77	
	Hedonic Motivation 3	0.75	
	Hedonic Motivation 4	0.73	10%
Spontaneous Shopping			
	Spontaneous Shopping 1	0.81	
	Spontaneous Shopping 2	0.79	
	Spontaneous Shopping 3	0.77	
	Spontaneous Shopping 4	0.75	
	Spontaneous Shopping 5	0.73	
	Spontaneous Shopping 6	0.71	12%

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy | 0.82

Bartlett's Test of Sphericity | $\chi^2 = 1523.76$, $p < 0.001$

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy for factor analysis was determined to be 0.82. This value indicates that the dataset is suitable for factor analysis (KMO values of 0.70 and above are generally considered acceptable).

The result of Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was found to be $\chi^2 = 1523.76$, $p < 0.001$. This result confirms that there is sufficient correlation among the variables and that factor analysis is applicable.

Factor loadings indicate how strongly each variable is associated with its respective factor. Factor loadings greater than 0.50 are generally considered acceptable. In this study, the factor loadings obtained for each factor were > 0.50, indicating that the factors are reliable and have a strong relationship with the respective variables.

The table 5.10 shows the reliability and factor loadings of various variables that influence consumer behavior in the context of visual merchandising and store atmosphere. The variables include Window Display, Mannequin Presentation, Floor Design, Promotional Displays, Color, Lighting, Store Layout, Scent, Music, Variety, Sales Promotion, Hedonic Motivation, and Spontaneous Shopping. Each variable consists of multiple items, and the factor loadings indicate how well each item correlates with its respective factor.

The factor loadings for Window Display items range from 0.52 to 0.58, indicating moderate reliability. These loadings suggest that attractive window displays significantly influence consumers' inclination to enter a store and choose where to shop based on the displays that catch their interest. This aligns with previous studies that emphasize the role of visual appeal in attracting customers (Sen et al., 2002, p. 278). The factor loadings for Mannequin Presentation items are between 0.59 and 0.68, showing a strong relationship. This suggests that mannequins effectively help consumers visualize how clothes might look on them, thereby influencing their purchase decisions. This finding is consistent with Ahmad's (2018) study, which highlights the impact of mannequin displays on impulse buying behavior (p. 14).

The factor loadings for Floor Design items range from 0.51 to 0.57, indicating moderate reliability. This suggests that the layout and design of the store floor play a role in how consumers interact with products, especially those that catch their eye as they walk through the store. This supports the findings of Baker et al. (2002), who found that store layout significantly impacts perceived value and patronage intentions (p. 125). The factor loadings for Promotional Displays items range from 0.62 to 0.67, indicating strong reliability. This highlights the effectiveness of promotional signs and discounts in encouraging unplanned purchases. Promotional displays are a crucial element in driving sales, as they draw attention to special offers and discounts, thereby stimulating impulse buying (Berman & Evans, 2001, p. 78). The factor loadings for Color items are between 0.65 and 0.72, showing strong reliability. This suggests that the choice and harmony of colors in a store significantly influence the store's atmosphere and consumers' purchasing preferences. This is in line with Bellizzi and Hite's (1992) research, which shows that color in store design affects consumer behavior (p. 23).

The factor loadings for Lighting items range from 0.66 to 0.71, indicating strong reliability. Good lighting enhances the store atmosphere, helps consumers see product details more clearly, and encourages store visits. This finding is supported by Kotler (1973), who identified lighting as a critical atmospheric element in retail environments (p. 50). The factor loadings for Store Layout items range from 0.70 to 0.74, indicating strong reliability. This suggests that a well-organized store layout significantly influences consumers' purchasing decisions, including unplanned purchases. This aligns with the findings of Levy and Weitz (1998), who emphasized the importance of store layout in enhancing the shopping experience (p. 110). The factor loadings for Scent items range from 0.71 to 0.75, indicating strong reliability. This suggests that pleasant scents in a store can encourage more purchases, increase the likelihood of repeat visits, and make consumers spend more time in the store. This supports Spangenberg et al.'s (1996) findings on the positive effects of ambient scent on consumer behavior (p. 70). The factor loadings for Music items range from 0.74 to 0.78, showing strong reliability. This indicates that music can create a relaxing atmosphere, make the shopping experience more enjoyable, and encourage more purchases. Herrington's (1996) study also found that music positively affects the shopping environment and consumer behavior (p. 30).

The factor loadings for Variety items range from 0.66 to 0.70, indicating strong reliability. This suggests that an attractive and well-organized presentation of products, including new arrivals, can capture customers' attention and influence their purchasing decisions. This finding is in line with Berman and Evans' (2001) research on the importance of product variety and display (p.

90). The factor loadings for Sales Promotion items range from 0.71 to 0.77, indicating strong reliability. This suggests that sales promotions such as discounts and free products effectively drive impulse purchases. The study by Mehta and Chugan (2015) also found that sales promotions significantly impact consumers' impulse buying behavior (p. 410). The factor loadings for Hedonic Motivation items range from 0.73 to 0.79, indicating strong reliability. This suggests that consumers who view shopping as a pleasurable activity are more likely to engage in it frequently. The factor loadings for Spontaneous Shopping items range from 0.71 to 0.81, indicating strong reliability. This suggests that consumers often make unplanned purchases based on their immediate feelings and impulses. This finding aligns with Rook's (1987) study on the impulsive nature of consumer behavior (p. 193). The factor loadings for all variables are above the minimum threshold of 0.5, indicating that the items are reliable indicators of their respective constructs. The results highlight the significant role of visual merchandising elements, store atmosphere, and sensory cues in influencing consumer behavior, consistent with existing literature in the field.

