

**Studying The Stimulating Role of Visual  
Merchandising and Store Indoor Atmosphere on  
Customers Shopping Behavior: Case Of Clothing  
Stores**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Visual merchandising is one of the essential strategic tools as an initial stimulant while getting the brand into the customer's mind. It is a crucial retail strategy that maximizes the aesthetics of a product and activates customers' shopping behaviour. Therefore, retail is where the brand interacts and connects with the customer whilst well visual merchandising creates awareness and draws customers into the shop. The engagement process starts before a customer sets foot in the store and this process is dependent upon the visual quality of a retail display. For this purpose, the principles of visual expression and interior design must be taken into account in a detailed perspective; including design of windows, interior layout, furniture and fixtures, fabric, texture, colour and lighting design and so far due to their significant influence on the customer's behaviour and satisfaction.

This thesis focuses on the stimulating effect of visual merchandising and store indoor environments on various shopping behaviour. This perspective intends to quest the impact of the above-stated principles of visual expression as a stimulating factor on the shopping behaviour of customers by conducting a questionnaire survey. In addition, it attempts to quest and explore whether consistency and inconsistency between visual merchandising and retail indoor atmosphere features are effective on the satisfaction of various customers in mixed fashion clothing stores or not.

In this thesis, a survey was conducted to determine the public spaces' evaluations and opinions, especially clothing stores window displays. According to the collective of the analysis's findings, certain design elements in fashion retail store interior and

exterior design, display units, colour and texture, lighting, and store layout, all contribute to increased purchase behaviour. Furthermore, according to the results, there is a strong relationship between the customer and the retail atmosphere. Therefore, this research should be considered by many researchers and designers when it comes to stimulating customers and creating visually attractive stores and interior design, and how it triggers the shopping phenomenon on the user.

**Keywords:** Visual Merchandising, Retail Design, Interior Design, Shop-Window Design, Retail Store, Stimulation

## ÖZ

Görsel mağazacılık, markayı müşterinin zihninde canlandıran ilk uyarıcı olarak temel stratejik araçlardan biridir. Ayrıca, bir ürünün estetiğini en üst düzeye çıkararak ve müşterilerin alışveriş davranışlarını harekete geçiren çok önemli bir perakende stratejisidir. Bu nedenle perakende, markanın müşteriyle etkileşime girdiği ve bağlantı kurduğu yerdir; iyi bir görsel mağazacılık farkındalık yaratır ve müşterileri mağazaya çeker. Katılım süreci, bir müşteri mağazaya ayak basmadan önce başlar ve bu süreç, bir perakende teşhirinin görsel kalitesiyle doğrudan bağlantılıdır. Bu amaçla vitrinin tasarımı, iç mekan organizasyonu / düzeni, mobilya ve donatılar, kumaş/tekstil, doku, renk ve aydınlatma tasarımı gibi görsel anlatım ve iç mekan tasarım ilkelerinin kapsamlı bir şekilde ele alınması ve bu konuların müşteri davranışı ve memnuniyeti üzerindeki önemli etkilerini gözleterek süreç ilerlemelidir.

Bu tez, görsel mağazacılık ve mağaza iç mekan ortamlarının çeşitli alışveriş davranışları üzerindeki uyarıcı etkisine odaklanmaktadır. Bu bakış açısı ile, uyarıcı bir faktör olarak yukarıda belirtilen görsel anlatım ilkelerinin müşterilerin alışveriş davranışları üzerindeki etkisini araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Ayrıca, görsel mağazacılık ve perakende iç mekan ortam/atmosfer özellikleri arasındaki devamlılığın veya karşıt bir yaklaşımın karma moda giyim mağazalarında müşteri memnuniyeti üzerinde etkili olup olmadığını da araştırmayı hedefler.

Bu tezde, özellikle giyim mağazaları, vitrin tasarımları gibi kamusal alanların değerlendirme ve görüşlerini belirlemek amacıyla bir anket çalışması yapılmıştır. teşhir birimleri, renk ve doku, aydınlatma ve mağaza düzeninin yanı sıra, tümü artan

satın alma davranışına katkıda bulunur. Sonuçlara göre, müşteri ile perakende atmosferi arasında güçlü bir ilişki vardır. Bu araştırma, müşterileri uyarmak ve görsel olarak çekici bir mağaza ve iç tasarım yaratmak ve kullanıcı üzerinde alışveriş olgusunu nasıl tetiklediğini belirlemek söz konusu olduğunda birçok araştırmacı ve tasarımcı tarafından dikkate alınmalıdır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Görsel Mağazacılık, Perakende Tasarım, İç Mekan Tasarımı, Vitrin Tasarımı, Giyim Mağazası, Uyarım

**To My Be Loved Family...**

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .....	iii
ÖZ .....	v
DEDICATION .....	vii
ACKNOWLEDGMENT .....	viii
LIST OF TABLES .....	xii
LIST OF FIGURES .....	xiv
1 INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 Background Information and Problem Statement .....	1
1.2 Aim and Research Question of the Study .....	3
1.3 Research Methodology .....	4
1.4 Limitations .....	4
1.5 Significance of The Study .....	5
1.6 Organization of The Study .....	6
2 CONCEPT OF VISUAL MERCHANDISING AND VISUAL QUALITY ELEMENTS OF THE RETAIL STORE .....	8
2.1 Visual Merchandising: .....	8
2.1.1 Visual Quality Elements of Visual Merchandising .....	10
2.1.1.1 Window Display .....	11
2.1.1.2 Colour and Texture .....	12
2.1.1.3 Lighting .....	17
2.1.1.4 Props, Fixtures and Sign .....	18
2.1.2 Design Principles of Visual Merchandising .....	20
2.1.2.1 Balance .....	21

2.1.2.2 Emphasis .....	21
2.1.2.3 Proportion.....	23
2.1.2.4 Rhythm.....	24
2.1.2.5 Harmony.....	25
2.1.3 Role of Visual Merchandising in Retail Store.....	26
2.2 Retail Store.....	27
2.2.1 Types of Retail Stores.....	28
2.2.2 Store Atmospheric .....	30
2.2.2.1 External Atmosphere.....	33
2.2.2.2 Internal Atmosphere.....	35
2.2.3 Atmospheric Factors of Retail Store .....	37
2.2.3.1 Ambient Factors .....	39
2.2.3.2 Design Factors.....	40
2.3 Summary of the Chapter .....	43
<b>3 THE ROLE OF STIMULATION IN IMPULSE PURCHASING .....</b>	<b>46</b>
3.1 Stimulation .....	47
3.2 The S-O-R Model.....	47
3.3 Factors that Affect the Stimulation .....	49
3.3.1 Visual Quality.....	49
3.3.2 Sound.....	50
3.3.3 Odour.....	50
3.4 Impulse Buying .....	50
3.4.1 External Factors.....	52
3.4.2 Internal Factors .....	53
3.5 Summary of the Chapter .....	54

4	INVESTIGATING THE STIMULATING ROLE OF VISUAL MERCHANDISING AND STORE INDOOR ATMOSPHERICS ON CUSTOMER SHOPPING BEHAVIOUR.....	55
4.1	Development and Implementation of Data Collection Tool: Questionnaire Survey.....	56
4.2	Questioning the Stimulating Role of Visual Merchandising and Store Indoor Atmosphere on Customer Shopping Behaviour.....	59
4.2.1	General Information About Respondent.....	59
4.2.2	Awareness of Respondents About Concepts of Visual Merchandising and Store Atmospheric .....	61
4.2.3	Opinions About The Effect of Visual Quality Elements on Visual Merchandising and Store Atmospherics.....	67
4.2.4	Opinions about the Stimulating Effect of Visual Quality Elements on Users' Perception of Access and Impulse Buying .....	77
5	CONCLUSION .....	85
	REFERENCES.....	90
	APPENDICES .....	101
	Appendix A: Questionnaire Survey .....	102
	Appendix B: Scientific Research and Publication Ethic Board Report .....	108

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Visual Quality Elements Of Visual Merchandising (Adapted From Jernigan, 1990; Col Borne, 1990; Diamond, 1993).....	10
Table 2: User's Emotional Response to Colours (Adapted from Quinn, Thomas R. 1991) .....	12
Table 3: Types of Balance (By the Author).....	21
Table 4: Types of Emphasis (By the Author) .....	22
Table 5: Types of Proportions (By the Author) .....	23
Table 6: Types of Rhythms (By the Author) .....	25
Table 7: External and Internal Atmosphere factors of store classified by Öncü (2014) .....	32
Table 8: The external atmospheric factors of the retails classified according to Öncü (2014).....	33
Table 9: Classification Of Store's Atmospheric Dimensions Adapted From El-Murad, Jaafar & Olahut, Meda & Plaias, Ioan. (2012).....	38
Table 10: Factors that define the store Atmospheric Adapted from Baker (1987)....	39
Table 11: Social Factors Adapted from Baker (1988) .....	42
Table 12: External Factors for Impulse Buying ( Adapted from Salih, N. (2019)) ...	52
Table 14: Internal Factors for Impulse Buying ( Adapted from Salih, N. (2019)) ....	53
Table 15: Results of the Lighting Factor on Visual Merchandising and Store Atmospheric ( By the Author).....	70
Table 16: Results of the Colour and Texture Elements on Visual Merchandising and Store Atmospheric ( By the Author) .....	

