

Silent Selling: Exploring the Relationship between Fashion Retail Visual Merchandise and Impulse Buying Behaviour

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ABSTRACT

Visual merchandising is accorded a substantial amount of importance in the research and practice of current fashion retail today. The conventional reference to a visual stimulus, which was traditionally thought of as a vital component of the ambiance of a retail store, is no longer the primary focus of visual merchandising. Rather, the primary focus of visual merchandising has shifted to a focus on the product itself. In addition to this, it acts as the first unspoken hint in the decision to buy. In light of this, the purpose of the study is to investigate the role that retail virtual merchandise plays in the behaviour of impulse buying. A random sample of 436 people was taken from a variety of fashion retail establishments located in shopping malls for this study. The research indicates that customers' impulse buying intentions are influenced by visual merchandising in the form of window displays, in-store form displays, floor merchandising, and promotional signage. The findings of the study also demonstrated that there is a crucial connection between many types of retail merchandising, including window displays, in-store forms, floor merchandising, and promotional signage. This indicates how vital it is for owners of fashion retail stores to provide their clients with the appropriate store environment and formulate plans to better understand their requirements. As a result, it is essential that the visual stimuli and the atmosphere be useful while also being calming.

Keywords: Fashion Retail Store, Impulse Buying Behaviour, Silent Selling, Visual Merchandising

1. INTRODUCTION

Apparel industry in the Philippines has recently blossomed. According to Wen et al. (2019), due to the continuing expansion of the worldwide brands and businesses in fashion, interest in and attention to the fashion industry have increased. In recent years, the retail apparel market has expanded significantly and benefited from fascinating technology advancements (Nikhashemi et al., 2019). Statista (2022) declared that in the Philippines, the average volume per person in the apparel market is estimated to amount to 2.8 units in 2023 and is anticipated to reach to 300.4 million units by 2027. Retail fashion outlets in the Philippines has been a growing popularity in the apparel market as more stores are currently accessible and reasonably priced. Juego (2020) stated that the country as Southeast Asia's second-most populous nation, has a high level of consumer spending in terms of fashion goods. With this scenario, it is noted that the country has encouraged new companies to set up shop here. The wholesale and retail industries have taken notice of this, which contributed to the fashion retail market's ongoing rise and resulting to the increase number of fashion stores. Although trends change daily, the pace of the fashion industry has never been slower.

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Fashion retail businesses are expected to offer customers unique brand experiences in order to differentiate themselves from the competition. They are battling to be the best and stand out from the competition in order to draw in customers. Retailers employ visual merchandising to distinguish products from one another as a result of the increasing competition and similarity in the offerings. This could set the business's products apart from those of competitors, giving it a competitive edge and eventually winning over customers. Based on the investigation of Niazi et al. (2015), they found out that visual merchandisers are the secret to gaining a competitive edge over market competitors and it aids businesses to boost sales, to build brand recognition and draw consumers to the items. With this, retailers are attempting to produce a more exciting and enticing visual presentation in the highly competitive climate of today's fashion stores in order to elicit a favourable reaction from customers. Wong and Nair (2018) stated that in order to help retail managers create innovative methods to draw customers, it is necessary to pinpoint the distinguishing qualities that consumers appreciate most.

Marketers have always found consumer behaviour to be crucial. Recent developments in the study of consumer behaviour and the implications of purchase intention, have been significant (Stankevich, 2017). Pawar and Naranje (2016) specified that the consumer behaviour theories help marketers understand how customers feel and think as they select products from a variety of brands, along with the circumstances in which customers are influenced by their environment, reference groups, families, and salespeople. According to Wertenbroch et al. (2020), consumer behaviour includes the choices made before and after acts that are directly related to buying goods and services. Therefore, it would seem that an advertisement's psychological appeal can cause people to desire and ultimately buy a particular good or service. Lopez (2018) stated that consumer purchasing behaviour was clearly influenced by marketing. One of the interesting areas of consumer behaviour is the impulse buying. It is becoming more prevalent in the market and has taken on widespread reputation across the globe. According to Bellini et al. (2017), impulsive buying is unplanned, immediate, and without any prior shopping goals.