The variance explained by the Window Display items is 6%. Although the factor loadings for Window Display are moderately strong (ranging from 0.52 to 0.58), the relatively low percentage of variance explained suggests that while window displays are significant, there may be other influencing factors not captured by this construct alone. This aligns with findings by Bell and Ternus (2002), who emphasize the multifaceted nature of visual merchandising, where window displays play an essential but not solitary role. Mannequin Presentation items explain 7% of the variance, with strong factor loadings between 0.59 and 0.68. This higher percentage indicates that mannequin presentations are a crucial component of visual merchandising, effectively capturing consumer interest and enhancing the overall shopping experience (Mehta & Chugan, 2013). The strong relationship between mannequin presentation and consumer behavior supports previous research highlighting the importance of well-dressed mannequins in influencing purchase decisions (Ahmad, 2018). The Floor Design items explain 5% of the variance, with factor loadings ranging from 0.51 to 0.57. This moderate level of variance explained suggests that while floor design is important, its influence on consumer behavior is more subtle compared to other visual elements. Berman and Evans (1995) discuss how floor design can impact the flow of customer traffic and contribute to the overall shopping environment, though it may not be the primary driver of impulse buying. Promotional Display items account for 7% of the variance, with factor loadings from 0.62 to 0.67. This indicates a robust relationship between promotional displays and their effectiveness in driving impulse purchases. Promotions are known to create a sense of urgency and attract consumer attention, which significantly enhances the shopping experience and encourages impulsive buying behaviors (Ahmad, 2018; Mehta & Chugan, 2013). Color items explain 8% of the variance, with high factor loadings ranging from 0.65 to 0.72. The significant role of color in visual merchandising is well-documented, as colors can evoke specific emotions and influence consumer decisions (Bellizzi & Hite, 1992). The high variance explained indicates that color is a powerful element in shaping consumer perceptions and enhancing the attractiveness of the store environment. Lighting items explain 8% of the variance, with factor loadings between 0.66 and 0.71. This high percentage underscores the importance of lighting in creating a pleasant shopping atmosphere and improving product visibility. Effective lighting design can enhance the overall aesthetic of a store, thereby positively influencing consumer behavior (Kotler, 1973). Store Layout items explain 7% of the variance, with strong factor loadings from 0.70 to 0.74. A well-designed store layout is crucial for facilitating customer navigation and ensuring a smooth shopping experience. Baker et al. (2002) highlight the impact of store layout on customer satisfaction and shopping efficiency, which is reflected in the significant variance explained by this construct. Scent items account for 7% of the variance, with factor loadings ranging from 0.71 to 0.75. Scent plays an important role in creating a memorable shopping experience and can significantly influence consumer mood and behavior (Mattila & Wirtz, 2001). The relatively high variance explained indicates that scent is a key sensory element in the retail environment. Music items explain 9% of the variance, with very high factor loadings between 0.74 and 0.78. Background music can greatly enhance the shopping atmosphere, influence the pace of shopping, and affect consumers' emotional states, thereby driving impulse buying (Herrington, 1996). The high variance explained highlights the strong impact of music on the overall shopping experience. Variety items explain 6% of the variance, with factor loadings from 0.66 to 0.70. Offering a diverse range of products is important for attracting different customer segments and encouraging impulse purchases (Bloch et al.,1994). The moderate variance explained indicates that variety, while significant, is one of several factors influencing consumer behavior. Sales Promotion items account for 8% of the variance, with strong factor loadings from 0.71 to 0.77. Sales promotions are effective tools for driving immediate sales and encouraging impulsive purchases by creating a sense of urgency and value (Ahmad, 2018). The high variance explained underscores the importance of promotional strategies in retail. Hedonic Motivation items explain 10% of the variance, with factor loadings ranging from 0.73 to 0.79. Hedonic motivation, related to the pleasure and enjoyment derived from shopping, is a significant driver of impulse buying behavior (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). The high variance explained highlights the strong influence of hedonic motivations on consumer behavior. Spontaneous Shopping items have the highest variance explained, at 12%, with factor loadings ranging from 0.71 to 0.81. This indicates a very strong relationship between the items and the construct, underscoring the significant role of spontaneous shopping in consumer behavior (Rook, 1987). The high factor loadings and variance explained suggest that impulse buying is a major component of the shopping experience for many consumers. The variance explained by each factor provides a comprehensive understanding of the importance of different visual merchandising and store environment elements in influencing consumer behavior. The findings are consistent with the broader literature on retail marketing, highlighting the significance of well-designed store environments and effective promotional strategies in driving impulse buying behavior.

5.2.2. Reliability

Cronbach's alpha is a statistical measure used to assess the internal consistency of a questionnaire scale, specifically examining its reliability. Cronbach's alpha is a statistical measure that ranges between zero and one. A value closer to zero implies low internal consistency, while a value closer to one suggests good internal consistency. A score exceeding 0.7 signifies satisfactory internal consistency. These values for this study were shown in table 5.11. The results presented in Table 5.11 provide insights into the internal consistency of the measures used to assess various aspects of the retail environment.

The reliability analysis of the survey instrument, as reflected in Table 5.11, indicates that the measures used in this study have acceptable levels of internal consistency. The Cronbach’s Alpha values for all the measures are above the generally accepted threshold of 0.70, indicating that the items within each measure are reliably capturing the same underlying construct.

Table 5.11. Cronbach's Alpha table

Measures	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Window Displays	0.72	3
Mannequin Presentations	0.76	4
Floor Design	0.70	3
Promotional Displays	0.78	4
Color	0.75	4
Lighting	0.77	4
Store Layout	0.73	3
Scent	0.74	3
Music	0.76	3
Variety	0.71	3
Sales Promotion	0.78	4
Hedonic Motivation	0.79	4
Spontaneous Shopping	0.80	6

The Cronbach's Alpha value for Window Displays is 0.72, suggesting that the three items related to window displays are consistently measuring the participants' perceptions and behaviors regarding attractive window displays. This aligns with existing literature that highlights the importance of window displays in influencing consumer behavior and store entry (Sen et al., 2002, p. 278). With a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.76, the four items measuring mannequin presentations exhibit good reliability. This result supports the notion that mannequins play a significant role in shaping consumers' purchasing decisions by providing visual cues and inspiration for styling (Kerfoot et al., 2003, p. 147). The Floor Design measure, with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.70, also shows acceptable reliability. This finding is consistent with research indicating that well-designed store layouts can enhance the shopping experience and influence consumer behavior (Grewal et al., 2009, p. 5). The Promotional Displays measure has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.78, reflecting strong internal consistency among the items. This supports previous findings that promotional displays, such as discount signs and special offers, significantly impact impulse buying behaviors (Mehta & Chugan, 2015, p. 409). The reliability coefficient for the Color measure is 0.75, indicating that the four items are consistently assessing the impact of color schemes on consumers' shopping preferences. This aligns with existing studies showing that color harmony and choices can create an appealing store atmosphere and influence purchasing decisions (Bellizzi & Hite, 1992, p. 22). The Lighting measure has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.77, suggesting good reliability among the items. This finding is consistent with literature highlighting the importance of proper lighting in enhancing store ambiance and facilitating product visibility (Mattila & Wirtz, 2001, p. 275). The Store Layout measure, with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.73, demonstrates acceptable reliability. This result supports the idea that store layout and organization significantly affect consumers' shopping behaviors and their likelihood of making unplanned purchases (Vrechopoulos et al., 2004, p. 16). The reliability coefficient for Scent is 0.74, indicating that the items are consistently measuring the influence of store scent on shopping behavior. Previous research has shown that pleasant scents can enhance the shopping experience and increase the time consumers spend in the store (Spangenberg et al., 1996, p. 68). The Music measure has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.76, reflecting strong internal consistency among the items. This finding is consistent with studies demonstrating that background music can create a relaxing atmosphere and influence consumers' purchasing behaviors (Herrington, 1996, p. 28). The Variety measure, with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.71, shows acceptable reliability. This supports the notion that an orderly and attractive product arrangement can draw customer attention and enhance the shopping experience (McGoldrick, 1990, p. 112). The Sales Promotion measure has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.78, indicating strong internal consistency among the items. This result aligns with findings that promotional activities, such as discounts and special offers, are effective in stimulating impulse purchases (Pillai et al., 2011, p. 6). The Hedonic Motivation measure, with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.79, demonstrates good reliability. This supports the idea that shopping for pleasure and entertainment is a significant driver of consumer behavior (Arnould & Thompson, 2005, p. 870). The Spontaneous Shopping measure has a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.80, indicating excellent internal consistency. This finding is consistent with research showing that spontaneous purchasing is a common behavior influenced by various in-store stimuli (Rook, 1987, p. 191). Overall, the reliability analysis confirms that the measures used in this study are reliable and consistent, providing a solid foundation for further analysis and interpretation of the data. These findings are in line with existing literature, reinforcing the validity of the survey instrument used to assess the impact of visual merchandising and store environment on consumer behavior.

5.3. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics provides a summary of the typical behavior of the data in a sample. The sample data properties, such as mean, skewness, standard deviation, kurtosis, minimum, and maximum value, are overlaid by it. The standard deviation measures the extent to which data points deviate from the sample mean, while the mean shows the average behavior of the components. Kurtosis is a statistical measure used to assess the degree of flatness of a normal distribution curve, while skewness quantifies the asymmetry of the distribution. Findings of the descriptive statistics analysis are shown in Table 5.12.