Table 17: Results of the Display Units and Layout Elements on Visual Merchandising and Store Atmospheric ( By the Author) .....	75
Table 18: Results of the Sound and Semll Factors on Visual Merchandising and Store Atmospheric ( By the Author).....	76

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Organization of the Research (By the Author).....	7
Figure 2: Example of window display (URL1 and URL2).....	11
Figure 3: Example of window display ( URL1 and URL2).....	11
Figure 4: Examples of the use of texture in window display (URL3) .....	15
Figure 5: Example of the usage of the texture on the exterior of Desinchá Concept Store (2020).....	16
Figure 6: Example of the use of props in window display (URL 18).....	17
Figure 7: Example of the use of fixtures application in window display (URL 18)..	19
Figure 8: Example of the use of sign in window display (URL 18) .....	20
Figure 9: Example of a window display in harmony ( URL15) .....	26
Figure 10: Summary of the Chapter 2 (By the Author) .....	45
Figure 11: Summary of Chapter 3 (By the Author) .....	46
Figure 12: The S-O-R Model adapted by Tai & Fung (1997) .....	48
Figure 13: Theory of Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) (Source: Baker et al., 1994; Donovan et al., 1982).....	48
Figure 14: Organization of the Assesment ( By the Author) .....	58
Figure 15: General information - age ranging and gender of the respondent .....	60
Figure 16: Education level of the respondents.....	60
Figure 17: Awareness of respondent about visual merchandising.....	61
Figure 18: Shows the percentages of the visual merchandising affect the respondents and their shopping decision.....	62
Figure 19: Results of the most influential factors in terms of visual quality results of the respondents.....	62

Figure 20: Selected images for the questionnaire survey part B.....	63
Figure 21: Results of the most effective window display design.....	64
Figure 22: Effect of visual quality factors on respondents shopping behaviour.....	65
Figure 23: Results of the most attractive key elements for the retail store .....	65
Figure 24: Evaluation results of the most influential factors according to respondents .....	66
Figure 25: Selected Images Part C For The Exterior Atmosperic Factors.....	78
Figure 26: Results Of The Most Attractive Window Display For The Respondents	79
Figure 27: Result Of The Different Product Range In The Window Display And Their Effect On The Respondents .....	79
Figure 28: Selected Images Part C For The Exterior Atmosperic Factors.....	80
Figure 29: Shows The Results Of The Colour Variations With A Well-Organized Window Display .....	81
Figure 30: The Effects Of The Proper Lighting Selection On The Window Display	81
Figure 31: Images For The Questionnaire Part D – Influence by Interior Atmospherics .....	82
Figure 32: Outcomes of the effective factors of the questionnaire survey .....	84

# Chapter 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background Information and Problem Statement

In today's competitive market, companies continue making every effort to attract and keep customers as long as possible. To achieve this aim, various techniques are implemented, and all available and unconventional methods are used. The store environment and atmosphere influences the different types and levels of customer behaviour (Kotler, 1973).

The concept of “atmospherics” was introduced by Kotler (1976, p.50) as: “...the conscious designing of space to create certain effects in buyers. More specifically, atmospherics is an effort to design buying environment to produce specific emotional effects in the buyer that enhance his purchase probability.”

Atmospheric refers to the triggers in a retail atmosphere that has a significant effect on customers buying decisions. For this reason, to affect the behaviour and satisfaction of the customer, principles of visual expression and interior design must be considered in a comprehensive point of view in line with the location of shops, window design, interior layout, furniture and fixtures, fabric, texture, colour and lighting design, heating/ cooling conditioning and so far. However, it is significant to be aware of the stimulating effect of these factors on customers and hence to know how these factors



[separately or in an intermingled way] trigger their buying process for a responsive interior design solution.

More specifically, by using different combinations of visual merchandising elements, retailers aim to create an attractive sales experience that influences the emotions and actions of customers. Visual merchandising is described as “everything the customer sees, both exterior and interior, that creates a positive image of a business and results in attention, interest, desire and action on the part of the customer” (BastowShoop et al., 1991, p.1).

The main aim of a display window is to intrigue an interest between "window shoppers" and to get the customer attention to buy it by placing them in the window display. When developing a display window, several factors must be considered. First, the display window must have a visual impact; it should be unique, differentiating the shop from the others. Moreover, several studies have analysed the relationship between customer behaviour and the retail environment. They concentrated on environmental aspects like location and aesthetics and customer-level factors like shopping-related feelings and satisfaction (Machleit and Mantel, 2001). The effect of the shop environment on the customer has been observed by several researchers.

Rostocks, (2003) (cited in Supriya M. Kalla and A. P. Arora, 2011) highlighted visual stimulation as one of the reasons that trigger shopping behaviour (Solomon et al., 2004, Espinoza et al. 2004). Therefore, it must be noted that visual merchandising is one of the important strategic tools as an initial stimulant while getting the brand into the customer's minds and activates their shopping behaviour and retail is the place where the brand interacts and connects with the customer.

And hence, this research, due to scarcity of research on the relationship between visual stimulation and shopping behaviour, particularly focuses on the stimulating effect of visual merchandising and stores indoor environment on the customer shopping behaviour. Besides, it not only focuses on the window display and exterior atmospherics but also intends to explore the role of consistency and inconsistency between visual merchandising and retail indoor atmosphere features on customers' satisfaction while shopping.

## **1.2 Aim and Research Question of the Study**

### *Aim*

Accordingly, the aim of this research was to reveal the ways of expressing the visual quality elements as the store interior environment and visual merchandising factor as an initial stimulus on customer shopping behavior, especially in fashion clothing stores, and to create an structure for a sensitive interior design solution. Accordingly, the main research question that will respond to the stated aim is:

*How visual quality elements could be articulated for a responsive interior design solution in order to stimulate users' perception and hence to direct them to access and impulse buying?*

Objectives of the research in order to respond to the stated question are as stated below:

1. To determine the visual quality elements and their use on visual merchandising and the store atmospherics through literature review
2. To determine customers level of awareness about visual quality elements, visual merchandising and store atmospherics through a survey.
3. To assess the impact of external atmospherics and types of visual merchandising as a triggering factor on directing them to access, purchasing behaviour, and impulse for buying through a survey.

4. To identify the role of indoor atmospherics of the store and the consistency or inconsistency of external visual merchandising elements in the store on the customers purchasing behaviour through a survey.

### **1.3 Research Methodology**

This study is conducted with a mixed research methodology composed of both quantitative and qualitative research methods. The main two key methods of data collection are a literature review on the key concepts of the study and a questionnaire survey to achieve the main goal and objectives of the study. Literature review provide a theoretical background and assist the development of the questionnaire survey. There were no limitations specified in terms of location/place/participants while conducting the questionnaire survey. It was completed with one hundred forty-seven people (147) participants between March and April 2021.

Participants voluntarily participated in the questionnaire and were chosen through random sampling (no participant criteria). In the first part of the questionnaire, 11 questions were asked for gathering demographic information and a Likert Scale was developed that is composed of 58 questions for the purpose of measuring awareness of respondents on the visual merchandising and store atmospherics/; to gather their opinions about visual quality elements of visual merchandising and store atmospherics/; to gather their opinions about the stimulating effect of visual quality elements on directing them to access and impulse buying.

### **1.4 Limitations**

This thesis limited to the inquiry of the stated aim only at women and men mix clothing stores. However, children stores are not included in this research. It was concentrated on the influence of window display design and interior design\_atmospherics on the

customer behaviour and how this issue triggers their stimulus to purchase in mix clothing stores. Moreover, in order to limit this study, in the first part of the visual quality elements of visual merchandising factors included window display, store sign, lighting and colour design, fixture and furniture, and store layout and organization. For the atmospheric factor of the retail store, ambience factor and design factors are analyzed. For the ambience factor sight, smell, touch and sound were analyzed and for the design factors colour, display layout and style and aesthetic factors were included. Besides, the role of the stimulus in impulse purchasing, impulse buying is divided into two external factors and internal factors.

On the other hand, the study is limited to generic results and no comparative evaluation has been provided due to inadequate diversity among the respondents as a result of random sampling. For the questionnaire survey, the income of the respondent is not included. Because, without respondents income level the important point is to find the triggering factor as an initial stimulus on customer shopping behaviour.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The purpose of this research is to raise awareness of the stimulating role of elements of visual merchandising and to provide a reliable source for future studies. Approaches can be developed that can lead the designer to understand the important stimulating impact of visual merchandising elements and their relationship with store indoor atmospherics as a result of measuring user opinions and knowledge through a questionnaire survey.

Moreover, literature review put forward that there have been limited research carried out on this subject in the recent years, and it could be noted that this study is a valuable

for source for future studies and could be expanded upon. Existing literature was not up-to-date, and it is necessary to do further research in this field of study in order to fill the gap.

## **1.6 Organization of the Study**

This thesis consists of 5 chapters. The first chapter gives information about the thesis in general. In this section, the purpose of the research, aim and methods of the thesis is explained. The second chapter is divided into two sections. It first reviews the concepts of visual merchandising and retail store. In order to understand the role of visual merchandising elements and visual quality elements within the retail store, it is also important to know them and understand how to use them in order to create an attractive interior and exterior atmosphere whilst triggering the customer's stimuli. The third chapter of the thesis reviews and highlights the concept of stimulation and was carried out to understand how it is triggered by the environment. The fourth chapter is the part where the questionnaire survey was developed based on the criteria provided as a result of the theoretical background, then implemented and the results were achieved. Discussion of the results were provided in the chapter five, which is the conclusion chapter of the thesis. Figure 1 illustrates the organization and the structure of the thesis.

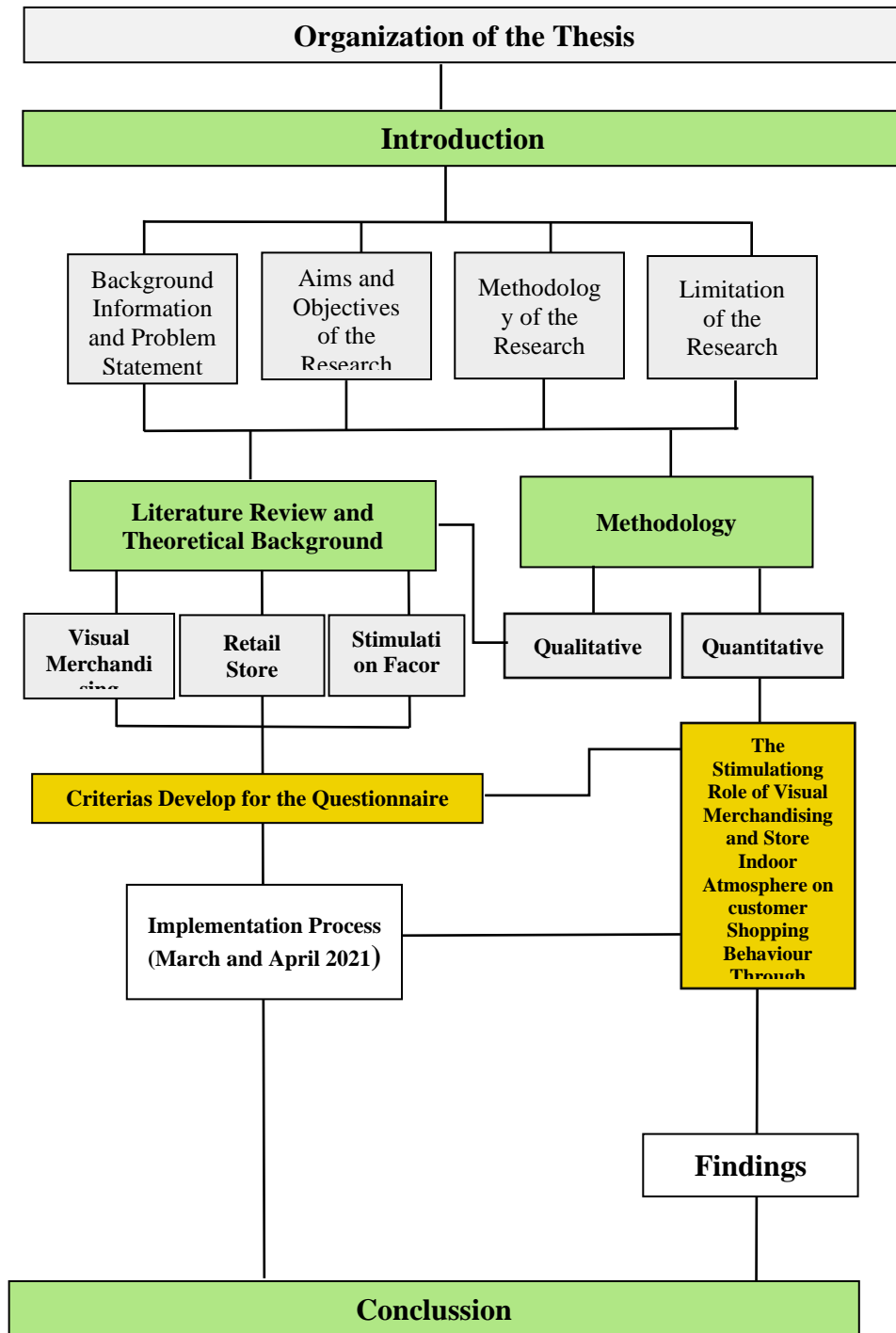


Figure 1: Organization of the Research (By the Author)