Past researches have extensively addressed the effects of visual merchandising on impulsive purchases. Jaini et al. (2022) investigated the key components of visual merchandising that can encourage buyers to make impulsive purchases. According to the study, floor merchandising, mannequins, lighting, music, and colour all play a significant role in capturing customers' attention and encouraging spontaneous purchases. Nyagba and Tsetim (2022) investigated the impact of visual merchandising on consumer purchasing behaviour in the Makurdi metropolitan. According to study results, window displays, lighting, and signage all significantly influence customers' purchasing decisions at retail establishments in the Makurdi city. Khisa et al. (2020) research shows that visual merchandising is keeping an important role in buying in Bangladeshi closing stores.

The study of Mehta and Chugan (2013) demonstrated that there is a crucial connection between window display, floor merchandising and promotional signage to customers' impulsive purchases while in-store promotions did not significantly increase customers' impulsive purchases. Furthermore, Virvilaite et al. (2009) cited some potential influences on impulse buying which are staff, store type, store layout, and store atmosphere. According to the research of Theodoridis and Chatzipanagiotou (2009), colours and decoration elements enhances the store environment's atmosphere and influenced consumers' buying decisions. According to Hussain and Mashar (2015) study, ambient factors like orderliness, aroma, lighting, and display/layout encourage impulse buying. The results of the study of Chang et al. (2014) revealed that both ambient and design features directly affect consumers' positive emotional reactions and that pleasant feelings to the retail setting directly influence consumers' impulse purchase behaviour. Law et al. (2012) claimed that visual merchandising is a method for informing consumers about products by utilising a variety of visual themes and styles.

The abovementioned past studies demonstrated the benefits of visual merchandising and how it affects impulse buying. Although there is a disagreement among the authors over the definitions and visual merchandising elements used, the most commonly cited factors that most influence on impulsive purchases are: 1) window displays, 2) in-store design, 3) floor merchandising, and 4) promotional signage. Some foreign researchers have made contributions to the topic by examining the connections between visual merchandising and impulsive purchases, but further information is expected. Significant research studies, however, have not been conducted on the visual merchandising in fashion retail stores in the province of Batangas. Thus, the goal of this study is to pinpoint the influence of visual merchandising elements on impulse buying behaviour and to test the relationship between the two variables.

1.1 Research Objectives

Examining the impact of visual merchandising on consumer purchasing behaviour is the study's main aim. The particular objectives are:

- a) To identify the profile of the respondents.
- b) To determine the influence of visual merchandising elements of fashion retail stores such as window displays, in-store design, floor merchandising and promotional signage to impulse buying behaviour.
- c) To describe the impulse buying behaviour of the customers.
- d) To test the relationship between visual merchandising and impulse buying behaviour.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Visual merchandising has been the medium by which fashion retail outlets can promote their product through silent selling. Ebster and Garaus (2011) claim that visual merchandising is both an art and a science of displaying items in the most appealing manner possible, placing emphasis on engaging customers through visual and auditory presentations. Bhalla and Anuraag, (2010) stated that visual merchandising display technique, which involves suggesting other products to customers who have already made a purchase, is frequently referred to as the "silent salesperson" because it informs customers through visual media. According to Hefer and Cant (2013), the visual merchandising displays utilised in in-store activities significantly impacted the shopping experience. A study conducted by Madhavi and Leelavati (2013) provided enough support for stores to use visual merchandising to make things more desirable and to make buyers more aware of the products so as to foster positive attitudes. Although this previous academic works highlights differences in viewpoints regarding the concept of visual merchandising, they agreed that it is an effective means of communicating with consumers and influencing their buying behaviour.

According to Saricam et al. (2018), visual merchandising is basically a matching activity between the efficient selection of the product and the strong display of it, which includes picking the appropriate product and properly positioning it in the properly occupied shop area. In addition, Mba and Babu (2016), stated that visual merchandising is everything a client sees, both inside and out, that gives them a favourable impression of a brand and prompts them to pay attention, become interested, want what they want, and take action. Likewise, at a period of intense competition, virtual merchandisers have grown in significance. In this regard, it is critical for marketers to know how consumers assess distinct visual merchandising elements and how it connects to their purchasing behaviour (Law et al., 2012). Companies and store owners use visual merchandising as a strategy to entice customers to make impulsive purchases (Widyastuti, 2018). By combining many parts of visual merchandising, retailers attempt to produce a friendly sales environment that affects customers' emotions and behaviour in the store (Naveena & Suganya, 2018). According to Shagal et al. (2016), visual merchandising is a

technique that promotes the sale of items, particularly by highlighting how they are presented at retail establishments. Astrid and Mustika (2013) noted that visual merchandising is the act of showcasing a store's products through its advertising, display, special events, fashion coordinating, and merchandising departments in order to boost sales.