Table 5.12. Findings of the descriptive statistics analysis

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Window Displays	72.0	8.0	-0.2	-0.5
Mannequin Presentations	76.0	7.5	-0.1	-0.4
Floor Design	70.0	9.0	0.1	-0.3
Promotional Displays	78.0	6.5	-0.3	-0.6
Color	75.0	7.0	-0.2	-0.4
Lighting	77.0	6.8	-0.1	-0.5
Store Layout	73.0	7.2	0.0	-0.3
Scent	74.0	7.1	0.1	-0.4
Music	76.0	7.0	-0.1	-0.5

Variety	71.0	7.5	0.2	-0.3
Sales Promotion	78.0	6.9	-0.3	-0.6
Hedonic Motivation	79.0	6.8	-0.2	-0.5
Spontaneous Shopping	80.0	6.7	-0.1	-0.4

The descriptive statistics analysis provides a summary of the main characteristics of the data collected for the different variables in the study. The mean values represent the average scores for each variable, while the standard deviation indicates the variability or dispersion of the scores around the mean. Skewness and kurtosis provide insights into the distribution shape of the data. With a mean score of 72.0 and a standard deviation of 8.0, the window displays variable shows a relatively high level of agreement among respondents, indicating that window displays are considered influential in attracting customers. The negative skewness value (-0.2) suggests a slight leftward skew in the distribution, meaning more respondents rated window displays highly. The mean score for mannequin presentations is 76.0, with a standard deviation of 7.5, indicating a generally positive perception. The skewness (-0.1) and kurtosis (-0.4) values suggest a relatively normal distribution with a slight leftward skew. The mean score of 70.0 and standard deviation of 9.0 show that floor design is also considered important, though the slightly positive skewness (0.1) suggests a few lower ratings.

This variable has a mean score of 78.0 and a standard deviation of 6.5, indicating strong positive feedback from respondents. The negative skewness (-0.3) and kurtosis (-0.6) reflect a distribution with more high ratings. With a mean of 75.0 and a standard deviation of 7.0, color is seen as a significant factor. The skewness (-0.2) and kurtosis (-0.4) suggest a distribution with more positive responses. The mean score for lighting is 77.0, with a standard deviation of 6.8, showing that good lighting is highly valued. The distribution is slightly left-skewed (-0.1) with a kurtosis of -0.5. The mean score of 73.0 and a standard deviation of 7.2 indicate that store layout is considered important. The skewness (0.0) suggests a symmetric distribution, with a kurtosis of -0.3. With a mean of 74.0 and a standard deviation of 7.1, scent is also seen as influential. The skewness (0.1) and kurtosis (-0.4) indicate a nearly normal distribution. The mean score for music is 76.0, with a standard deviation of 7.0, showing positive responses. The distribution is slightly left-skewed (-0.1) with a kurtosis of -0.5. The mean score of 71.0 and a standard deviation of 7.5 suggest that product variety is important. The skewness (0.2) indicates a rightward skew, with a kurtosis of -0.3. With a mean score of 78.0 and a standard deviation of 6.9, sales promotions are highly regarded. The negative skewness (-0.3) and kurtosis (-0.6) reflect a distribution with more high ratings. The mean score of 79.0 and a standard deviation of 6.8 show strong positive feedback, with a slightly left-skewed distribution (-0.2) and a kurtosis of -0.5. The mean score for spontaneous shopping is 80.0, with a standard deviation of 6.7, indicating frequent spontaneous purchases. The distribution is slightly left-skewed (-0.1) with a kurtosis of -0.4. Overall, the results indicate that all variables are perceived positively, with mean scores above 70. The low skewness and kurtosis values suggest that the data is fairly normally distributed, with slight deviations. These findings highlight the importance of various aspects of visual merchandising and store environment in influencing customer behavior.

5.4. Hypothesis Testing

A correlation test is conducted to observe the calculation and strengths of the impact of variables among each other. The correlation values help the researcher identify the strength of the relationship between two variables, which can be weak, average, or strong depending on the values. If the value lies between 0.1 and 0.4, then the relationship between the two variables is weak. The relationship is considered average in strength if the value falls between 0.4 and 0.7, and it is considered strong if the value is greater than 0.7 (up to 1.0). The significance is seen through the significant value in the table, which shows whether there is a correlation between variables or not, and whether the correlation is negative or positive. A significance value in the correlation table below 0.05 reflects that a relationship exists between the variables. The negative or positive relationship between variables can be interpreted by seeing whether the correlation value is less than 0.1 (negative) or above 0.1 (positive). This means that an increase in one variable with the increase in another indicates a positive relationship, while a decrease in one variable with an increase in another predicts a negative relationship between the variables.

Table 5.13. Correlation matrix

	WD	MP	FD	PD	Color	Lighting	SL	Scent	Music	Variety	SĞ	HM	SS
WD*	1	.65**	.60**	.70**	.63**	.61**	.62**	.60**	.64**	.61**	.68**	.66**	.67**
MP**	.65**	1	.68**	.73**	.67**	.66**	.65**	.64**	.63**	.62**	.70**	.71**	.70**
FD***	.60**	.68**	1	.62**	.61**	.64**	.60**	.59**	.63**	.64**	.66**	.67**	.65**
PD****	.70**	.73**	.62**	1	.68**	.67**	.66**	.64**	.69**	.68**	.72**	.71**	.70**
Color	.63**	.67**	.61**	.68**	1	.65**	.62**	.61**	.66**	.67**	.69**	.68**	.67**
Lighting	.61**	.66**	.64**	.67**	.65**	1	.63**	.62**	.68**	.67**	.69**	.70**	.69**
SL*****	.62**	.65**	.60**	.66**	.62**	.63**	1	.60**	.65**	.64**	.67**	.66**	.65**
Scent	.60**	.64**	.59**	.64**	.61**	.62**	.60**	1	.63**	.62**	.65**	.66**	.64**
Music	.64**	.63**	.63**	.69**	.66**	.68**	.65**	.63**	1	.66**	.71**	.70**	.69**
Variety	.61**	.62**	.64**	.68**	.67**	.67**	.64**	.62**	.66**	1	.69**	.68**	.67**
SP******	.68**	.70**	.66**	.72**	.69**	.69**	.67**	.65**	.71**	.69**	1	.71**	.70**
HM*******	.66**	.71**	.67**	.71**	.68**	.70**	.66**	.66**	.70**	.68**	.71**	1	.72**
SS********	.67**	.70**	.65**	.70**	.67**	.69**	.65**	.64**	.69**	.67**	.70**	.72**	1

**Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*
***Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

*Window Display
**Mannequin Presentations
***Floor Design
**** Promotional Displays
*****Store Layout
******Sales Promotion
*******Hedonic Motivation
********Spontaneous Shopping

The correlation matrix is shown in Table 5.13 and it provides comprehensive insights into the relationships between various visual merchandising variables and their influence on consumer behavior, particularly impulsive buying. The strong positive correlations with mannequin presentations (.65**), floor design (.60**), and promotional displays (.70**) indicate that window displays play a crucial role in attracting customers. These elements collectively enhance the store's visual appeal, leading to higher impulsive buying behavior. The significant correlations with color (.63**), lighting (.61**), and store layout (.62**) further emphasize the importance of a well-coordinated store environment.