## **Chapter 2**

# **CONCEPT OF VISUAL MERCHANDISING AND VISUAL QUALITY ELEMENTS OF THE RETAIL STORE**

This section is based on the research's main aim, which is to uncover ways of articulating visual quality elements as a factor of visual merchandising and store indoor environment as an initial stimulant on customer shopping behaviour, particularly in a fashion clothing store. The literature was re-examined based on prior studies in two sections: visual merchandising and retail stores.

Visual merchandising is discussed in the first section in order to understand the principles of visual expression and how are they effective on the customer's attention. Then in the second section exploration of fashion retail stores besides creation of store indoor and exterior atmosphere and how they act as an impact factor on the visual merchandising is discussed.

### **2.1 Visual Merchandising**

Today, the concept of visual merchandising has become a strategic tool used to influence potential customers. Visual merchandising helps in strikingly displaying products to attract the customer to the store and increase the store's sales. Walters and White (1987, p. 238) are among the first researchers to define visual merchandising in marketing management studies as "any activity that aligns effective product selection

with effective marketing presentation". Pegler (2006) defines visual marketing as a product display that communicates product concepts to customers in order to optimize sales and profits. According to Kerfoot, Davies & Ward, (2003), The modern idea of visual merchandising was first widely used as a business tool in the retail setting and was written extensively in the 1990s by McGoldrick (1990), Levy and Weitz (1996),

Visual merchandising not only influences the customer but also plays a role in influencing purchasing behaviour. According to Bastowshoop et al. (1991), "everything the customer sees both exterior and interior that produces customer attention, interest, desires, and actions that emerge from a business's positive brand image a customer" is called visual merchandising.

Visual merchandising is a purely marketing-based term that represents the most essential marketing tool and the most direct communication tool with the product; this includes any company, store or brand billboards, banners, posters that customers may see during their market visit or shopping, brochures, shop signage and shelf signs. Visual merchandising includes the store layout, the shape of the store shelf, the store's department, the atmosphere of the store and the brand in the store (Wanniachchi, N & Kumara, Varuna. (2016).

According to Mehta, N. P. & Chugan, P. K. (2013), visual product identification establishes the relationship between customers and products to create brand concepts and sales. Visual merchandising is a strategy for presenting and displaying items to target potential customers that are appealing and eye-catching. It is a process of combining a product's successful assortment with its effective presentation, which entails picking the correct product and displaying it effectively in a well-used retail



area. Mondol, Edward & Karim, Dr. Asif & Salman, Narjes (2021) , stated that the main goal of adopting visual merchandising is to increase sales by attracting customers into the shop, encouraging them to stay in the store and have a pleasant experience in the retail environment, and even persuading the customer to make an unexpected and impulse buy. Among many marketing strategies, visual merchandising is a way of closer communication and direct interaction with customers.

### 2.1.1 Visual Quality Elements of Visual Merchandising

Visual Merchandising, as described by Pegler (2006), is the presentation of merchandise at its best; it is colour-coordinated, accessorized, and self-explanatory. Visual merchandising includes every visual quality element that customers need when they enter the store. Therefore, as they approach and enter the store, everything given to customers is considered visual merchandising (Jernigan, 1990).

Table 1: Visual Quality Elements Of Visual Merchandising (Adapted From Jernigan, 1990; Col Borne, 1990; Diamond, 1993)

<b>Visual Quality Elements of Visual Merchandising</b>	
<b>EXTERIOR</b>	Window display
	Entrance: Location/Size
	Product Display
	Store Sign
<b>INTERIOR</b>	Lighting
	Colour
	Fixture and Furniture
	Interior Signs
	Store Layout/ Store Organization

Visual Merchandising covers all visual components that contribute to the quality of a retailer's identity and how that image is perceived. Visual merchandising aims to create a pleasant retail ambience by combining exterior (building, location, window display)

and interior components (store design). However, Hubrechts. and Kocktürk (2012) stated that, the role of interior and exterior displays differs: internal displays are intended to bring customers to a particular product or sector of retail, whilst external displays are generally used to draw customers into the store.

### **2.1.1.1 Window Display**

The most effective strategic technique for influencing customer buying behaviour is window displays. It acts as a "silent salesman" (Buttle, 1988; Greenwood, 1988) who can distinguish between retail qualities (Klokis, 1986). According to Vargo E. (2006), it is stated that it takes a customer about 10 seconds to decide whether to enter a store after seeing a window display. As a result, it must be noted that it is an effective advertising tool for connecting potential customers to a retail store.

Window displays are the initial step in recognizing a store and its merchandise. The second step is to persuade people to go shopping.

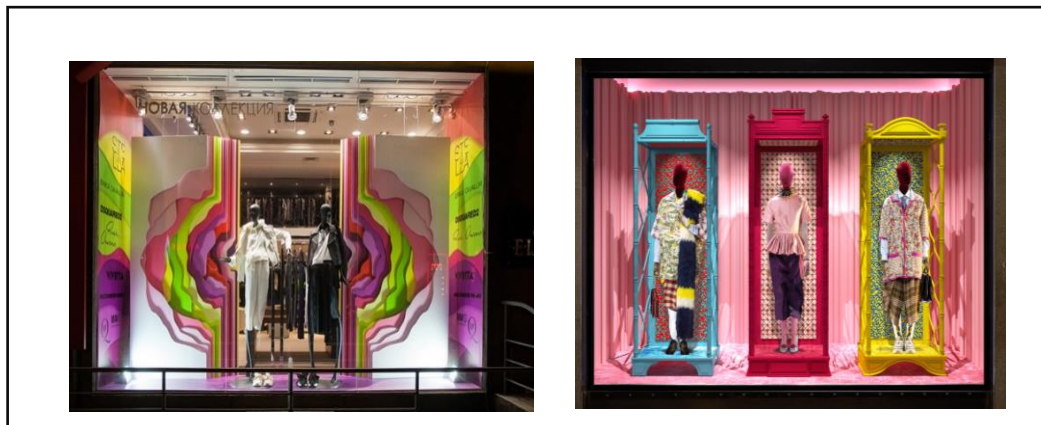


Figure 2: Example of window display (URL1 and URL2)

The store's physical appearance should be appealing enough to entice customers to shop there. Additionally, the store's appearance invites customers to enter. Effective interior attracts clients, lowers psychological defences, and aids sales (Jiyeon, 2003). The use of visual communication, an attractive display of lighting, colours, texture, appealing sound, and odour is essential to guide and stimulate customers' perceptual and emotional reaction, and ultimately to impact their buying behaviour and are referred to visual merchandising strategies (Zetocha et al., 1991).

### **2.1.1.2 Colour and Texture**

#### **Colour**

Colours are a part of nonverbal signs identified as a significant phenomenon on the market (Kotler and Keller, 2006). For visual merchandising, colour may make a strong and long-lasting visual impact. Because it attracts customers attention, it may either give them a positive or negative experience. According to Birren (1987), colour is psychological and physiological and has an impact on visual sensations since it is observed both cognitively and visually.

One of the strategic tools is the colour wheel which is essential in creating a retailer's colour strategy. Various colour schemes may be created by combining different colours. These are some of the most frequent colour schemes that may be utilized to create a display.

Table 2: User's Emotional Response to Colours (Adapted from Quinn, Thomas R. 1991)

<b>User's Emotional Response to Colours</b>	
<b>Colour</b>	<b>Emotional Response</b>
Blue	It gives calms and relaxes feeling to excite people.

Green	Eyes detect the colour easily. Restful and tranquil. Stimulates people. It makes time seem to pass quickly.
Red	Excites and stimulates. Induces aggression. It slows down time.
Yellow	Creates a feeling of warmth and happiness. Draws attention. Boosts morale.
Orange	Friendly, warm and vibrant. Exhilarating.
Purple and Violet	A cool colour. It tends to lend elegance and sophistication. Royal.
Brown	Relaxing and warm
Grey	Depressing. Cool

Colour schemes that contribute to the ambience and attract customers could be developed through creativity and experimenting. However, the general opinion of colour will directly contribute to visual marketing's performance. Colour is an essential element of visual merchandising. It affects customer expectations and attitudes, purchases and consumption behaviour and allows companies to place themselves or to differentiate themselves from the competition.



Figure 3: Example of the colour usage in retail store, LAURELLA Fashion Store (2021)

Figure 3 shows the LAURELLA Fashion Store in Poland (2021). Designers Laura Reiss-Vogel and Marcin Vogel create a conceptual fashion retail store in Poland. The owners' main objective was crystal clear: *"the business had to be the pinkest and most "instagrammable" location on the Polish map."* The pink colour's usage creates a soft interior atmosphere and highlights the product. Laura Reiss-Vogel and Marcin Vogel (2021) stated that;

" In every one of the pink is still very much present, differing in shade only, and the entire concept is complemented with characteristic, eye-catching neons. With the first step through the door, our adventure begins with a floral room, embellished with lamps in lotus flower shape, flower-patterned floor, paper flowers, and Flower Power neon. To visit Laurella shop is an adventure in itself, where care about every detail, surprising solutions and most of all - attitude towards clientele - especially younger one - can be noticed almost every step of the way."

