



ARE YOU IN YOUR RIGHT SENSES WHEN YOU GO FOR SHOPPING? A CRITICAL EXPLORATION ON SENSORY MARKETING

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ABSTRACT:

Due to the competition in market, marketers are striving hard to establish themselves in the market. Even if they establish their name, they should make sure that they sustain themselves in the market, which is hard because of emerging companies. In order to sustain, they bring up innovative ideas and try to attract the customers. Neuro-marketing is one of the latest emerging concepts in marketing. Neuro-marketing is nothing but the link between neuroscience and marketing. With the help of neuroscience lab experiments, marketers have found different ways to manipulate the consumer's logical thinking in order to increase the sales. Sensory marketing is a part of neuro-marketing. This strategy is used by the marketers in order to mute consumer's cognitive thinking ability. They influence the sensations of the customers to make them buy products without thinking logically. With the help of mind mapping researchers have found ways to influence different sectors of people. This would change the pattern of a consumer's behavior. The core of this study is to find out if this strategy has an influence on the consumers and how. An attempt has been made in this paper to explore how customers' senses have been influenced by the marketers. And the extent of its influence is also analyzed and presented in this paper. It also shows the relationship between Age, Gender and Sensory Factors.



KEYWORDS: Mind mapping, Neuro-marketing, Sensory Marketing, Vision, Hearing, Touch.

INTRODUCTION

Marketers use different strategies in order to draw the minds of the consumers. They use innovative ideas so as to sustain themselves in the market. Many famous brands have already established their names in the market. Customers are favorable to the products that they are comfortable with.

Markets have taken help from the psychologists and have come up with groundbreaking ideas to appeal the consumers. Sensory aspects of a consumer has been targeted and has been influenced through the ambience of the store. This type of marketing where marketers target the consumer's Senses is known as sensory marketing. Consumers

make decisions unconsciously when their senses are being influenced. Sensory aspects such as visual, audio, touch, smell and taste have been directly influenced by the marketers. Studies have proven that sensory factors have an influence on a consumer's decision to buy a product. Gender plays a vital role when it comes to sensation. Both

male and female genders have different patterns of mind mapping and both their views are different from each other. Visual aspects include the color and shape of the product, the way the product is arranged and the brightness of the shop. Color has been known to have a strong impact on human behavior and decisions. Dash Busk, in his article states that 93% of buyers focus on visual appearance of a product in purchasing and 85% claim color to be their primary reason for purchase. Audio or the hearing aspect has been influenced by music in the store. The selection of the song and its volume has a huge effect on the consumers while they purchase a product. Selection of the type of music also has a huge role in the decision of the customers, Dr. Neil Nedley in his article "Music and the Frontal lobe" states that according to music therapists, certain types of music such as rock with its syncopated rhythm, affect the frontal lobe and our ability to reason and make judgments. Classical Music improves spatial temporal reasoning. Music improves frontal lobe function. He has also quoted the study done by Gueguen and Jacob in 2010 that when romantic songs were played, the customers stayed longer. The Odor of the store also has an influence on the decision of the consumer to stay in the shop for a longer period of time. Touch deals with the skin and our skin feels warmth, cold, and pain. Hence the temperature of the shop also has a very important role to play in the time spent inside the shop. The longer the customer stays inside the shop, the more products he buys since he enjoys the temperature inside and takes a walk inside the shop. Magdalena Grębosz, Barbara Wrońska in their study "Sensory Impact on Customer Behaviour" has suggested that Taste can be excluded from the further analysis as, according to Kotler taste does not apply directly to the atmosphere. This survey shows how customers are manipulated by the marketers, how they influence each gender through their difference in senses and also to find if age can stand the test of manipulation of senses.

OBJECTIVE

1. Conceptual frame work of Sensory marketing.
2. To identify which sense has been more influenced by the sensory marketing.
3. To find out if Age and Gender have influence on the senses.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Chennai which is in Tamil Nadu, which is the southernmost part of India. Chennai is the capital of Tamil Nadu and is a metropolitan city. It comprises of people from different parts of India and the world as well. This study consists of 300 samples. All the demographic variables were satisfied.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Vision, hearing, taste, smell, and touch are the so-called five senses. But the number of human senses is closer to ten than five. In addition to touch, the skin contains separate warmth, cold, and pain senses. Furthermore, sense organs in the muscles, tendons and joints tell us about the position of our limbs and the state of tension in the muscles. They serve the sense called kinesthesia. The vestibular sense informs us about the movement and stationary position of the head.¹

Human Sensitivity refers to the experience of sensation. Sensitivity to stimuli varies with the quality of an individual's sensory receptors (eg., eyesight or hearing) and the amount or intensity of the stimuli to which he or she is exposed.²

Wohlwill has noted, researchers in all fields are keenly aware of how environmental design can affect human behavior. Over the years psychologists and researchers in other disciplines have shared ideas. The study of how physical settings affect human behavior and how human behavior affects the