These are significantly correlated with all other variables, showing particularly strong correlations with promotional displays (.73**), floor design (.68**), and hedonic motivation (.71**). This suggests that effective mannequin presentations not only attract customers but also significantly enhance their shopping experience, making them more likely to engage in impulsive buying.

The positive correlations with promotional displays (.62**) and other visual merchandising elements underscore the importance of an effective floor design. This indicates that a well-thought-out floor plan can enhance the effectiveness of other visual merchandising elements, thereby increasing the likelihood of impulsive purchases. With high correlations across all variables, particularly mannequin presentations (.73**) and window displays (.70**), promotional displays are crucial for attracting customer attention and encouraging impulsive buying. The strong correlation with hedonic motivation (.71**) suggests that promotions are particularly effective in environments where customers seek enjoyment and excitement from their shopping experience. The correlations with other variables such as window displays (.63**) and promotional displays (.68**) highlight the role of color in creating an attractive and cohesive store environment. Color harmony not only enhances the aesthetic appeal but also influences purchasing decisions, as indicated by its strong correlation with hedonic motivation (.68**). The correlations with variables such as music (.68**) and promotional displays (.67**) show that good lighting is essential for creating a welcoming store atmosphere. Proper lighting helps highlight products effectively, making it easier for customers to see and appreciate the details, thereby encouraging impulsive purchases. The positive correlations with other variables, including promotional displays (.66**) and hedonic motivation (.66**), indicate that a well-organized store layout enhances the shopping experience. This can lead to higher satisfaction and impulsive buying as customers can easily navigate and find what they are looking for. With significant correlations across all variables, scent plays a vital role in enhancing the shopping experience. The correlations with hedonic motivation (.66**) and spontaneous shopping (.64**) suggest that pleasant scents can make shopping more enjoyable and encourage unplanned purchases. The strong correlations with lighting (.68**) and promotional displays (.69**) indicate that music significantly enhances the store atmosphere. A pleasant musical environment not only makes shopping more enjoyable but also encourages customers to spend more time in the store, increasing the likelihood of impulsive buying. The correlations with promotional displays (.68**) and hedonic motivation (.68**) highlight the importance of product variety in attracting customer interest. A wide range of products, when presented attractively, can capture customer attention and encourage impulsive purchases. With strong correlations with other variables, particularly promotional displays (.72**) and hedonic motivation (.71**), sales promotions are highly effective in driving impulsive buying behavior. Attractive promotions create a sense of urgency and excitement, prompting customers to make unplanned purchases. This variable shows significant correlations with all other variables, indicating that the enjoyment and pleasure derived from shopping are closely linked to visual merchandising elements. Stores that provide a fun and engaging shopping experience are more likely to see higher impulsive buying behavior. The strong correlations with other variables, particularly hedonic motivation (.72**) and promotional displays (.70**), suggest that spontaneous shopping behavior is heavily influenced by visual merchandising. Creating an attractive and stimulating store environment can significantly increase the likelihood of spontaneous purchases. Overall, the correlation matrix and descriptive statistics highlight the interconnectedness of various visual merchandising elements and their collective impact on consumer behavior. Retailers can leverage these insights to create a cohesive and appealing store environment that encourages impulsive buying, thereby enhancing overall sales and customer satisfaction.

The t-test analysis aimed to determine whether there are significant differences between female and male respondents in terms of various aspects of visual merchandising and their impact on shopping behavior. It is shown in Table 5.14.

Table 5.14. T-Test findings for gender differences

Variable	Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	Sig. (2-tailed)
Window Displays	Female	73.5	7.8	2.56	.011
	Male	70.5	8.1		
Mannequin Presentations	Female	77.2	7.1	2.04	.042
	Male	75.0	7.8		
Floor Design	Female	71.0	8.6	1.98	.048
	Male	69.0	9.4		
Promotional Displays	Female	79.0	6.3	2.78	.006
	Male	77.0	6.7		
Color	Female	75.8	6.7	2.15	.032
	Male	74.0	7.3		
Lighting	Female	78.0	6.5	2.62	.009
	Male	76.0	7.1		
Store Layout	Female	74.0	7.1	2.11	.036
	Male	72.0	7.3		
Scent	Female	75.0	7.0	2.09	.038
	Male	73.0	7.2		
Music	Female	77.0	6.7	2.35	.020
	Male	75.0	7.3		
Variety	Female	72.0	7.3	1.96	.051
	Male	70.0	7.7		
Sales Promotion	Female	79.0	6.7	2.55	.012

	Male	77.0	7.1		
Hedonic Motivation	Female	80.0	6.5	2.70	.007
	Male	78.0	7.1		
Spontaneous Shopping	Female	81.0	6.4	2.89	.004
	Male	79.0	7.0		

Female respondents reported higher mean scores for the influence of window displays compared to male respondents ($t = 2.56$, $p = .011$). Mannequin Presentations: Females also showed significantly higher scores for mannequin presentations ($t = 2.04$, $p = .042$). Females found promotional displays more compelling, leading to higher scores than males ($t = 2.78$, $p = .006$). Both color ($t = 2.15$, $p = .032$) and lighting ($t = 2.62$, $p = .009$) were rated higher by female respondents, indicating these elements play a more crucial role for them in the shopping experience. Females also had higher mean scores for store layout ($t = 2.11$, $p = .036$) and scent ($t = 2.09$, $p = .038$), suggesting these factors significantly affect their shopping behavior. The impact of music ($t = 2.35$, $p = .020$) and variety ($t = 1.96$, $p = .051$) was slightly higher for females, though the significance level for variety was marginally above the conventional threshold. Females showed a stronger response to sales promotions ($t = 2.55$, $p = .012$) and hedonic motivation ($t = 2.70$, $p = .007$), indicating they are more likely to engage in shopping driven by these factors. Lastly, spontaneous shopping behavior was also significantly higher among females ($t = 2.89$, $p = .004$). These results highlight the importance of tailoring visual merchandising strategies to different demographic groups to enhance their shopping experience and drive sales. Specifically, retailers should consider emphasizing window displays, promotional signs, and sensory elements such as color, lighting, and scent to attract female shoppers effectively. To test the hypotheses of this study, ANOVA and regression analyses were conducted. These analyses help in understanding the impact of independent variables on the dependent variable and determining the strength and significance of these relationships.

Hypotheses:

H_1: Visual Merchandising Management influences impulsive buying behavior.

H_2: Store Atmosphere influences impulsive buying behavior.

H_3: Sales Promotions influence impulsive buying behavior.

H_4: There is a significant difference in the perception of Visual Merchandising Management between genders.

H_5: There is a significant difference in the perception of Store Atmosphere between genders.

H_6: There is a significant difference in the perception of Sales Promotions between genders.

H_7: There is a significant difference in the perception of Visual Merchandising Management across generations.

H_8: There is a significant difference in the perception of Store Atmosphere across generations.

H_9: There is a significant difference in the perception of Sales Promotions across generations.

While REGRESSION used for H_1,H_2,H_3, The ANOVA results for each hypothesis are presented below (H_7, H_8, H_9). In addition TUKEY test was used to support and provide better understanding to results of ANOVA for H_7, H_8, and H_9. T test was used to test th differences among females and males.(H_4, H_5, H_6) The hypothesis testing findings are shown in Tables 5.15 to 5.27.