Colour directly impacts visual characteristics, awareness, attention and object perception. One of the key reasons why colour in visual merchandising is so relevant is that it appeals to customers' emotion leads to a very enticing space, and helps in the sales process (Thilakarathne, 2016).

On the other hand, texture creates a visual interest between the window display and potential customers. It refers to surfaces in the display to distinguish between colour, emotion and feelings and the environment in which the retail could visually stimulate customers' awareness.

## **Texture**

According to Taskiran (2012, as cited in Hashem, 2019), the texture is referred to the company's surfaces, the differences between colours and emotions, and how the store displayed its merchandise and products in a manner that awakened customers' curiosity visually (Taskiran, 2012).



Figure 4: Examples of the use of texture in window display (URL3)

This illustrates that texture will aid customers in experiencing and feeling the merchandise and having a visual impression. Important distinguishing surface textures have an influence on customers' feelings and emotions. For this reason, it is necessary to use materials that express effectiveness, lightness, and a pleasant, inviting atmosphere. It is crucial to blend textures with the other visual quality elements to complement the significant points of the store's and case.

Figure 5 illustrates the example of designing the texture elements on façade design and interior store environment. Architect group Superlimão who conceived this project in 2020, created an attractive façade for the retail store. It is quite a strong example of how the customers' perception can be affected by the texture element.



Figure 5: Example of the usage of the texture on the exterior of Desinchá Concept Store (2020)

Architects stated that (2020);

"Create an out-of-the-box vertical space that would confuse the senses. The experience starts on the sidewalk with a kinetic facade, which initially seems basic, but slowly reveals itself with subtle movements. About one thousand aluminum leaves hanging inside the concrete screen blocks flicker with the wind, mimicking the crown of a tree and creating infinite different patterns."

### **2.1.1.3 Lighting**

Another essential aspect of visual marketing is lighting. It is a display of window make-up in another dimension (Zetocha et al., 1991). According to Barr and Broudy (1986), the most direct type of nonverbal communication used by merchants to interact with their customers is light. Lighting design, according to Pegler (2006), is the simplest and most effective way to gain people's attention and awareness. Through colour, temperature and appearance, lighting helps to create a specific influence on products by creating moods for customers' emotional state and behavioural purpose (Astrid & Mustika, 2013). Besides as it is simply emphasized by Quartier and Cleempoel (2008): "Lighting has an impact". In retail environments, it has an impact on people's feelings and, as a result, on their behaviour.

In fashion retailers, the appropriate lighting should be carefully selected. Lighting is concerned with producing ambience and visually pleasing environments. The way spaces are seen also influenced by lighting. It has the potential to create both pleasant or unpleasant thoughts in the perception of that environment. In visual merchandising, researchers focus on three primary forms of lighting (Shoop, & Zetocha, & Passewitz, 1991):

1. Ambient Light – general lighting for the object
2. Task Light – enlight the specific object/product/area
3. Accent Light– highlight that gives a drama to the specific object/product/area

The strength, location, and colour of light can drastically influence the sense of a design, making it an extremely useful tool. Furthermore, there is light, there are shadows, which may be a decisive element in the creative tool of a visual merchandiser.



#### 2.1.1.4 Props, Fixtures and Sign

##### Props

A prop is a material that is used in connection with a product in a showcase to highlight the function of the merchandise being presented or the story being told. The purpose of props is to help the merchandise seem its best. In window display products always should be the centre of the attraction.

Props are designed to create a storyline about the product or a merchandise idea. It is there to highlight the merchandise and create a visual excitement to the window (Figure 6).



Figure 6: Example of the use of props in window display (URL 18)

##### Fixture

A fixture is just simply reflect the products, however, even the retailer's ambience. Gondolas, tables, cubes, mannequins, waterfalls and other racks, display cabinets, and manufacturer point-of-purchase displays can all be used to exhibit products successfully (exemplified in Figure 7).

There are various types of fixtures. According to Ortiz (2021) fixtures types are divided as:

- Body forms
- Wall displays
- Display cases
- Hanging elements



Figure 7: Example of the use of fixtures application in window display (URL 18)

## Sign

It is the receptionist of the window display. It clarifies the possibilities, simplifies common questions, and delivers detailed information to the target audience (Zetocha et al., 1991). Signs show customers the theme, price, and the other information, enticing them into the store and encouraging them to buy the products. By introducing themselves and their products, signs should establish rapid and effective communication with customers. In terms of advertising to potential customers as James and Susan Claus (2000) state that on-premise signs are the most cost-effective and efficient. They say that signage is a company's first point of contact with customers. The goal is to encourage impulsive "stop and shop" to raise product

awareness or product for reference in the future and to affect buying choices after the customer has stopped (Figure 8).



Figure 8: Example of the use of sign in window display (URL 18)

### **2.1.2 Design Principles of Visual Merchandising**

Designing an impressive display for a retail store is one of the effective ways to attract potential customers to the retail store. In general, proper visual merchandising elements affect the customers' attention for about 10 seconds, which is why it is essential to have an impressive and attractive one.

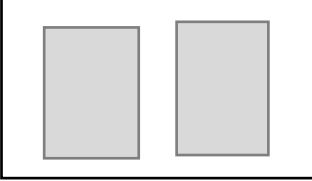

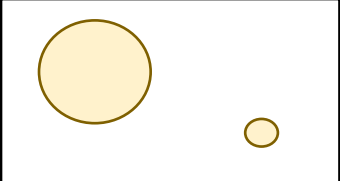

All aspects of the displays are linked with each other to form a coherent, efficient and visually attractive display when used correctly. It will be easy to create a display for any type of merchandising when these design principles are incorporated. According to Taskiran (2013), there are five visual merchandising principles. These are balance, emphasis, proportion and rhythm. As it was emphasized these principles should be

used correctly and effectively for an understandable and attractive window display. In this section, the principles of visual merchandising are discussed.

### 2.1.2.1 Balance

The definition of balance defines how visual elements are arranged (Lohr, 2008). The balance and weight of items between two sides of a display are referred to as balance. A philosophy of equals is used to achieve balance. There are two primary forms of balance (Zetocha et al., 1991).

Table 3: Types of Balance (By the Author)

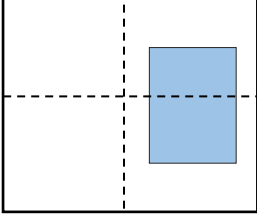

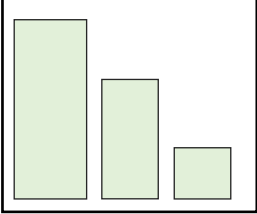

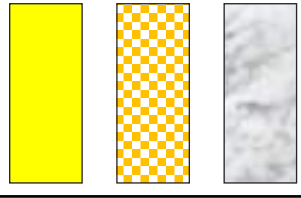

Types of Balance	Traditional or Symmetrical Balance	Informal or Asymmetrical Balance
Explanation	Elements and Figures on both sides of the Display are of the same size.	Components or Figures on both sides of the Display are the same size, but they are arranged differently.
Example	  <p>example explained the traditional or symmetrical balance (URL4)</p>	  <p>Explain the form of the Informal or Asymmetrical Balance (URL5)</p>

### 2.1.2.2 Emphasis

The idea of focus is connected to the construct of contrast. The use of emphasis draws attention to specific items by making them shine out (Evans & Thomas, 2012). In turn, emphasis is classified according to the level of focus placed on significance. The

dominating object will bring more attention to itself and stand out from the other elements of a design.

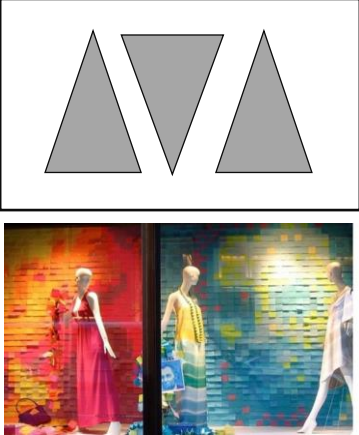
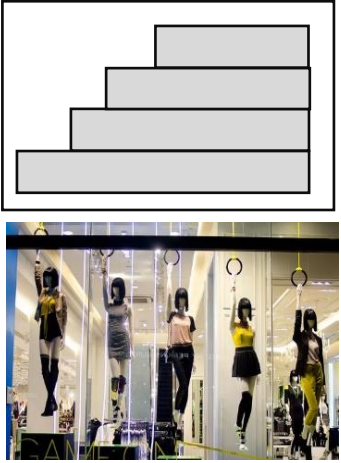
Table 4: Types of Emphasis (By the Author)

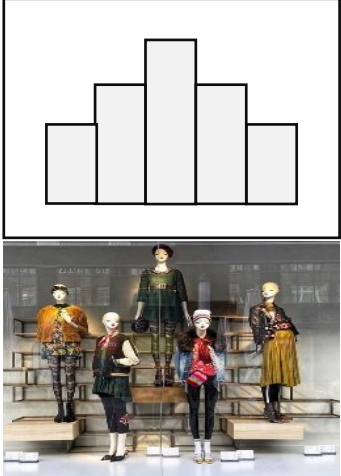
Emphasis by design elements	Focal Point	Scale	Texture
Explanation	<p>Creating a focal point, which is the spot that attracts the attention of the viewer, is one approach to achieve emphasis. The focus point might be the biggest, brightest, darkest, or most intricate portion of the total, or it could be given extra attention for some other reason.</p>	<p>The mood or effect of a window displays is affected by its size and scale. The relative size of an object inside the space, for example, influences its effect, as does the degree of detail we can notice.</p>	<p>Texture have a significant impact on window displays. The different combinations of texture create curiosity on customers attraction and give extra attention to the window display.</p>
Example	<div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center;">   <p>Explain the form of the Focal Point (URL6)</p> </div>	<div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center;">   <p>Explain the Scale and Size relation (URL7)</p> </div>	<div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center;">   <p>Explain the Color and Texture (URL8)</p> </div>

### 2.1.2.3 Proportion

The linkage between size and form is known as proportion. (Bastow-Shoop et al., 1991) stated that the dimensions of the elements in the window display and the size between the design area and the elements should be analyzed in-depth in each design to achieve a proper proportion. Each item of the product must be viewed in context with the rest of the store. Proportion is the relationship between the components of a display and the whole. Distance, size, quantity, degree, or portion comparisons are all examples of this.