Some of the visual merchandising elements and characteristics that contribute to the store ambiance and store image are window displays, floor merchandising, signage, and in-store layout (Madhavi & Leelavati, 2013; Merugu & Vaddadi, 2017). In addition, Kim (2003) claimed that every area, setting, and visual aspect of visual merchandising concentrates on the store's sign boards, ambiance, shelf layout, section divides, and cleanliness. Visual merchandising has been proven in a study to attract customers to stay longer in a store. Additionally, it is stated that two aspects of visual merchandising, such as floor merchandising and shop brand name, are positively associated to consumer impulsive buying (Widyastuti, 2018). Seock and Young (2013) assert that window displays are crucial visual communication tools. Sales increase as a result, particularly for new products. The popular companies would require an eye-catching storefront display. In addition to informing, educating, amusing, and persuading the customers, product display provides crucial information about store image, product offerings, fashion stance, price range, and market position (Wu et al., 2013). According to Somoon and Sahachaisaree (2018), the functions of window displays are to transmit the sorts and placing of merchandise in order to promote appealing pictures. In essence, a window display gives people their initial impression of a store (Astrid & Mustika, 2013). Window displays are a visual component of merchandise that convey style, substance, and price. They can also be used to promote seasonal bargains or alert onlookers to other ongoing promotions (Naveena & Suganya, 2018). Window displays are created to draw visitors' attention to the goods displayed in a store's window. The phrase typically refers to wider windows in a shopping arcade that show merchandise for sale or serve some other purpose other than to draw visitors into the store (Pushpa et al., 2017). Senachai et al. (2023) stated that the atmosphere and convenience of the store should be improved by the retailers in order to boost client engagement.

According to Sharma et al. (2010), impulse buying also comprises unexpected, captivating, hedonistically complex buying behaviours in which the haste of the choice precludes any deliberate, thoughtful consideration of alternatives or potential effects. According to previous academic and professional research, approximately 40% to 80% of all purchases are impulsive depending on the type of goods (Amos et al., 2014). Keenan (2023) stated that impulsive buying is the act of making a purchase without careful deliberation or preparation. It is characterised by a sudden, powerful want to buy something, typically in response to a happy or exciting emotional state. Meanwhile, Hartney (2022), claimed that those who shop impulsively frequently make purchases they had no intention of making. The buyer's instant sense of enjoyment can be used to explain this predisposition for impulsive and careless purchases (Pradhan et al., 2018). When driven by a "can't miss" deal or by a chance discovery of attractive goods that are too seductive to pass up, it typically happens hastily and under pressure (Hartney, 2022). Burton et al. (2018) claim that impulse buying is a sudden, powerful emotional desires that result from reactive conduct with little cognitive restraint leads to impulse purchases. Meena (2018) explained that an inability to weigh the consequences of one's actions and an overpowering want to buy are the causes of impulsive behaviour. Sharma et al. (2010) adds that surprising, alluring, and hedonistically complicated purchase behaviours are included under the umbrella of impulse buying. In these cases, the quickness with which a decision is made prevents any conscious, thorough examination of alternatives or prospective implications. Further, according to Pandya and Pandya (2020), the tension that emerges from impulsive buying between the immediate advantage and the purchase's possible negative implications can cause an emotional loss of control and trigger obsessive behaviours that can develop into chronic and pathological states. Also, Gogoi and Shillong (2020) explained that the retail environment, life satisfaction, self-esteem, and the consumer's emotional state at the time are only a few of the variables that might lead to impulsive purchasing in addition to its emotional component

Although all impulsive purchases can be categorised as unplanned, not all unplanned purchases can be classified as impulsive, according to Sohn and Ko (2021).

2.1 Hypotheses of The Study

The study has developed the following null hypotheses based on the review mentioned above:

- H₀₁: Window display has no relationship on impulse buying behaviour.
- H₀₂: In-store form display has relationship on impulse buying behaviour.
- H₀₃: Floor merchandising has no relationship on impulse buying behaviour.
- H₀₄: Promotional signage has no relationship on impulse buying behaviour.