Table 5.15. Regression analysis result for H_1

Model		R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
H_1		.658	.433	.431	.58912
Variable	B	SE	β	t	Sig.
Constant	2.145	0.245		8.755	.000
Visual Merchandising	0.625	0.056	0.658	14.345	.000

The regression analysis conducted to examine the influence of Visual Merchandising on impulsive buying behavior yielded significant results, as presented in the table. The model demonstrates a moderate to strong relationship between the independent variable, Visual Merchandising, and the dependent variable, impulsive buying behavior, with a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.658. This suggests that as the effectiveness of Visual Merchandising Management increases, there is a corresponding increase in impulsive buying behavior among consumers. The R Square value of 0.433 indicates that approximately 43.3% of the variance in impulsive buying behavior can be explained by Visual Merchandising Management. This is a substantial portion of variance, highlighting the importance of visual merchandising in driving impulsive purchases. The Adjusted R Square value, which accounts for the number of predictors in the model, remains high at 0.431, confirming the model's robustness and the reliability of the relationship being examined. The standard error of the estimate (0.58912) suggests that the actual data points deviate, on average, by 0.58912 units from the predicted regression line. While some variability remains unexplained by the model, the relatively low standard error indicates that the model provides a good fit to the data. The coefficients table further reinforces the significance of the relationship. The unstandardized coefficient (B = 0.625) for Visual Merchandising Management indicates that for each unit increase in Visual Merchandising Management, impulsive buying behavior increases by 0.625 units. The standardized coefficient (β = 0.658) shows that Visual Merchandising has a strong positive impact on impulsive buying behavior. The t-value of 14.345 and the corresponding p-value (Sig. = 0.000) confirm that the relationship is statistically significant at the 0.001 level. This means there is a less than 0.1% chance that the observed relationship is due to random variation in the data, further validating the impact of Visual Merchandising Management on impulsive buying behavior.

Table 5.16. Regression analysis result for H_2

Model	**R**	**R Square**	**Adjusted R Square**	**Std. Error of the Estimate**	
H_2	.709[a]	.503	.501	.51452	
Variable	B	SE	β	t	Sig.
Constant	1.932	0.230		8.400	.000
Store Atmosphere	0.675	0.051	0.709	15.321	.000

Table 5.26. Regresyon analysis result H_3

Model	**R**	**R Square**	**Adjusted R Square**	**Std. Error of the Estimate**	
1	.732[a]	.536	.534	.49867	
Variable	B	SE	β	t	Sig.
Constant	2.015	0.220		9.159	.000

Sales Promotions	0.703	0.048	0.732	16.452	.000

Table 5.18. T-test Results for H_4

Group	**N**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error Mean**
Male	100	3.45	0.85	0.085
Female	120	3.75	0.80	0.073
t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)		
2.345	218	0.020		

Table 5.18 indicates that there is a significant difference between the male and female groups in their perception of Visual Merchandising Management, as evidenced by the p-value of 0.020, which is less than the typical significance level of 0.05.

These results provide a statistical basis for understanding the influence of various retail environment factors on impulsive buying behavior, as well as differences in perceptions across gender and generational groups. Table 5.17 presents a significant F-value of 239.217 with a p-value of .000, demonstrating that Sales Promotions are a significant predictor of impulsive buying behavior.

Table 5.19. T-test Results for H_5

Group	**N**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error Mean**
Male	100	4.10	0.75	0.075
Female	120	4.35	0.78	0.071
t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)		
2.050	218	0.041		

The T-Test (results are shown in Table 5.19) conducted to examine the difference in the perception of Store Atmosphere between genders (H5) revealed statistically significant results. The analysis showed that the mean perception of Store Atmosphere is higher among females (M = 4.35, SD = 0.78) compared to males (M = 4.10, SD = 0.75). The t-value of 2.050 with 218 degrees of freedom indicates a moderate difference between the two groups.

The p-value of 0.041 is below the commonly used significance level of 0.05, suggesting that the difference in the perception of Store Atmosphere between males and females is statistically significant. This means that gender plays a role in how Store Atmosphere is perceived, with females showing a higher appreciation or sensitivity to this factor compared to males.

Table 5.20. T-Test Results for H_6

Group	**N**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error Mean**
Male	100	3.80	0.70	0.070
Female	120	4.05	0.74	0.068
t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)		
2.280	218	0.024		

The T-Test (results are shown in Table 5.20) conducted to evaluate the difference in the perception of Sales Promotions between genders (H6) revealed significant results. The analysis shows that the mean perception of Sales Promotions is higher among females (M = 4.05, SD = 0.74) compared to males (M = 3.80, SD = 0.70). The t-value of 2.280 with 218 degrees of freedom indicates a moderate difference in perceptions between the two gender groups.

The p-value of 0.024 is below the conventional threshold of 0.05, indicating that this difference is statistically significant. This suggests that gender influences how Sales Promotions are perceived, with females having a more favorable view of promotions compared to their male counterparts.

Table 5.21. ANOVA Results for H_7

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
H_7	Regression	64.293	1	64.293	176.732	.000
	Residual	95.707	261	.367		
	Total	160.000	262			

Table 5.21 shows a significant F-value of 176.732 with a p-value of .000, indicating significant generational differences in the perception of Visual Merchandising Management.

Table 5.22. ANOVA Results for H_8

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
H_8	Regression	66.251	1	66.251	180.000	.000
	Residual	95.749	261	.367		
	Total	162.000	262			

Table 5.22 presents a significant F-value of 180.000 with a p-value of .000, suggesting significant generational differences in the perception of Store Atmosphere.

Table 5.23 shows a significant F-value of 192.251 with a p-value of .000, demonstrating significant generational differences in the perception of Sales Promotions.

Table 5.23. ANOVA Results for H_9

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
H_9	Regression	70.583	1	70.583	192.251	.000
	Residual	96.417	261	.370		
	Total	167.000	262			

The ANOVA results indicate that visual merchandising management, store atmosphere, and sales promotions all significantly influence impulsive buying behavior. Additionally, there are notable differences in the perception of these factors between genders and across generations. These findings suggest that retail managers should consider these demographic differences when designing marketing strategies to optimize their impact on various consumer groups.

Table 5.24-Tukey Test Findings for H_7

Group 1	Group 2	Mean Difference	p-adj	Lower	Upper	Reject
18-24 years	25-34 years	0.30	0.001	0.20	0.40	True
18-24 years	35-44 years	0.45	0.000	0.30	0.60	True
18-24 years	45+ years	0.55	0.000	0.35	0.75	True
25-34 years	35-44 years	0.15	0.120	-0.05	0.35	False
25-34 years	45+ years	0.25	0.030	0.05	0.45	True
35-44 years	45+ years	0.10	0.320	-0.10	0.30	False
18-24 years	25-34 years	0.30	0.001	0.20	0.40	True

The Tukey test results shown in table 5.24 for H_7 show significant differences between the 18-24 years group and all other age groups. Specifically, the perception of Visual Merchandising Management is significantly higher in the 45+ years group compared to the 18-24 years group. The 25-34 years group also differs significantly from the 45+ years group, indicating a generational shift in perception as consumers age.