Table 5: Types of Proportions (By the Author)

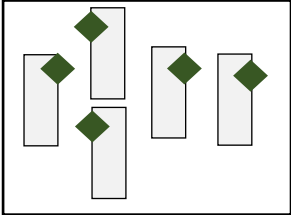

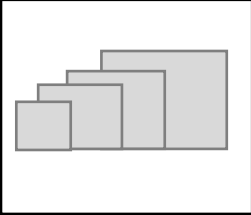

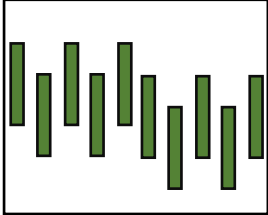

Types of Proportion	Definition	Example
Repetition	<p>In the context of design, repetition refers to the usage of the same components many times. Repetition establishes visual cohesion and helps streamline a composition by ensuring "maximum sameness/minimal variation."</p>	 <p>Example of the Repetition ( URL 9)</p>
Steps	<p>People will look at the top items first, and their eyes will move across the display. Then, mannequins can climb or sit on the steps to get more customers to think about them.</p>	 <p>Example of the steps (URL 10)</p>

<p>Pyramid</p>	<p>In this shape, the goal is to put the most critical and exciting item at the top so that it's the first thing people see. After that, customers will look down the slope when they reach that point.</p>	 <p>Example of the pyramid ( URL11)</p>
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#### 2.1.2.4 Rhythm

The measurement of ordered movements, such as from object to object, background to foreground, and side to side, is known as rhythm or flow. The customer's eye should be led from the dominating product to the secondary object(s) or from the principal presentation of the grouping down to the arrangement of accessories or alternate sections of the display by the rhythm of the display.

Table 6: Types of Rhythms (By the Author)

Types of Rhythm	Flow	Progression of Sizes	Continuous Line Movement, Rhythm
Explanation	The repetition of elements (shapes) that may be arranged in various locations in a display creates flow.	A sequence of sizes creates flow. For instance, consider the range of sizes from small to big.	The positioning of the components in the Display creates a continuous line movement, which creates flow.
Example	  <p>Flow Repetition (URL11)</p>	  <p>Progression of Sizes (URL12)</p>	  <p>Continuous Line Movement, Rhythm (URL13)</p>

### 2.1.2.5 Harmony

Identity and qualities of design components, including form, size, colour, texture, and orientation, give harmony. Several of these may be used to keep everything in harmony. In a display, there are three different types of harmony (functional, structural, and ornamental).

The first one is functional harmony, which is focused on the functional ability of something. As for structural harmony, it involves properly arranging all of the elements; products should not be placed out of sequence. Last but not least, the



components of a display that are just included for ornamental purposes create a decorative harmony.



Figure 9: Example of a window display in harmony ( URL15)

### 2.1.3 Role of Visual Merchandising in Retail Store

Visual merchandising has a significant role in a retail store. It gives the store attraction and motivates the customer to enter to store and spend time there. Besides, it encourages the customers to purchase products planned or unplanned. According to Mills et al. (1995), visual merchandising includes window – exterior displays, interior displays such as form showcases, floor–wall merchandising, and promotion signs.

"Visual merchandising is concerned with presenting products or brands visually to customers, as well as whether the message is decoded at an appropriate level - a process that affects a positive psychological or behavioural outcome ultimately leading to purchases," according to Kerfoot et al. (2003).

According to Schimp (1990) (cited in Gajanayake, Gajanayake, & Surangi, 2011), visual merchandising's role is to:

- Increase customer awareness of a product and give essential information about it;
- Inform customers about a product's advantages and availability;
- Promote a product or brand by persuading people to buy it;
- To make the purchase process as simple as possible and then to maximize space and make the purchasing process more efficient;

According to the definitions above, it must be noted that visual merchandising is a crucial component of a retail store. It helps the business to attract more customers, encourage them in choosing the products they want, keep them for extended periods of time, and inspire them to purchase items on their terms.

## **2.2 Retail Store**

Shopping is an essential physical and psychological activity in human life. People buy for a variety of reasons, including social purposes, recreation, physical activities, and keeping up with the newest fashion trends (Tauber, 1972). Retailers are the places where people do the shopping and socialize.

The retail industry is one of the most competitive industries. The success of a retail company is determined by its quickly responding and analyzing customer behaviour. Customers' attitudes and factors that impact a customer's purchase decision must be emphasized by retail stores. In the chain of supply and demand, retail is the last link between manufacturers and customers (Berman, & Evans, 2009). Retail stores create their own images, which have different impacts and influences on customers. The

visuals may affect a customer's self-image, causing a higher purchase rate (Schiffman, Kanuk, 1997). In this section, retail stores are going to be emphasized in detail.

### **2.2.1 Types of Retail Stores**

Different retail sectors can be used to describe and identify retail spaces. Trying to trigger one-of-a-kind experiences in order to attract customers was not something retail has developed today. As soon as competitors entered a sector, retailers had to separate themselves from the competition. Pride & Ferrell (2015) stated that a retail store keeps a large inventory of various product categories. In this category, the combination of customers or product offerings and the operational style of the retailers is unique. On the other hand, "Retail spaces can be characterized through various retail areas," L. Meshner (2010, p.33) states that "any site may be classified as a retail space" and observes that "every region has been influenced by social and financial situations, governmental concerns, history, and the progress of configuration processes." She classified this business into four categories:

1. Food ( markets, supermarkets including particular food stores)
2. Fashion ( clothes, shoes, beauty products)
3. Home Retailing ( furniture, cook equipment, fabrics)
4. Entertainment (sports, technology, travel, etc.)

The term "retail store" refers to a business that provides a wide range of product types. In this category, the mix of customer or product offerings and the retailers' working style is different (Pride, & Ferrell, 2015). According to Pride, & Ferrell, 2015, retailers can be categorized into five:

1. Fashion Retail Stores
2. Concept Store

3. Chain Store
4. Flagship Store
5. Department Store

- **Fashion Retail Store**

Fashion retail stores provide a diverse selection of merchandise. These stores provide a wide range of things, ranging from the most affordable to the most expensive. Purchasing products from retail sector stores allows them to market such products effectively. As a result, the store's ambience has been designed with retail sales in mind, and special attention has been paid to the products' presentation. The viewpoints of customers are taken into account. Consideration is given to the psychological and physical variables that influence customers' behaviour in selecting space and the display of items.

- **Concept Store**

Exclusive goods, unique designs, and limited-edition products in concept stores provide a unique shopping experience. Pride, & Ferrell, 2015 stated that the stores in this category bring creativity and shopping together under one roof for their customers. It is all about exploration and firsthand experience. As a result, products and designs are updated regularly to ensure that the experience is fresh and exciting.

- **Chain Store**

It is a collection of stores with a retail system that includes items from a specific brand to customers under the control of a centralized control company (Pride, & Ferrell, 2015).

All shops share the same brand and management structure in this chain.

There should be consistency in using the same logo, brand, and commercial items throughout all locations that are part of a network of chain stores. Having a defined store environment across all stores is essential. Using the same colours and materials across all stores, customers should have a consistent retail image throughout.

- **Flagship Store**

Flagship stores are high-end stores that are often created exclusively for major fashion firms. According to Pride, & Ferrell, 2015, these shops appeal to a specific customer. In Flagship stores, unique designs and limited-edition goods associated with a particular brand are shown. As a result, the retail environment should convey a unique picture of the establishment.

- **Department Store**

A department store is a retail outlet that offers an extensive range of products. According to Pride, & Ferrell, 2015, the products often include ready-to-wear clothing and accessories for adults and children, outdoor products and domestic textiles, small housewares, furniture, electrical appliances and accessories, and food regularly, among other things. Those products are divided and organized into divisions and departments under the supervision of managers and purchasers.

### **2.2.2 Store Atmospheric**

Differentiating products and services in retail stores helps to influence customers' purchasing decisions. Retailers are using various strategies and management to sell their products and brands to customers, impacting the customers' views of the store. Communicating with customers through environmental stimuli has long been an essential aspect of retailing (McGoldrick, 2002).

The retail environment is created expressly to transmit the business's identity and character (Berman & Evans, 2013). Giving depth to the atmospheric impressions and expressing the retailer's brand value, each part of the retailer's environment is unique from its competitors.

Store atmospherics have been described as "purchasing environments to induce certain emotional responses in the customer that improve their purchasing possibility" in an early description (Kotler, 1973, p.50). When it comes to retail stores, Kotler (1973), often known as the "father of atmospherics," said that the atmosphere in and around the store might trigger perceptions about the store and its identity.

The atmosphere of a store is the combination of the qualities and specifications of the store that impact customers' emotions—in other words, maybe considering that the atmosphere of a store impacts the customers' physical and psychological well-being. All of the store atmosphere aspects, such as sound, odour, and the retail's visual elements impact a customer's perception of the store (Baker, 2002). In some contexts, it has been argued that the store's atmosphere is more important than the products regarding purchasing decisions (Billings, 1990). Unfortunately, this is a significant concern in discourse since a while where there is a fact that despite the increased focus on store interior and the environmental arrangements of retailers, many retailers continue to ignore the true potential of forming a positive atmosphere as a marketing strategy (Markin, Charles, & Chem, 1976). However, as Donovan and Rossner (1982) indicated, a pleasant atmosphere encourages customers to spend more money than expected.

Additionally, in his research, Kotler (1973) clarifies that the creatives attempt to create the ideal environment, different customers perceive it individually. Therefore, a significant difference exists between the planned environment and the atmosphere that the customer perceives as being there. Therefore, many customers have different reactions to it.

In 1974, the first study on the store atmosphere was published, describing the environment in a store (Öncü, 2014). He differentiated between internal and external atmospherics in the shop.

Table 7: External and Internal Atmosphere factors of store classified by Öncü (2014)

<b>Internal Atmosphere</b>	<b>External Atmosphere</b>
Interior Design Of The Retail Store	The Entrance And Front Of The Retail Store
Store Layout And Organization	Architectural Design And Structure
Floor And Ceiling	Window Display

The impact of ambient store characteristics, both internally and externally, on customer purchasing behaviour has received significant attention in analyzing customer shopping behaviour (Milliman, 1982). Moreover, Ward, Bitner, and Barnes (1992) define store atmosphere as the physical environment, which is classified into an exterior and an interior environment. The external environment comprises the store's visibility from the parking lot, the entrance, and passing traffic. The inside environment includes the visibility of the retail selling area, which is part of the overall environment.

Customers are influenced by atmospheric elements via creating attention, expressing a brand image and quality of service, and triggering emotional reactions (Kotler, 1973; Kotler and Scheff, 1997). Sarel (1986) claimed that customers are interacting with ambient indicators at all stages of their visit and that these indicators may significantly impact the impression they create about a place (Mazursky and Jacoby, 1986). As a result, atmospherics may be seen as an expressive design of space that affects both the customers and the employees. This means that the most important aspects of a store's atmosphere include everything from the emotional and perceptual to the sensory, smell, and visual.