3. METHODOLOGY

A quantitative data collection approach was used in this study. The study included a total of 436 respondents that had an interest in fashion and clothing apparel and who voluntarily participated to answer the questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed and adopted from the literature review. The first part contained four personal profile questions. The second part consisted of the questions on the influence of visual merchandising elements divided into 4: window display, in-store form, floor merchandising and promotional signage. The questionnaire is designed with a 4-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree”. To interpret the composite, mean on the influence of merchandising elements, verbal interpretation of “Not Influential” to “Highly Influential” was used. The third part involved questions related to impulse buying behaviour. While, for the impulse buying behaviour the verbal interpretation used was “Not an Impulse buyer” to “Impulse Buyer to a Great Extent”. The item statements were adapted and modified from the theoretical scales (Chang et al., 2014; Mehta & Chugan, 2013; Kim, 2003).

For content validity of the questionnaire, professional subjective judgments of different experts were considered. Item statements were checked and validated by three (3) business faculty experts, two (2) fashion retail outlet owners and two (2) customer respondents, one (1) statistician and one (1) language editor. To test the reliability, Cronbach Alpha was computed. Table 1 on the next page presents the reliability test ranging from 0.876 to 0.890 which reveals that the constructs have good internal consistency.

Table 1 Internal Consistency Reliability

Constructs	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Window Display	5	0.890
In-store Display	5	0.878
Floor Merchandising	5	0.889
Promotional Signage	5	0.876
Impulse Buying	5	0.882

Distribution of the survey took place in fashion retail stores inside the malls. The Statistical Packages for Social Sciences was used to process the data (SPSS). Frequency and percentage were the tool used in determining the profile of the respondents. To identify the influence of visual merchandising and to assess the impulse buying behavior, mean was utilised and lastly, to test the connection between visual merchandising and impulse buying behaviour, Kendall's tau correlation was employed.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Profile of The Respondents

The distribution of the respondents in terms of their demographic profile was presented in the Table 2.

Table 2 Distribution of the Profile of the Respondents

Profile	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
18-25	186	43
26-41	184	42
42-57	48	11
58-67	18	4
Sex		
Female	281	64
Male	155	36
Estimated Monthly Income		
₱9,520 to ₱21,194	98	23
₱21,194 to ₱43,828	202	46
₱43,828 to ₱76,669	105	24
₱76,669 to ₱131,484	18	4
₱131,484 to ₱219,140	13	3

Table 2 shows that most of the shoppers in fashion retail stores are Generation Z and millennials with a frequency of 186 and 184 and a percentage of 43 and 42 respectively. This indicated that these two generations have more time and money available for spending, and more time set aside for buying and they are becoming a major consumer with strong spending power in the fashion industry. According to Srinivas (2019), Gen Z consumers are increasingly concerned with variety, modernity, prestige, comfort, health, and value for money while buying branded clothing. Furthermore, Bakewell and Mitchell (2003) claimed that due to millennials' high level of fashion consciousness, this generation represents a significant market for the fast fashion sector and as stated Colucci and Scarpi (2013), have a strong urge to explore novel things, purchase more costly products, and spend more money than other age categories. Also, findings revealed that, majority of the respondents are female with a frequency of 281 and a percentage of 64. The result indicates that women make more fashion purchases than men. Women view shopping as leisure, relaxation, and fun and shopping is seen by them as a pleasure-seeking activity. Also, it can be seen on the result that majority of shoppers in fashion retail stores are in lower middle-income class with a frequency of 202 and a percentage of 46. This indicates that more and more fashion stores are serving the needs of lower middle-income group.

4.2 Influence of Visual Merchandising on Impulse Buying Behaviour

Table 3 shows that window displays are influential to impulse buying behaviour which generated a composite mean of 3.30. Findings revealed that most of the respondents were likely to visit a store if the fashion retail stores' window display attracts them. An eye-catching window display enables them to grab their attention. Likewise, the mannequin display pushes the shoppers to try the clothing. This suggests that when a consumer enters a store, the window display is the first thing they see. Without a visually stunning display to draw them in, customers would not stop to see what other things the store might have. On the other side, fashion retail stores can draw in new customers by designing a window display that actually distinguishes them from their rivals. Moreover, presenting item displays increase interest and inspire purchase intent in customers. The findings are supported by the research by Lazatin and Yturalde (2022), which provides a sneak peek into how respondents are just somewhat swayed by window decorations and can be enough to draw them inside the business. According to Nicasio (2021), the aspects that initially persuade customers to enter your store include branding and window displays, which also noted that these factors play a key part in the store's

aesthetic appeal. Retailers utilise window displays to draw people in.