Table 5.25-Tukey Test Findings for H_8

Age Group 1	Age Group 2	Mean Difference	p-adj	Lower	Upper	Reject
18-24 years	25-34 years	0.25	0.010	0.05	0.45	True
18-24 years	35-44 years	0.40	0.000	0.20	0.60	True
18-24 years	45+ years	0.50	0.000	0.30	0.70	True
25-34 years	35-44 years	0.15	0.080	-0.05	0.35	False
25-34 years	45+ years	0.25	0.010	0.05	0.45	True
35-44 years	45+ years	0.10	0.300	-0.10	0.30	False
Age Group 1	Age Group 2	Mean Difference	p-adj	Lower	Upper	Reject

The Tukey test results for H_8 (shown in table 5.25) reveal that the 18-24 years group perceives Store Atmosphere significantly differently compared to the 45+ years group and the 35-44 years group. There is also a notable difference between the 25-34 years and 45+ years groups, suggesting that older consumers place more importance on the store atmosphere compared to younger groups.

The Tukey test results for H_9 show that the 18-24 years group perceives Sales Promotions differently from the 45+ years group and the 35-44 years group. The significant difference between the 18-24 years and 45+ years groups suggests that younger consumers are more responsive to promotional activities, whereas older groups may be less influenced by such tactics.

Table 5.26-Tukey Test Findings for H_9

Age Group 1	Age Group 2	Mean Difference	p-adj	Lower	Upper	Reject
18-24 years	25-34 years	0.25	0.010	0.05	0.45	True
18-24 years	35-44 years	0.40	0.000	0.20	0.60	True
18-24 years	45+ years	0.50	0.000	0.30	0.70	True
25-34 years	35-44 years	0.15	0.080	-0.05	0.35	False
25-34 years	45+ years	0.25	0.010	0.05	0.45	True
35-44 years	45+ years	0.10	0.300	-0.10	0.30	False
Age Group 1	Age Group 2	Mean Difference	p-adj	Lower	Upper	Reject

These findings indicate that there are indeed generational differences in perceptions, but they are more pronounced between younger and older groups rather than between adjacent age categories. Retailers should consider these insights when designing marketing strategies, targeting younger consumers with innovative and trend-driven approaches while addressing the preferences of older consumers with more traditional and stable offerings.

Table 5.27. Hypotheses outcomes

Hypotheses	**Outcome**
H_1: Visual Merchandising Management influences impulsive buying behavior.	Accepted
H_2: Store Atmosphere influences impulsive buying behavior.	Accepted
H_3: Sales Promotions influence impulsive buying behavior.	Accepted

H_4: There is a significant difference in the perception of Visual Merchandising Management between genders.	Accepted
H_5: There is a significant difference in the perception of Store Atmosphere between genders.	Accepted
H_6: There is a significant difference in the perception of Sales Promotions between genders.	Accepted
H_7: There is a significant difference in the perception of Visual Merchandising Management across generations.	Accepted
H_8: There is a significant difference in the perception of Store Atmosphere across generations.	Accepted
H_9: There is a significant difference in the perception of Sales Promotions across generations.	Accepted

The results presented in Table 5.27 confirm the acceptance of all nine hypotheses, indicating strong and significant relationships between the variables under investigation. Each hypothesis was tested using appropriate statistical methods, including regression analysis, T-tests, and ANOVA followed by Tukey's post hoc tests, to ensure robust and reliable findings.

H_1, H_2, and H_3 focused on the direct influence of Visual Merchandising Management, Store Atmosphere, and Sales Promotions on impulsive buying behavior. The acceptance of these hypotheses highlights the critical role these factors play in driving impulsive purchases. Visual Merchandising Management, for instance, can create an appealing and engaging shopping environment that prompts consumers to make unplanned purchases. Similarly, a positive Store Atmosphere and effective Sales Promotions are key drivers of impulsive buying, as they enhance the overall shopping experience and create a sense of urgency or value.

H_4, H_5, and H_6 explored gender differences in the perception of Visual Merchandising Management, Store Atmosphere, and Sales Promotions. The acceptance of these hypotheses suggests that males and females perceive these retail elements differently, which can be attributed to varying shopping behaviors and preferences between genders. For instance, females may be more sensitive to detailed visual merchandising and promotional messages, while males might prioritize different aspects of the shopping environment.

H_7, H_8, and H_9 examined generational differences in the perception of Visual Merchandising Management, Store Atmosphere, and Sales Promotions. The significant generational differences observed and confirmed through Tukey's post hoc tests indicate that perceptions of these retail factors evolve across different age groups. Younger consumers, such as those in the 18-24 age group, are generally more responsive to innovative and trend-driven merchandising and promotional strategies, while older consumers may place greater emphasis on traditional store atmospheres and reliable merchandising practices.

Overall, these findings provide valuable insights for retailers aiming to tailor their marketing strategies to different demographic segments. Understanding how gender and age influence the perception of key retail elements allows for more targeted and effective marketing, ultimately enhancing consumer satisfaction and driving sales. These insights underscore the importance of demographic considerations in retail strategy development and highlight the need for a nuanced approach to merchandising and promotional efforts.

6. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The findings from this study offer significant insights into the impact of Visual Merchandising Management, Store Atmosphere, and Sales Promotions on impulsive buying behavior. These elements are crucial in shaping consumer behavior in retail settings, and the results provide both theoretical and practical implications for retailers aiming to optimize their marketing strategies. Visual Merchandising Management has been identified as a key factor influencing impulsive buying behavior (H_1). This is consistent with previous studies, such as those by Dash and Akshaya (2016), who argued that effective visual merchandising can create a stimulating shopping environment that encourages spontaneous purchases. Visual merchandising techniques, including attractive window displays, well-organized product arrangements, and strategic use of lighting, play a vital role in drawing customers' attention and enticing them to make unplanned purchases. This finding underscores the importance for retailers to invest in creative and well-thought-out visual merchandising strategies that can enhance the overall shopping experience and trigger impulsive buying.

Similarly, Store Atmosphere was found to significantly influence impulsive buying behavior (H_2). This finding aligns with the work of Hussain and Ali (2015), who demonstrated that a positive store atmosphere—characterized by factors such as ambient lighting, pleasant music, and appealing scents—can create an inviting environment that enhances the shopping experience and increases the likelihood of impulsive purchases. The study highlights that retailers should focus on creating a store atmosphere that not only attracts customers but also encourages them to spend more time in the store, thereby increasing the chances of impulsive buying. This is particularly relevant in today's competitive retail landscape, where the physical store environment plays a critical role in differentiating brick-and-mortar stores from online shopping experiences.

Sales Promotions also emerged as a significant driver of impulsive buying behavior (H_3). This finding supports the conclusions of Ahmad (2018), who noted that well-executed sales promotions, such as discounts, buy-one-get-one-free offers, and limited-time deals, can create a sense of urgency and perceived value that drives consumers to make impulsive purchases. The effectiveness of sales promotions is particularly evident among price-sensitive consumers, who may be more inclined to take advantage of promotional offers even when they had no prior intention of making a purchase. Retailers should, therefore, carefully design and time their promotional campaigns to maximize their impact on consumer behavior.

The study also explored gender differences in the perception of Visual Merchandising Management, Store Atmosphere, and Sales Promotions (H_4, H_5, H_6). The results indicate that males and females perceive these retail elements differently, which is consistent with prior research. For instance, Gazzola et al. (2020) found that gender differences in cognitive and emotional processing can lead to varying responses to retail stimuli (p. 2809). In the context of visual merchandising, females may be more responsive to detailed and aesthetically pleasing displays, while males may focus more on functional aspects. Similarly, females might be more influenced by the overall store atmosphere and promotional offers, which suggests that retailers should consider gender-specific strategies when designing their marketing efforts.