### 2.2.2.1 External Atmosphere

External of the store is the first thing to attract the customer. It gives the first clue about the retail brand identity and character. The external appearance of the retail store is the first attraction point for the customer perception. Öncü (2014) classified the external atmosphere factors as the following:

1. Architectural Structure of the Store
2. The Entrance and Front of the Store
3. Window Layout of the store
4. Parking Area of the Store

Table 8: The external atmospheric factors of the retails classified according to Öncü (2014)

<b>External Atmospheric Factors</b>	
Architectural Design And Structure	Customers get their initial impression of a shop's architecture from its outer structure and architecture. In addition, the store's architectural structure has a significant impact on customer behaviour and



	<p>convenience. Additionally, the store's architectural structure must be taken into account when it comes to safety. Customers' safety must be taken into consideration while designing the business.</p> <p>Exterior aesthetics and building maintenance take on additional significance when the store's name or brand name is clearly displayed on its exterior.</p>
<p>The Entrance And Front Of The Retail Store</p>	<p>The store's entrance and front layout are the first visual cues that tell customers about the brand and encourage them to enter.</p> <p>When customers enter or depart the business, the store entrance impacts the amount of traffic.</p> <p>The store's front layout is just as significant as the store's front door.</p> <p>At the store entrance, a sign informing customers about its items may encourage them to enter and draw in visitors.</p>
<p>Window Display</p>	<p>Customers must be taken into consideration while designing the store's design and window displays.</p> <p>Customers' purchases are strongly influenced by the store's design and display arrangement approaches, affecting and influencing many other issues, such as the length of time customers spend in the store.</p> <p>One of the primary stimuli that direct the customer's perception and impact their purchasing choice is the</p>

	<p>shop display and its interior arrangement (Erolu, 2004:59).</p> <p>The arrangement of the store's display has a significant impact on the purchasing choice of passers-by who are contemplating making a purchase but are unsure of where or what to choose (Arslan, 2004:80).</p>
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#### **2.2.2.2 Internal Atmosphere**

The internal atmosphere of the store is an essential factor as well as the external appearance. External appearance is the first impression of the store identity and image. It is an inviting factor for the customers. Therefore, the internal appearance of the store should be encouraging the customers' excitement relating to the store and impulse the buying decision.

According to Öncü (2014), each retail store has its own unique environment and atmosphere, which highlight the importance of the store atmosphere in shopping. Customer experience is essential when a customer enters a store after being attracted by the store's external environment. The customer should not be dissatisfied by the store's inside atmosphere. The internal atmosphere of the store must direct a client who has entered as a response of the attractiveness of the interior atmosphere to the products in the store and must stimulate the customer's motivation to make a purchasing behaviour. Furthermore, the internal atmosphere of the store must be consistent with the image and overall idea of the store. According to Baker and Grawel (1994), a well-designed store environment triggers customers' awareness of the product quality. In that point of view, internal atmosphere factors must be taken into account. Öncü (1994)

classified internal atmospheric factors of the store into three; Interior Design Of The Retail Store, Store Layout And Organization and Floor And Ceiling.

- **Interior Design Of The Retail Store**

For the retailer's design and style to be in harmony with the things on display. The design and format must reflect those of the rest of the store's products. In order to guarantee that customers feel more comfortable as soon as they enter the shop, the store's design and presentation must be adapted to their needs. A furniture store's interior design must be consistent with the things it sells.

- **Store Layout And Organization**

Easy movement and circulation are other essential factors for the internal atmosphere. The layout of the in-store area is essential in maintaining that customers may quickly move between products and sections while they are in the store. The length and comfort of the in-store corridor are very significant for the customers within the stores to display behaviours such as reaching the products, taking the products in their hands and perusing, feeling, or smelling them, and so on.

The layout of a store has been found to have a considerable influence on the perceptions and behaviours of customers, making it an essential element of the buying process. The design of the store layout, whether effective (or unsuccessful), may have an impact on strategy, time spent in the environment, and eventually purchases (Bitner 1992; Turley and Millian 2000; Burke 2006; Shankar et al. 2011; Lu and Seo 2015).

- **Floor And Ceiling**

Customers' perceptions of a store's floor and ceiling layouts might vary considerably. In addition, different variations of the materials and textures create a unique atmosphere in the store.

High and low ceilings may create an attractive or claustrophobic ambience in a store. Choosing light hues for the ceiling, such as white, grey, beige, champagne, or light pink produces an open environment and draws the customer's attention to the ceiling. Additionally, the ceiling space includes lighting and air conditioning fixtures. By exposing them or concealing them, the business maintains a fashionable appearance (Arslan, 2004)

### **2.2.3 Atmospheric Factors of Retail Store**

A store's environment should be divided into categories in order to better understand the variables that attract customers. Unfortunately, when it comes to distinguish the aspects of a retail business, there is no single and universal strategy to use. According to Kotler (1973–1974), a person's perception of an environment's atmosphere depends on the sensory channels through which the atmosphere is perceived. Visual, audible and tactile stimuli are all ways a person in a retail environment perceives the atmosphere. Therefore, Table 9 indicates the variety of ways to classify a store's atmosphere.

Table 9: Classification Of Store's Atmospheric Dimensions Adapted From El-Murad, Jaafar & Olahut, Meda & Plaias, Ioan. (2012)

<b>Classification of Store's Atmospheric dimensions</b>		
<b>Author</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Atmospheric dimensions</b>
Kotler	1973-1974	Four dimensions: visual; aural; tactile; olfactory
Baker	(1986;1994)	Three dimensions: ambient; design; social
Bitner	(1992)	Three dimensions: ambient conditions; spatial layout and functionality; signs, symbols, and artefact
Berman and Evans	1995	Four dimensions: exterior; genral interior; store layout; interior displays
D'Astous	2000	Three dimensions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• irritant ambient factors;</li> <li>• irritant design factors;</li> <li>• irritant social factors</li> </ul>

Baker (1994) provides a comprehensive framework for atmospheric aspects, which refers to the effect of the shop environment on quality implications and the perception of the store. Aspects of the physical retail setting define atmospheric dimensions as:

- Ambient Factors
- Design Factors
- Social Factors

Table 10: Factors that define the store Atmospheric Adapted from Baker (1987)

<b>Factors that define the store Atmospheric</b>		
Ambient Factors	Conditions that occur in the background of user present perception.	Air Quality - Temperature - Humidity - Circulation/Ventilation Noise (level/Pitch) Scent Cleanliness
Design Factors	Stimuli are always on user attention.	Aesthetic Architecture, Colour, Style Materials, Décor Scale, Shape Texture, Pattern Functional Layout Ergonomic Signage Accessories
Social Factors	People in the environment	Audience (Other Customers) Number, Appearance, Behavior Service Personnel Number, Appearance Behavior

### 2.2.3.1 Ambient Factors

The retailers with a strong sense of excitement and awareness are more important to stimulate customers to purchase behaviours at that setting. Moreover, Sarel (1986) argued that customers engage with ambient indicators during their visit and these indicators might have a significant impact on the impression that customers experience about retail (Mazursky and Jacoby, 1986).

Ambient factors are an essential aspect of the store environment. They are "nonvisual factors" that might be defined as "background conditions" ( Baker, 1998). Wakefield and Baker (1998) claimed that the ambient factors are generally intangible characteristics of retail. Users cannot directly notice factors such as sound, light,

temperature, and odour but these may influence human senses (Mirabi & Samiey, 2015).

According to Kotler (1973 – 1974), ambient factors are essential for determining the store atmosphere. Ambient factors have a strong relationship with the human senses and are great triggers for stimulation;

- Sight – colour, size, shape
- Smell – Odour, parfume
- Sound – music, volume
- Touch – temperature, softness, hardness

Levy and Weitz (2009) emphasize that these senses are influenced by the factors and when they come together, they create an intense atmosphere for the store and encourage the customer's motivation to spend longer time in the store and increase the probability of impulse purchasing.

D'Astous (2000), claims that the design of the store environment has a strong influence on customers behaviour. Ambient factors are the background conditions, but they are essential for the store environment and help influence stimulation. The variables of the factors affect the customer perception and give a pleasant store atmosphere.

### **2.2.3.2 Design Factors**

Retail is the place where the brand interacts and connects with the customer. Nowadays, retail identity works are often expressed in the store's interior design, where the product is displayed to the customer. However, Heodoridis & Chatzipanagiotou (2009) illustrates that the experience of the store environment is created by including some visual elements of the physical store environment, such as colours and display

elements. Therefore visual quality elements are considered as a factor of the store environment that affect the buyer's behaviour, which is also referred to elements of visual merchandise.

Design factors influence customers' perceptions of product quality and pricing as well as their impression of the retailer's service (Grewal and Baker, 1994). Therefore, when it comes to customer views of product value, price, and the retailer's service, it must be noted that the design factors have an essential role (Grewal and Baker, 1994).

The retail area of a well-designed store should have sufficient spaces, welcoming exhibits, and attractive signage and design. In order to attract customers, a store's design must be eye-catching enough to persuade customers to buy there rather than another, as they are the ones who create the store's image and reputation (Hasty, & Reardon, 1997). Therefore, the retail area of a well-designed store should have appropriate spaces, appealing exhibits, and attractive signage and design.

Stores must concentrate on the customer since they build the entire image and feedback of the retailer. Therefore, its design must be appealing enough to persuade customers for shopping there rather than at a competitor's site (Hasty & Reardon, 1997).

Customers are easily stimulated if the interior design appeals to them. As soon as a customer enters the internal environment, they are influenced by everything from the layout of the store's hallways to the width of store's corridors to the store's lighting and even the sight of a restroom or a sitting area. Levy and Weitz (2007) state that retailers must try to provide items that meet the customer's needs and design stores to persuade customers to purchase more products than they planned. Thus, the store layout is a



significant factor influencing customer behaviour and a significant element in creating a store image. Well-designed arrangements are essential because they significantly impact in-store circulation patterns, retail atmosphere, purchasing behaviour, and efficiency (Vrechopoulos et al., 2004). On the other hand, store signage plays an important function in expressing brand targets and competitive positioning. Customers should be able to see visual communication (signage) within seconds of entering the store; leading them through different store parts. Store signage is also a convenient technique that builds customer trust and encourages them to purchase there (Niazi et al., 2015). In addition, in-store displays inspire customers to participate in unplanned shopping.