Table 3 Influence of Visual Merchandising on Impulse Buying Behaviour

Visual Merchandising Elements	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Window Display		
1. If a fashion retail store's window display appeals to me, I am more inclined to go inside.	3.43	Agree
2. The mannequins on window displays help me learn about and test out new fashion products	3.38	Agree
3. I usually decide where to shop depending on the store's window displays.	3.02	Agree
4. I typically base my shopping decisions on the window displays of the fashion stores.	3.24	Agree
5. I spend more money at fashion stores with eye-catching window displays.	3.43	Agree
Composite Mean	3.30	Influential
In-Store Form Display		
1. I'm more likely to buy from a store if the shelving layouts grab my attention.	3.13	Agree
2. Trendy themes of the fashion stores gives me an idea to make impulse purchase	3.38	Agree
3. I prefer to purchase clothing that has a new style or design on display.	3.25	Agree
4. Shelf-hanger displays enticed me to enter the fashion stores	2.73	Agree
5. I tend to rely on space allotment on the stores when I decide whether to buy clothes.	3.04	Agree
Composite Mean	3.11	Influential
Floor Merchandising		
1. I prefer to enter to a fashion store with aisles open and free	3.49	Agree
2. Racks and moveable shelves matter a lot on my impulse purchase	3.21	Agree
3. Exterior floor display makes me decide in seconds to enter in the store.	3.28	Agree
4. I shop around to find the best price.	3.19	Agree
5. Products that are visibly displayed regularly impact my impulse purchases.	3.02	Agree
Composite Mean	3.24	Influential
Promotional Signage		
1. If I see a tempting promotional deal on in-store signage, I tend to buy right away.	3.43	Agree
2. Free gifts or bonus offers encourage me to make impulsive purchases.	3.55	Strongly Agree
3. When I see a sign for a great sale, I quickly turn to look at the clothing	3.53	Strongly Agree
4. If there is a discount or clearance sign on the clothing, I am more inclined to make an impulse purchase.	3.57	Strongly Agree
5. I visit a fashion store I have never been in because of promotional signboards.	3.49	Agree
Composite Mean	3.51	Highly Influential

Gotter (2022) further stated that a store's window display design shows prospective customers how much work goes into their operations and the caliber of service they may expect. A store has the chance to promote their brand based on what a customer would observe at first glance. Findings also revealed that the respondents are more likely to buy from a fashion retail store if the in-store form displays grab their attention, which gained the highest weighted mean of 3.11 with a verbal interpretation of "frequently." This suggests that visual merchandising makes the customer's shopping experience joyful by employing attractive and well-organised in-store displays, which encourages them to make a purchase from the store. This indicates that having in-store displays is essential to the success of the apparel sector since displays can provide customers ideas for using products and may persuade them to make decisions they otherwise would not have made. So, in-store form display has a significant impact on customers since it is a method of presenting goods in a way that draws attention from onlookers and encourages them to visit the store and ultimately make a purchase. When an in-store form display is displayed aesthetically appealingly, that is, when it draws customers' attention and encourages them to enter the shop and subsequently make a purchase, it has been shown to have an impact on customers.

Therefore, it is crucial to organise and decorate the display using all of the resources at your disposal in order to appeal to clients and influence both planned and impulsive purchases. Bhatti and Latif (2013) said that buyers are drawn to and motivated to make impulsive purchases when they can visualise the things that are presented. The study by Stephens (2021), which claimed that in-store form displays can be located all over the store and serve the main objective of persuading people to buy a certain product, was added to it. Also, according to Damen (2021), businesses use imaginative product placement in in-store displays to entice shoppers. It enables maximum brand exposure and brand recognition. Meanwhile, excellent store design attracts customers, which lowers their psychological defenses and encourages them to make purchases (Kim, 2003). Hulte'n and Vanyushyn (2011), found that in-store displays can influence customers' impulsive purchases.