¹ Clifford T. Morgon , Richard A. King , John R. Weisz , John Schopler , " Introduction to psychology" Seventh Edition, Tata McGraw Hill Education Pravite Limited , 37th reprint 2010 , ISSN-13: 978-0-07-462250-6 , ISSN-10: 0-07-462250-1 , Pg 85

² Leon G. Schiffman, Leslie Lazar Kanuk, " Consumer Behaviour" Sixth Edition, Prentice- Hall of India private limited, 14 Reprint January 2000, ISBN- 81-203-1288-0, Pg 146

environment is termed as Environmental psychology. Environment represents more than the shape of a building, layout or the arrangement; Variables such as size, shape, and the number of people per square foot all affect human behavior.³

CONCEPTUAL FRAME WORK

Högskolan i Halmstad in his Marketing Dissertation has stated that “Sensory marketing is defined as a way of measuring and explaining consumer emotions, spotting and capitalizing on new market opportunities, an opportunity to maximize product profitability, ensuring first and repeat purchase (loyalty) and ensuring long-lasting product success.” Sensory marketing enhances the senses and blinds the cognitive aspects. He has also stated that “Colours and shapes are the first way of identification and differentiation. Brands are associated to a specific colour, then it is memorized more easily in the consumers’ unconscious. The brand can be identified even if the customer doesn’t see the name. According to memory retention studies, consumers are up to 78% more likely to remember a message printed in colour than in black and white.” Högskolan i Halmstad has also stated an example according to two studies from Roballey & Ali (1985) and Milliman (1986), a fast-tempo music will push the customer to leave earlier. In the other hand, a slow music played at low volume will increase the time and the money spent inside. Some studies also revealed that clients will eat faster and consume more with a loud volume and fast tempo music. The research work of Smith & Curnow (1966), has revealed that in a point of sales, customers adopt their walk speed according to the tempo of the music.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

The data was put to test with help of a statistical software SPSS. Cronbach’s Alpha test was used for testing the reliability of the responses and questioner. The Cronbach Alpha value is .896 which implies that the results are good and are valid for further studies.

GENDER AND SENSORY

Independent T test has been applied, the mean values are alone considered to find out which factor has more influence on gender and the average has been found for each factor. Senses of a human in general are Vision, Hearing, Touch, Smell and Taste. In this paper taste has not been taken into consideration.

When ‘Vision’ was taken for analysis, from the average it was found that women have been influenced more since the mean value is higher (4.48) than the Male (4.21). This is because, the female brains are more complicated than the males’. It is also found that the colors of the product are easily identified (4.89) and is influential (4.76) in the purchase of a product by women than men (4.34) (4.30) respectively. This is mainly due the color sense of man, studies have found that men are not able to identify minute differences in colors. The appearance of the shop likewise has a relatively huge impact on the men (4.28) while compared to the women (4.19), whereas the appearance of the product has influence on the women (4.09) more than the men (3.90).

The following factor ‘Hearing’ was taken into consideration when the overall average of the factor was taken for analysis. It was found that women (4.41) were more influenced by music or songs that were played in the shop than the men (4.34). It’s also discovered that women (4.93) (3.37) have agreed more on the fact that they enjoy music and they stay longer in the shop when compared with men (4.78) (3.23). Selection of music also has influence on the gender. It’s found that men (5.02) have high sensitivity towards music than women (4.93).

The next factor ‘Touch’ was also put into the same test and the overall average was considered and the other variables were also taken into account. From the test it is found that women (4.50) are more particular when it comes to touch than the men (4.34). It was brought to notice that men (4.58) are very particular about the display of the products and the heights at which they are displayed more

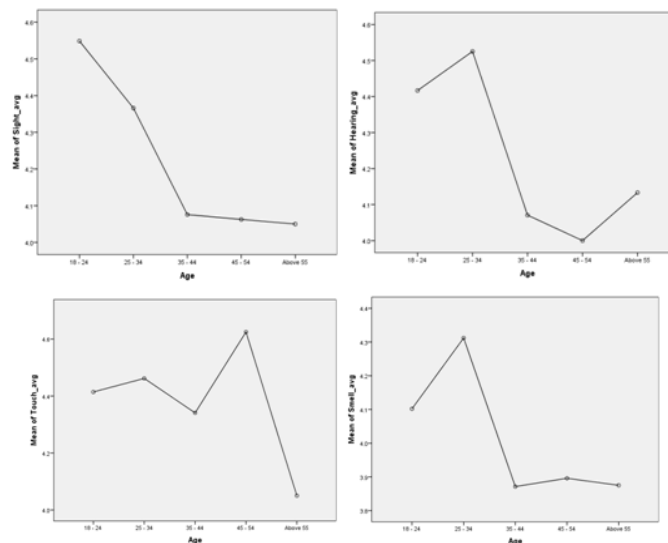
³ Lester A. Lefton, Series editor: Bill Barke, Production Editor: Elaine Ober, “Psychology” 3rd Edition, Allyn and Bacon, Inc, ISBN 0-205-08177-0, Pg429

than women (4.31). Whereas for the temperature of a shop, women (4.28) feel that it is more important than men (4.23). Men (3.70) (4.88) do not feel that the shape and the feel/ texture of a product are very influential however, women (4.26) (5.13) consider it important.