Table 11: Social Factors Adapted from Baker (1988)

<b>Design Factors of the Atmosphere</b>	
<b>Colour</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create effect on whole atmosphere</li> <li>- Induce feelings and emotions</li> <li>- Affects visual feelings</li> <li>- Create visual impression</li> <li>- Give positive/negative feeling</li> </ul>
<b>Display and Layout</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Functional elements</li> <li>- Should be well considered</li> <li>- Create impulsive purchase</li> </ul>
<b>Style and Aesthetic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Aesthetic factors</li> <li>- Part of whole design</li> <li>- Subjective element</li> <li>- Changes rapidly</li> </ul>

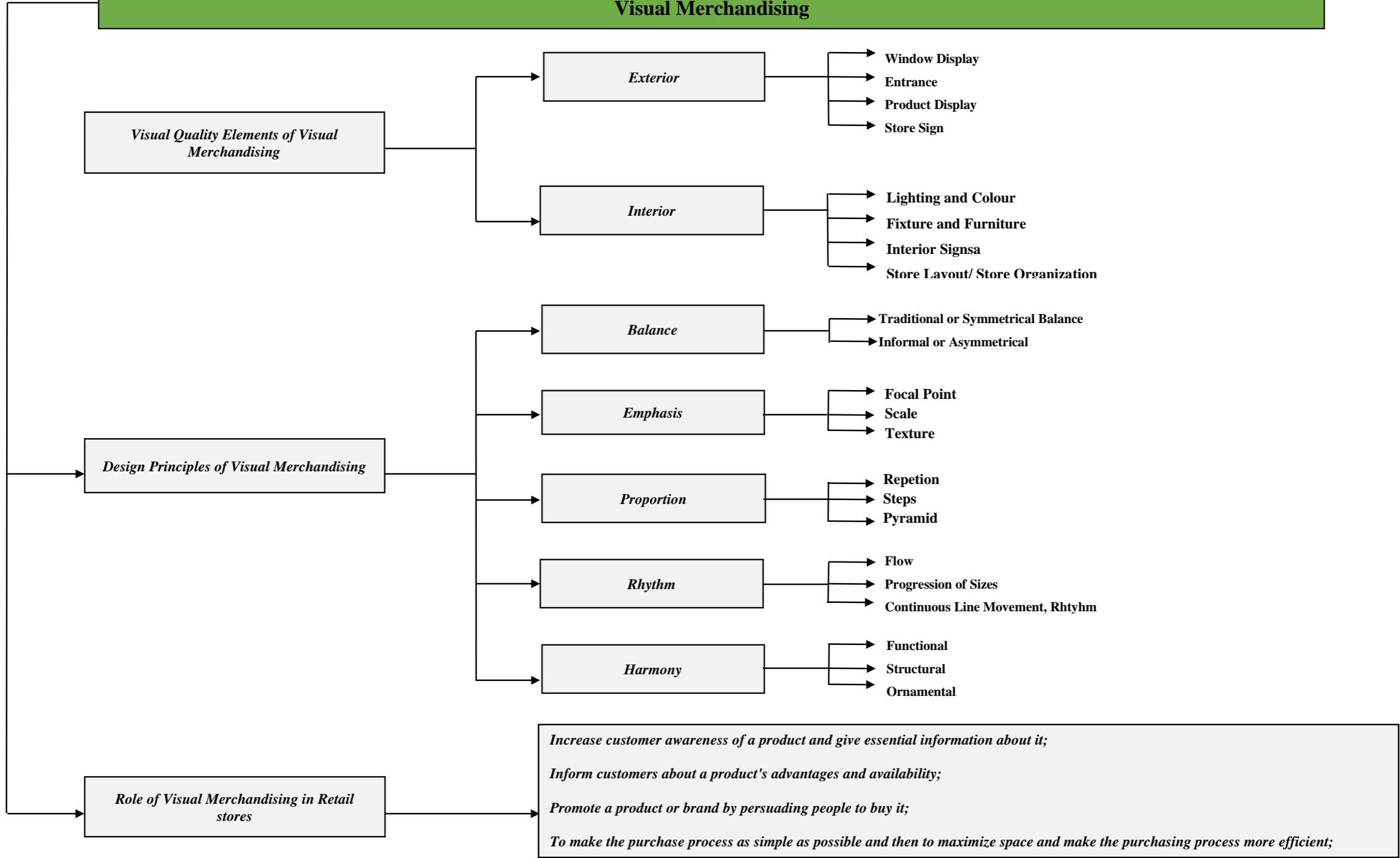
The design should give a positive impression to the customer. The customer should leave the store feeling pleased and satisfied, which is a crucial component.

### **2.3 Summary of the Chapter**

Chapter two reviewed the concepts of visual merchandising and retail store in depth (Figure 21). Firstly, the concept of visual merchandising was explored. It is important to understand visual merchandising through the use of its elements and principles of design in order to explore the role visual merchandising own in a retail store environment. Accordingly, it has been achieved that some of the visual merchandising elements such as colour and texture, lighting, furniture and layout has a significant impact on customers stimulation. Then, retail store issue explored further in order to understand what are the types of retail stores and how environmental factors of retail stores influence customers behaviour. Accordingly, it has been achieved that internal store atmosperic and exterior store atmospheric plays a triggering role in customers perception and create a first impression related with the store and impulse the stimulation. In the following chapter concept of stimulation is reviewed further in order to understand how it occurs and how visual merchandising and store atmospherics would be related to act as a stimulant and as a triggering factor to impulse buying.

**CHAPTER 2**  
**Concept Of Visual Merchandising Elements and Visual Quality Elements Of The Retail Store**

**Visual Merchandising**



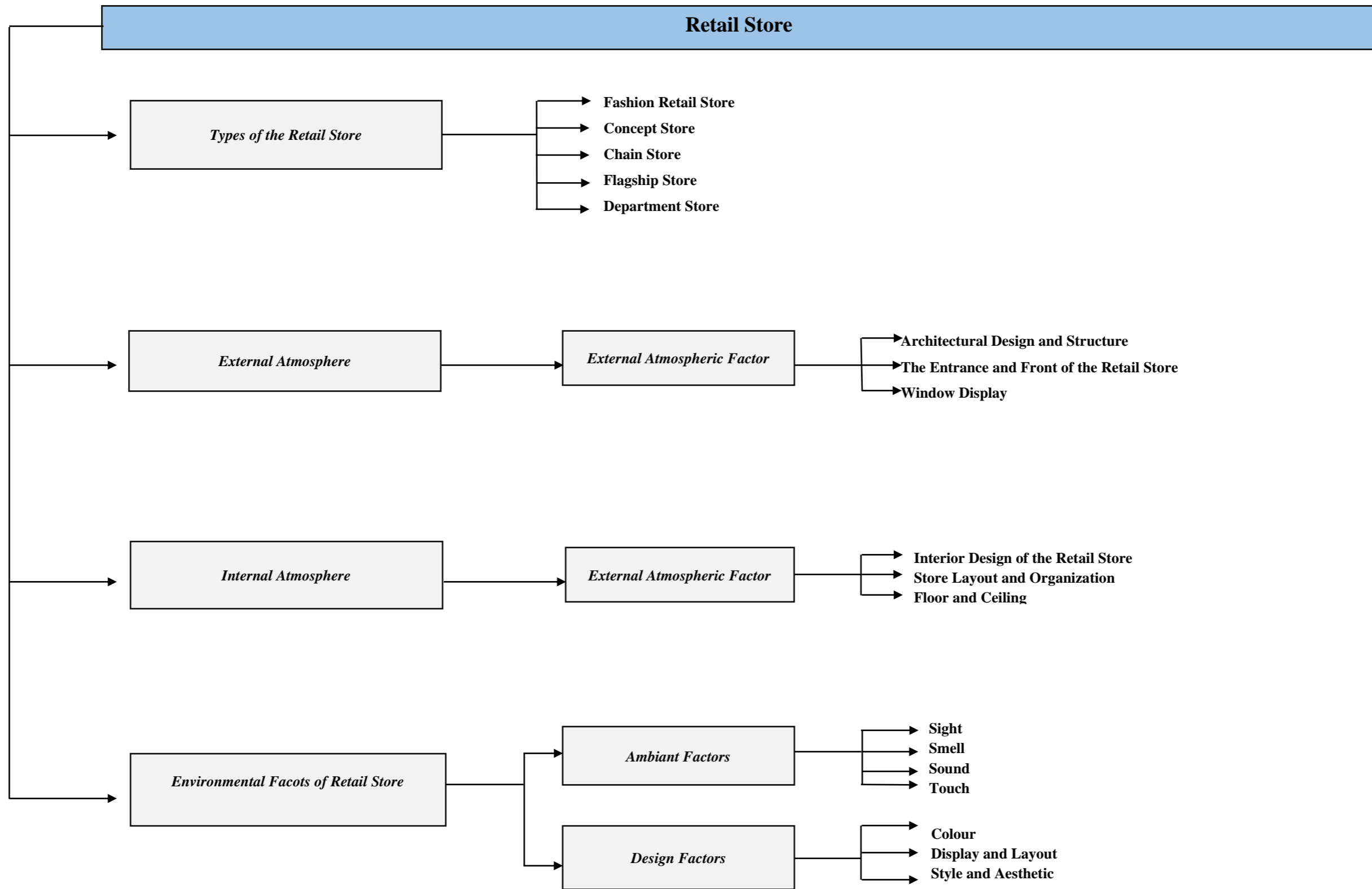


Figure 10: Summary of the Chapter 2 (By the Author)

## Chapter 3

# THE ROLE OF STIMULATION IN IMPULSE PURCHASING

This chapter concentrates on stimulation and impulsive purchase. It considers triggering factors of the stimulation that lead the customers to impulse purchasing.

Figure 11 illustrates the chapter's significant headings.

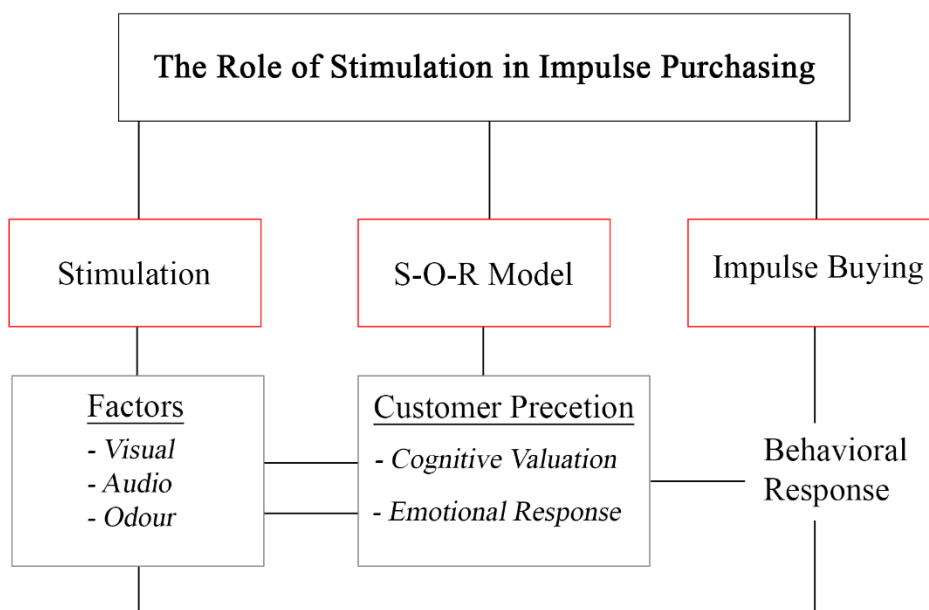


Figure 11: Summary of Chapter 3 (By the Author)

### **3.1 Stimulation**

Stimulation can be defined as "to function as a physiological stimulus to" or "excite to activity or growth or greater activity" Stimulation n.d. In *Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary (2020)*.