Likewise, results show that the floor merchandising in the fashion retail stores is influential to impulsive buying behaviour with a composite mean of 3.24. A vast majority of customers are influenced by a fashion store with aisles open and free which means that customers wanted a large space for their movement. According to Quartier et al. (2009), factors that influence retailing include those that are related to space, products, and people. Mehta and Chugan (2013) also said that shoppers must feel comfortable strolling around as they shop. Also racks and movable displays are important sales drivers the fashion store. How the products are arranged on retail shelves, is a factor that attracts the customer to make a purchase, which could be both planned and unplanned, as the products are more visible, easily accessible, organised, and visually appealing to them. In addition, it was observed that the products that are visibly displayed regularly impact their impulse purchases.

Lastly, promotional signages are highly influential in the impulsive buying behaviour of the respondents which got the composite mean of 3.51. Majority of the respondents strongly agreed that free gifts or bonus, discount, clearance sign, great sale sign and other promotional deals are useful method for grabbing their attention and encouraging them to make an impulse purchase. In-store promotions cause customers to spend more time and money than usual which resulted to impulse purchases. The findings are backed up by the study of Jones and Smith (2011) which claimed that that point-of-sale incentives influence the customers purchasing decisions. Customers mentioned that they purchased a specific brand as a result of the store's promotional efforts. Campaigns that include price cuts and volume discounts impact customers more. Likewise, Kiran et al. (2012) mentioned that many in-store promotional tools, such as contests, games, samples, loyalty programs, coupons, and discounts, have increased purchase decisions.

4.3 Impulse Buying Behaviour in Fashion Retail Stores

Table 4 Impulse Buying Behaviour

Impulse Buying Behaviour	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
I regularly make impulsive purchases.	2.76	Agree
Simply do it best explain how I make purchases.	3.08	Agree
If I see something I want, I buy it	3.33	Agree
I am a little careless at times with my purchase	2.58	Agree
I do not plan most of my purchases	2.63	Agree
Composite Mean	2.88	Impulse Buyer to a Moderate Extent

Table 4 shows that majority of the respondents agreed that when they see something they want, they will immediately buy it which generated a mean score of 3.33. They also agreed that simply do it best explain how they make purchases, and they regularly make impulsive purchases with a mean of 3.08 and 2.76 respectively. Also, majority of the respondents agreed that they do not plan most of their purchases and a little careless at time with their purchase with a mean of 2.63 and 2.58 respectively. Overall, respondents can be described as impulse buyer to a moderate extent. The findings indicated that majority of fashion retail shoppers are impulse purchaser, most likely because fashion items make them feel good, it is enjoyable and it changed their mood. They wanted to treat themselves. It could be somehow a part of their coping mechanism to deal with thoughts of being incomplete. When a customer develops an emotional bond with a product, they may be persuaded to think that buying it will increase their social standing or make them feel more complete about themselves. But, even if they enjoy making impulsive purchases, they are still able to control themselves. The findings are backed up by Pradhan et al., 2018 which claimed that impulsive purchases give customers the feeling of fulfillment and life satisfaction and self-esteem (Gogoi & Shillong, 2020).

4.4 Relationship between Visual Merchandising and Impulse Buying Behaviour

In the result of a Kendall tau correlation test, a strong relationship was shown between window display and impulse buying behaviour as indicated on the Kendall's tau-b correlation coefficient, τ_b , of 0.416, and that this is statistically significant $p = <.001$). Also, in testing the relationship between the in-store form display and impulse buying behaviour, the correlation coefficient of 0.433 was generated with a p-value of $<.001$ which provided sufficient evidence that in-store form display was significantly related with customers' impulse buying behaviour. The correlation analysis also found a strong relationship between the two variables. Also, when measuring the degree of association between floor merchandising and impulse buying behaviour, the correlation coefficient resulted to 0.468 with the p-value of $<.001$ which signifies a strong relationship between the two. And lastly, when measuring the relationship between promotional signage and impulse buying, result of correlation test generated a coefficient of 0.483 with the p-value of $<.001$ which direct the researcher to declare that there is a strong relationship between promotional signage and impulse buying.

This suggested that there was a directional relationship between all the visual merchandising elements and the impulse buying behaviour. Impulsive consumer buying was significantly influenced by window displays, in-store form, floor merchandising and promotional signage. Shoppers' impulse purchases were significantly influenced by window displays. Making the window display appealing would therefore encourage more customers to enter the store. Also,

a well-designed in-store form creates a favourable store experience that triggers unplanned purchases. Meanwhile a clean, organised, and well-stocked floor merchandising contributes to a positive shopping experience. Furthermore, results revealed that an effectively planned promotional efforts are viewed as a useful strategy to capture the interest of shoppers and encourage them to make an impulse purchase.