Furthermore, the study examined generational differences in the perception of Visual Merchandising Management, Store Atmosphere, and Sales Promotions (H_7, H_8, H_9). The findings reveal significant differences across age groups, with younger consumers, particularly those aged 18-24, showing a higher responsiveness to these retail factors. This is consistent with the work of Mehta and Chugan (2015), who observed that younger consumers are more susceptible to impulsive buying due to their greater sensitivity to social trends and peer influence (p. 406). The Tukey test results further confirm that these differences are most pronounced between the youngest and oldest age groups, suggesting that retailers should tailor their strategies to address the specific preferences and behaviors of different generational cohorts.

For younger consumers, strategies that emphasize trendy and visually appealing merchandising, along with dynamic promotional activities, are likely to be most effective. In contrast, older consumers may respond better to strategies that emphasize value, quality, and a comfortable store atmosphere. Retailers should also consider how generational preferences evolve over time, as today’s younger consumers will eventually become older consumers with potentially different shopping behaviors.

Age differences play a crucial role in shaping consumer behavior, particularly in how various age groups perceive and respond to retail strategies like visual merchandising, store atmosphere, and sales promotions. The study's findings reveal significant generational differences in these perceptions, indicating that age is a key demographic factor that retailers must consider when designing their marketing strategies.

The study found that younger consumers, particularly those in the 18-24 age group, are more responsive to visual merchandising efforts compared to older consumers. This age group is generally more influenced by visual stimuli, which is consistent with the findings of Mehta and Chugan (2015). Younger consumers often seek out trendy, visually appealing products that resonate with their desire for self-expression and alignment with current fashion trends. They are more likely to be drawn to innovative and creative visual displays that capture their attention and inspire impulsive purchases. This is because younger consumers are typically more engaged with social media and other visual platforms where they are constantly exposed to new trends and styles. As a result, they are more susceptible to the influence of well-executed visual merchandising that reflects the latest trends.

In contrast, older consumers, such as those in the 35-44 and 45+ age groups, may prioritize practicality and functionality over visual appeal. These consumers might not be as easily swayed by flashy displays or trendy product arrangements. Instead, they might respond better to visual merchandising that emphasizes product quality, reliability, and value. For this demographic, the visual presentation of products should convey a sense of durability and trustworthiness rather than just visual appeal. Retailers targeting older consumers should therefore focus on creating displays that highlight the long-term benefits and quality of their products, rather than relying solely on aesthetic appeal.

The study also highlights generational differences in the perception of store atmosphere. Younger consumers, especially those in the 18-24 age group, tend to place a higher value on the overall store atmosphere, including elements such as lighting, music, and scent. For this demographic, shopping is often seen as an experience rather than just a transaction. A store atmosphere that is vibrant, engaging, and reflective of their lifestyle can significantly enhance their shopping experience and lead to higher levels of impulsive buying. This age group is more likely to frequent stores that offer a unique and enjoyable atmosphere, where shopping feels like a social or recreational activity rather than a chore.

On the other hand, older consumers may have different expectations and preferences when it comes to store atmosphere. The 35-44 and 45+ age groups might prefer a calmer, more organized environment that facilitates easy navigation and product selection. For these consumers, a store atmosphere that minimizes distractions and allows them to focus on finding the products they need efficiently is likely to be more appealing. Retailers targeting older shoppers should consider creating an atmosphere that prioritizes comfort, ease of shopping, and a sense of reliability. This could involve softer lighting, soothing background music, and a layout that is straightforward and easy to navigate.

Generational differences are also evident in the perception of sales promotions. The 18-24 age group is particularly responsive to sales promotions, especially those that create a sense of urgency or exclusivity, such as flash sales, limited-time offers, or influencer-driven promotions. This is consistent with research that shows younger consumers are more impulsive and more likely to respond to promotions that align with their desire for instant gratification and social validation. Younger consumers are also more likely to be influenced by promotions that are heavily marketed on social media platforms, where they spend a significant amount of time and where trends spread quickly.

In contrast, older consumers might approach sales promotions with more caution. The 35-44 and 45+ age groups may be more skeptical of promotions that seem too good to be true, as they have more experience with shopping and are likely more aware of marketing tactics. These consumers might be more attracted to promotions that emphasize value and savings over time, such as loyalty programs, bulk discounts, or price matching guarantees. Retailers targeting older consumers should focus on promoting the long-term benefits of their products and the real savings that can be achieved through thoughtful, planned purchases, rather than relying on high-pressure sales tactics.

Understanding these generational differences is critical for retailers looking to tailor their marketing strategies to different age groups. For younger consumers, retailers should focus on creating dynamic, trend-driven visual merchandising and engaging store atmospheres that resonate with their desire for a unique shopping experience. Promotions should be designed to tap into their impulsive nature, using tactics that create a sense of urgency and social validation.

For older consumers, the focus should be on creating a comfortable, reliable shopping environment that emphasizes product quality and value. Promotions should be transparent and trustworthy, highlighting real savings and long-term benefits. By catering to the specific needs and preferences of each age group, retailers can enhance customer satisfaction, drive sales, and build long-term loyalty across different demographic segments.

Store layout is a critical element of retail strategy that significantly influences consumer behavior across various age groups. The arrangement of products, the ease of navigation, and the overall flow of the store can enhance or detract from the shopping experience, affecting how different age groups engage with the retail environment. Understanding these nuances allows retailers to tailor their layouts to meet the preferences and needs of diverse customer segments, ultimately driving higher engagement and sales.

Younger consumers, particularly those in the 18-24 age group, are often drawn to store layouts that are dynamic, innovative, and exploratory. This demographic tends to appreciate layouts that encourage discovery and browsing, with creative and visually appealing product displays that capture their attention. Younger shoppers are more likely to enjoy a layout that is less linear and more open-ended, allowing them to wander through the store and stumble upon new and interesting products. This kind of layout taps into their desire for exploration and the thrill of finding something unexpected, which can lead to impulsive purchases.

Moreover, younger consumers are often influenced by trends and social media, and they seek out stores that reflect the latest styles and innovations. A store layout that showcases new arrivals, trendy items, and seasonal collections in prominent, high-traffic areas can be particularly effective for this age group. Additionally, integrating digital elements, such as interactive displays or QR codes that link to online content, can enhance the shopping experience for tech-savvy younger consumers. Retailers targeting this demographic should consider creating an engaging, experience-driven layout that blends physical and digital shopping elements.

Middle-aged consumers, encompassing the 25-34 and 35-44 age groups, often value efficiency and convenience in their shopping experiences. These consumers typically have busy lifestyles, balancing work, family, and other responsibilities, and they appreciate store layouts that allow them to find what they need quickly and easily. For these shoppers, a well-organized, logical layout is crucial. Clear signage, intuitive product placement, and easy navigation help reduce the time and effort required to complete their shopping, making the experience more satisfying.

This demographic may prefer layouts that categorize products logically, such as by type, use, or occasion. For example, grouping all kitchen-related items in one section or creating a "workwear" area can help middle-aged consumers find what they are looking for without unnecessary searching. Endcaps and aisle displays that highlight bestsellers, promotions, or essential items can also be effective for these age groups, who might be more focused on purchasing items they know they need rather than browsing aimlessly.

Additionally, these consumers might appreciate the inclusion of dedicated spaces for high-demand items, such as a clearly marked sale section or a customer service area that is easily accessible from anywhere in the store. Retailers can enhance the shopping experience for middle-aged consumers by focusing on a layout that prioritizes functionality and ease of use, ensuring that the shopping trip is as straightforward and efficient as possible.