Nose is an important sensory organ. The factor was put into independent sample t test, with the overall average it was found that women (4.16) are highly influenced through smell more than men (4.11). After the test it was found that men (3.66) like and prefer products with strong odor while compared to women (3.42). Women (4.47) have agreed to the fact that the change in smell of a product affects their future intention to buy the same product, meanwhile, men (4.39) are not as influenced as women. Smell of the store and product have an higher influence on women (4.78) (3.99) while men (4.52) (3.87) do not find it very influencing when compared to women.

AGE AND SENSORY

The sensory factors are put into one-way anova test in spss by which the mean plots have been derived. The plots show the relationship between Age and sensory factors. When the mean value is higher than the others for a particular age it means that the respondents of that age group are highly influenced. Age has been grouped in different class intervals. From the study it's brought out to notice that different age group of people are influenced by different sensory factors.



The age group 18-24 comprises a majority of students. WHO categories 15-24 age group as youth. It was found that the vision factor(4.55) has a huge influence on youth while compared to other age groups. It is found that youth are able to identify the unique colors (4.81) when compared with the other age groups. It is recorded that the factors Hearing (4.42) and Touch (4.41) are the second highest influencers of the youth when compared to the other factors. The most influencing variable of these factors is the selection of music (5.02). It was found that Smell (4.10) has a relatively low influence on youth but greatly agreed to the fact that the smell of the shop (4.53) affects their purchase.

The age group 25-34 includes a part of young adults. This age group consists of young parents. It was this particular age group that was more influenced by hearing (4.53) and smell (4.31) factors. This is mainly because of the nature of the music played (5.06) and the smell of a product (4.59). This age group is the next highly influenced by vision (4.37) and touch (4.46). Color of the product (4.75) and the shape of the product (4.26) are the influencing reasons in these factors. It is understood from the plots that this age group is more influenced by sensory marketing.

The age group 35-44 covers a part of respondents who are entering into adulthood and part who are in adulthood. These respondents are more sensitive to the factor touch (4.34) while equated to the other factors within the age group. The next two factors vision (4.08) and Hearing (4.07), have more

or less the same level of influence. The least influencing factor for this particular age group is the factor Smell (3.87). When the results were observed in detail it was found that it was because of the layout of the shop (4.82) and the texture of the product (4.94). It was found that the factor touch has been highly influential. It was also discovered when compared with the age group that the respondents were mostly influenced by the ambience of the store, the nature of the music played (4.94), the brightness of the shop (4.30) and the smell of the store (4.70) also has an impact on their purchase.

Age group 45 – 54 consists of middle-aged adults. They are highly inclined to the factor touch (4.63) while compared with the other factors. This is because of two main reasons, the texture of a product (5.38) - it should be noted that this age group has the highest mean value for texture when compared to the others, the temperature (4.63) in the shop also has a relatively high influence when compared with the touch factor of the same age group. While Smell (3.90) has the least influence in this age group when related with other factors. it was found that the aroma of the shop (4.88) has an impact on purchase. Vision (4.06) is the second highly influential factor followed by hearing (4.00) which comes third. In the case of these factors it was found that color (4.88) has an important role to play in purchase. It was also found that the nature of the music (4.46) played has influenced the respondent and it was revealed that respondents prefer melodious music with low volume.

Respondents above the age of 55 are of older adults and senior citizens. They are well experienced and are not easily blinded like the other age groups. Within this age group it is found that Hearing (4.13) has an influence on the respondents. Vision (4.05) and touch (4.05) have equal responsibility in influencing the respondents to buy a product. The lowest influencing factor according to this age group is the factor Smell (3.88). The respondents in this age group have strongly agreed on few aspects that influence them to buy a product. They like going to bright shops (5.40) which plays soft music (5.60) and which has a pleasant scent (4.06). Like the other age groups, they like buying products that they feel comfortable with (5.00)

CONCLUSION

While concluding the study it has been found that respondents are not aware of the concept of sensory marketing. They fall into the traps of the markets. It has been found that all the categories of respondents are influenced. Over all, women have been highly influenced when compared to men in terms of gender. In age, it has been found that the respondents between the age of 25- 34 have been influenced by sensory marketing more than the other age groups and the least influenced age group would be the one above 55. Hence, it can be concluded that sensory marketing is practiced widely and respondents are not able to be in their right senses while shopping due to the mesmerizing techniques of the marketer.

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