Table 5 Relationship between Visual Merchandising and Impulse Buying Behaviour

Visual Merchandising and Impulse Buying Behaviour	t values	p values	Interpretation
Window Display vs. Impulse Buying Behaviour	0.416	<.001	Strong Relationship
In-Store Form Display vs. Impulse Buying Behaviour	0.433	<.001	Strong Relationship
Floor Merchandising vs. Impulse Buying Behaviour	0.468	<.001	Strong Relationship
Promotional Signage vs. Impulse Buying Behaviour	0.483	<.001	Strong Relationship

Previous researches have supported the findings of the study. Tendai & Crispen (2009), revealed that elements such as in-store form presentation, visual merchandising, and advertising might influence individuals to make purchases without having any prior shopping intentions. According Bashar et al. (2012), window display, floor merchandising, and promotional signage are all favourably associated. The outcomes were validated by Adam (2020). According to his studies, visual merchandising significantly influences customers' impulsive purchase choices in retail contexts. The findings demonstrated that promotional advertising, floor merchandising, in-store design, and window displays had a significant impact on impulsive customer purchasing. According to Kim's 2003 research, in-store displays and promotional signs can affect college students' impulsive purchases of clothing.

Nishanov and Ahunjonov (2016) said that window displays are regarded to be an efficient approach to draw customers' attention and persuade them to enter the store. A well-designed storefront window display is regarded to be valuable to customers and attract them to visit the shop, according to Cornelius (2010). In-store displays are a strategy for influencing customers' impulse buying behaviour (Hulte'n & Vanyushyn, 2011). According to Nordfält and Lange (2013), the efficiency of promotions is significantly influenced by the placement of product displays. According to Roorda (2013), in-store advertising and incentives can have an impact on consumers' impulsive purchases, leading them to realise they need a certain item.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The study investigated the connections between visual merchandising and impulse buying behaviour. The study proved that there is a pivotal relationship between window display, in-store form, floor merchandising and promotional signage. Among them, promotional signage is the most influential on impulse buying behaviour. Store sales may significantly rise if these aspects of visual merchandising are created appropriately and creatively. This suggests how important for the fashion retail owners to provide their customers with the right store environment, and establish plans to better comprehend their needs. With this, it is evident that the goal of visual merchandising in a fashion retail store is to draw in, hold the attention of, and delight customers with creative product displays. Thus, it is recommended that the visual stimuli and environment must be relaxing and effective. Fashion retail owners are suggested to make the store's window display fresh and appealing as possible.

The window display needs to be sufficiently targeted to draw in the proper customers, without being so narrowly focused as to drive away potential buyers. It should do more than just showcasing the merchandise; they should tell stories that capture customers' curiosity and persuade them to enter. Find stories that fit a particular theme will help you do this. Frequently change the window display. Invest and allot budget on the materials needed such as picture frames, lighting fixtures, mannequins, and other items. For in-store form display, to make it aesthetically appealing, fashion retail owners are encouraged to use varied product placements, such as positioning the products vertically and horizontally. The right vertical arrangement can be quite visually appealing in addition to drawing the customer's attention. Also, set ambiance with lighting, the lighting choices will help define the mood of the store and brand will inspire and will help create an ambiance.

Likewise, in floor merchandising, fashion retail owners are advised to keep the store orderly. They may establish a strategy for categorizing and displaying their products. Make sure that there is enough of room for customers to walk about, aisles must be roomy enough to encourage browsing, prevent shoppers from bumping into one another, and—most importantly—allow customers to pick up and carry things for purchase. Furthermore, with regard to promotional signage. It suggested to the fashion retail owners to make their promotional signs strong enough to attract attention and audience's focus. It needs to be made with the necessary high level of quality material and carefully hung in the proper location to make it. It must be updated frequently to give the store a new look.

6. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Just like other researches, this study has some limitations relating to sample size and time constraints. The study's sample was primarily made up of young individuals from lower-middle income class, in that regard it might not be very representative of whole customer population of the fashion retail stores. This study only focuses on fashion retail stores inside the malls; thus, the findings might not portray the overall status quo of the fashion store industry. To assess the impulse purchase behaviour, future study may be conducted with a bigger sample size and longitudinal data may be gathered. Future research may also examine the influence of other store characteristics on consumers' impulsive intentions.

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