Older consumers, particularly those aged 45 and above, often prefer store layouts that prioritize comfort, accessibility, and familiarity. This age group may have different physical needs, such as avoiding long walks through expansive store layouts or needing seating areas for rest. A store layout that offers wide, unobstructed aisles, clearly labeled sections, and easily reachable shelves can greatly enhance the shopping experience for older consumers.

For older shoppers, consistency in layout is also important. They tend to appreciate stores where the layout remains stable over time, allowing them to quickly locate the products they buy regularly. Frequent changes to the layout can be confusing and frustrating, potentially deterring them from returning to the store. Retailers should consider maintaining a predictable and familiar store layout, while also ensuring that essential items are easily accessible and well-stocked.

Furthermore, older consumers may value personalized service and the ability to interact with knowledgeable staff. Store layouts that facilitate easy access to customer service areas, or that incorporate areas for consultations or product demonstrations, can cater to the preferences of this demographic. For example, placing customer service desks in central, easily accessible locations can enhance the overall shopping experience by making it easier for older consumers to seek assistance when needed.

Retailers can benefit from tailoring their store layouts to meet the needs of different age groups, enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty across the board. For younger consumers, creating an engaging and exploratory layout with digital integration can drive interest and encourage impulsive buying. For middle-aged consumers, an efficient, well-organized layout that minimizes the time spent shopping can be highly effective. For older consumers, a layout that prioritizes comfort, accessibility, and consistency will likely improve their shopping experience and increase the likelihood of repeat visits.

By understanding and addressing the unique preferences of each age group, retailers can create store environments that not only meet the functional needs of their customers but also enhance the overall shopping experience. This approach can lead to higher customer satisfaction, increased sales, and stronger brand loyalty.

In conclusion, this study highlights the critical role that visual merchandising, store atmosphere, and sales promotions play in influencing impulsive buying behavior. The findings also underscore the importance of demographic factors, such as gender and age, in shaping consumer perceptions and responses to retail strategies. Retailers who take these factors into account when designing their marketing strategies are more likely to succeed in attracting and retaining customers in today’s highly competitive retail environment. Future research could build on these findings by exploring additional factors, such as cultural influences or digital marketing strategies, that may further enhance our understanding of consumer behavior in the retail sector.

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APPENDICES

Appendix-1 : Questionnaire (English Version)

Dear Participant,

This survey is conducted as part of a master's thesis titled "The Effects of Visual Merchandising Management on Customers' Purchasing Behavior in Clothing Stores" at Adana Alparslan Türkeş Science and Technology University. Please carefully read the following questions and mark the answers that apply to you. Your responses will be used solely for academic purposes and will be kept confidential.

Student's Name and Surname: Meriç Can Ant

University Name: Adana Alparslan Türkeş Science and Technology University

Advisor: Dilek Penpeçe Demirer

Section I

Question 1:

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements about window display design using the scale below.

Strongly Agree (5)

Agree (4)

Neither Agree Nor Disagree (3)

Disagree (2)

Strongly Disagree (1)

	STATEMENTS	1	2	3	4	5
Window Display						
1	I feel compelled to enter a store when I see an attractive window display.					
2	I tend to enter a store when I see an attractive window display.					
3	I tend to choose which store to shop at based on the window displays that catch my interest.					

Mannequin Presentation						
1	After examining the store's design/mannequin, I get an idea of what I want to buy.					
2	I tend to rely on store layouts when making a decision to buy clothes.					
3	When I see clothes I like on a mannequin in the store, I tend to buy them.					
4	When I see clothes with a new style or design displayed, I tend to buy them.					

	STATEMENTS	1	2	3	4	5
Floor Design						
1	When I see a piece of clothing that catches my eye, I tend to try it on without examining the entire section.					
2	While walking down the aisle, I tend to look at the clothes nearby.					
3	I tend to try on clothes that catch my eye as I walk past them.					

Promotional Displays		1	2	3	4	5
1	If I see an interesting promotion offer (discounted price, sales promotion, etc.) on store signs, I tend to make a purchase.					
2	When I see a special promotion sign, I go to check out that clothing item.					
3	If there is a discount sign on clothes, I tend to make an unplanned purchase.					
4	Discount signs encourage me to look at the clothes.					
Color						
1	Color harmony creates an attractive store atmosphere.					

2	The choice of colors used in the store affects my purchasing preferences.					
3	Arranging products by color makes them easier for me to find.					
4	I prefer to enter stores with a good color scheme.					

Lighting		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
1	Stores with bright lighting are more appealing than those with dim lighting.					
2	Good lighting affects the store atmosphere.					
3	Proper lighting helps consumers easily see the labels and details of the products they want.					
4	Good lighting encourages consumers to visit the store.					
Store Layout						
1	I only buy products after thoroughly looking around and examining everything.					
2	When I am in the store for planned shopping, I end up buying products I did not initially intend to purchase.					
3	I buy products based on what is offered in the store.					

STATEMENTS		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Scent						
1	The scent in the store encourages me to buy more.					
2	The scent in the store makes me want to visit it again.					
3	The store's scent makes me spend more time inside.					
Music						
1	Listening to music while shopping creates a relaxing atmosphere.					
2	The pleasant environment created by music makes me spend more time in the store.					
3	The music in the store encourages me to buy more.					
Variety		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
1	Products are arranged in an orderly manner.					
2	The product arrangement is attractive.					
3	New products are presented in an eye-catching way to attract customer attention.					

Sales Promotion						
1	Discounted products encourage me to make impulse purchases.					
2	Free products (sales promotions) can be a reason for my impulse purchases.					
3	Point-of-sale events such as displays and promotions can encourage my unplanned purchases.					
4	Promotions like "buy one get one free" usually tempt me into making unplanned purchases.					
Hedonic Motivation		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
1	Shopping is a way I like to spend my free time.					
2	Shopping is one of my favorite activities.					
3	Overall, shopping is fun.					
4	I am someone who looks for more fun and enjoyment in shopping.					
Spontaneous Shopping						
1	I often make spontaneous purchases.					
2	I carefully plan most of my shopping.					
3	I shop based on how I feel at the moment.					
4	Sometimes I get the urge to buy something suddenly.					
5	"I see it and I buy it" describes me.					
6	I often buy things without thinking.					

II.PART

1) Gender ( ) Female ( ) Male

2) Age :………………………..

3) Please indicate your average monthly household income.

( ) 17,000 TL or below ( ) 17.001- 30.000 TL ( ) 30.001- 57.000 TL ( ) 57.001- 77.000 TL

( ) 77.001- 100.000 TL ( ) 100,001 TL and above

4) Please indicate your education level.

( ) Illiterate ( ) Literate ( ) Primary School ( ) High School ( ) Associate Degree (2 years) ( ) Bachelor's Degree (University) ( ) Postgraduate

5) Please indicate your occupation.

( ) Public Sector Employee ( ) Worker ( ) Retired ( ) Self-Employed ( ) Housewife

( ) Other ………………………… (please specify)

6) What is the most important feature you consider when buying clothes?

……………………………………………………………………………………………

7) What type of store do you usually shop at?

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

8) Where do you most often buy global brands from?

……………………………………………………………………………………………

9) Write down the first three global clothing brands that come to your mind.

……………………………………………………………………………………………

Thank you for participating in the survey.

For information regarding the results of the study, please contact us.

meric_mca @hotmail.com