Our lives shaped by the behaviour and space. The human behaviour and psychology directly attracted by the design of the spaces (Lawson, 2001). According to Lawson (2001), human behaviour is instantly effected by the creation of the atmosphere. Also, feelings secure and stable effects is also influenced by the space. The users different responses and requirements are decided by the spaces vital design features.

According to Lawson (2001), space can directly control and shape our emotions. While shaping or creating, designers should consider emotions, behaviours, and needs of the users. For instance, what type of space user wants, what he/she wants to feel, and how it affects his/her psychological and physical well-being is noteworthy. Stimulation issues play a significant role in the space atmosphere. And thus it triggered by a space factor and might control the users' behaviour.

### **3.2 The S-O-R Model**

Currently, retail companies are developing new strategies and tools, which is effective and innovative as the initial stimulating factor on the shopping behaviour of customers. In the retail environment, the customers buying decisions are triggered negatively when they recognize that their needs were not satisfied. Therefore, the decision to visit a specific store, how much time to spend inside, and whether or not to purchase is significantly affected by the shopping environment and its effect on customers' emotions, especially while shopping is for leisure.



retail shop designs that create a retail environment (Rom et al. 1976; Markin, Lillis, & Narayana, 1976). According to Donovan et al. (1982), customers' emotions impact purchasing decisions.

### **3.3 Factors that Affect the Stimulation**

Shopping is a kind of leisure for people. People sometimes go shopping for their needs or do it as a fun activity. Therefore, retail is vital occasion for people for socializing. Das (2016) explains that appearance and feel may impact the customer's mood. Therefore, maintaining a store's physical and psychological environment is essential for ensuring a positive experience. Among these factors, the type of music that customers listen to while they are in the store, how clean it is, the layout of the retail operation, how accessible it is, and the store's odour are the effective ones. These aspects are designed to stimulate customers' senses and eventually boost their moods and feelings.

#### **3.3.1 Visual Quality**

When customers enter the store before purchasing, they explore the store environment. Visual quality elements play an essential role in-store environments. These elements are the first triggering issues for the stimulation.

According to Hsiao (2016), a store with various products is considered appealing. When alternatives surround customers, they often experience satisfaction and enthusiasm. Furthermore, when such things are merchandised creatively and logically, customers' emotions and feelings may improve.

Retail stores should encourage the customers to inspire their emotional well-being and encourage them to do shopping. In addition, creating a pleasant store environment is a



fundamental reason for the retailers. Therefore, retailers should consider visual quality elements such as colour, window display, lighting or texture.

### **3.3.2 Sound**

The background music developed in the 1930s. They believed that music has an inspirational role for the customers to stay in-store (Lindberg, 2017). When customers enter the store, background tempo encourages them to stay more and spend money. Background music enhances store ambience, which impacts consumers' feelings and emotions. Customers differ on the ideal amount of sound and the music that should be played in a store. Therefore, music may positively or negatively impact the ambience and eventually the customers' purchasing behaviour.

### **3.3.3 Odour**

Retailers have an advantage over other senses because they can use scent to make a customer "see" or "hear" a stimulus, even though the customer ignores it. Scents are perceived even when the customer does not pay attention (Ward, Davies, & Kooijman, 2007). Because there is no way to avoid smelling or filter out the odour, knowledge of the smell constantly triggers emotional responses (Lindstrom, 2008).

The odour itself is marketing. For the customers, there is no way to avoid the smell of the space. Smell of the space attracts people, take their attention and trigger the stimulation. It is different from traditional stimulation. It has a natural attraction to the customer's mind and memory. Because of the smell factor, people can recognize the store or brand identity quickly.

## **3.4 Impulse Buying**

Impulse Buying is a crucial strategical tool for the retail business. It is an unplanned purchase action. The first researcher about the subject was Applebaum (1951), and he

has stated that when the customers come to the store, they instantly stimulate the retail atmosphere. Besides, Clover (1951) mentions the customers shopping behaviour as an unplanned action which start before entering the retail.

According to Kollat and Willet (1967:21), impulsive purchasing is characterized as an unexpected purchase that happens in a retail atmosphere that reminds customers of their buying requirements. Therefore, the products that meet these requirements are not included in the prior evaluation. Hausman (2000) point out that several products are sold each year because of impulsive purchases, which are sophisticated and diverse.

According to Hausman (2000, p.405):

"Customers used shopping to meet several needs, not only their need for the things they purchase. In other words, shopping itself fulfils wants, and the items purchased during these visits are considered impulsive purchases. Also, customers may acquire unexpected things on shopping expeditions, but once they view the object, they understand it fits a certain need. Thus, consumers may utilize shopping experiences and follow impulsive purchases to meet requirements that do not fit into economic value theories."

People can influence everything from their surroundings. Their emotions and feeling have an essential role in their decisions. The impulse buying behaviour influences several factors from the surrounding, such as the shopping environment, their culture, personal needs, etc. In addition, impulse purchasing can affect different factors such as product display, use of colour, lighting arrangement. Hausman (2000), have expanded his investigations into how consumers' demographic and lifestyle characteristics interact with their susceptibility to impulse buying to understand better how merchandising stimuli such as retail store shelves position and shelf space

influence impulse buying. Other studies have looked at the types of situations in which people buy things in the heat of the moment without any prior planning (Rook, 1987).

According to Youn, S., & Faber, R. J. (2000), there are two categories of elements that influence impulsive purchase behaviour. These elements are: shopper-related factors, which are named as 'internal factors' and environmental factors, marketer-controlled factors, or sensory inputs emerging from marketing systems which are named as 'external factors'.

### 3.4.1 External Factors

The retail interior environment has stimulation factors, resulting in impulse buying behaviour the stimuli like product characteristics, shelf organization or a display influenced by the customer. On the other hand, external factors of impulse buying are certain stimuli with related changeableness and store environment. Figure 14 illustrates the factors that affect impulse buying behaviour.

Table 12: External Factors for Impulse Buying ( Adapted from Salih, N. (2019))

<b>External Factors For Impulse Buying</b>	
<i>Store Environment</i>	Store Layout Window Display Store Atmospheric
<i>Product Characteristics</i>	Brand and Identity Type of Product Product Display and Organization
<i>Sign and Props</i>	Commercial

### 3.4.2 Internal Factors

A person's personality is the essential aspect in determining whether or not he or she is sensitive to impulsive purchases. When it comes to impulsive purchasing, several aspects occur, including the unconscious psychological signals and features. Personality qualities, internal indicators including emotional states, a judgment of impulse purchasing activity, and demographic variables all play a role in determining a customer's level of the tendency of stimulating level (Kacen and Lee, 2002). People may be classified as having an affective state based on their emotional state, mood, and self-perception (Youn, 2000). Customers can be impulsive or non-impulsive, depending on how they perceive internal stimuli.

The internal factors of impulse buying are shown in Table 13. Internal factors stimulate the customer's perception and lead them to do unplanned shopping

Table 13: Internal Factors for Impulse Buying ( Adapted from Salih, N. (2019))

<b>Internal Factors for Impulse Buying</b>	
<b><i>Customer Characteristic</i></b>	Gender Age Mood Shopping Satisfaction
<b><i>In-Store Browsing</i></b>	Generally, do more unplanned shopping when the planned shopping and instantly affect the stimulus of the store
<b><i>The Presence of Others</i></b>	People tend to go shopping for socializing. Therefore, if they see another customer, they tend to do unplanned shopping

### **3.5 Summary of the Chapter**

As a result of an overview of the concept of stimulation; it has been achieved that sound and smell considerably impact customers' perception and it triggers the stimulation directly. Moreover the role of internal and external factors of the retail store were found as the most significant and effective ones on the customers' perception. In due course, in the further section of this study, effect of sound and smell on customers' perception and impact of internal and external factors of the retail stores on customers perception as the stimulants in addition to visual merchandising factors is explored in a particular type of a retail store.

## Chapter 4

# INVESTIGATING THE STIMULATING ROLE OF VISUAL MERCHANDISING AND STORE INDOOR ATMOSPHERICS ON CUSTOMER SHOPPING BEHAVIOUR

This chapter explores the effects of visual merchandising as a stimulating factor on the customers' shopping behaviour. Besides, it also aims to quest and explore the role of consistency and inconsistency between visual merchandising and interior atmosphere features on the customers' satisfaction in a retail store from their viewpoint with a specific focus on women and man (mix) clothing stores.

Accordingly, the thesis intends to quest the impact of the principles of visual expression as a stimulating factor on the shopping behaviour of customers. In this respect, a questionnaire was developed by taking clues from the literature review which has provided a thorough theoretical background to the development of the survey. This questionnaire survey aimed to find answer to the stated research question which was: "*How can visual quality elements be articulated for a responsive interior design solution in order to stimulate the perception of the users and thus direct them to access and impulse buying?*"

In the following part of this chapter, initially, the development of the questionnaire survey as the primary data collection tool/method is explored in detail. The survey has focused on three different matters. Accordingly,

- Firstly, it intends to quest the impact of external atmospherics and types/elements of visual merchandising as a triggering factor on the shopping behaviour to take attention of the customers.
- Secondly, the focus was on the quest of indoor atmospherics' role besides the pursuit of consistency or inconsistency of external visual merchandising elements as the stimulating factor to user perception
- And thirdly, it quests how these fields influence the effect of the stimulus on the purchasing behaviour of impulses.

And the questionnaire survey was developed in accordance with the stated three main viewpoints.

#### **4.1 Development and Implementation of Data Collection Tool: Questionnaire Survey**

The questionnaire survey was formed of 54 questions divided into four different sections. The first part includes closed-ended questions about the respondent. In the first part of the survey, demographic information of the participants such as their age range, education level, and occupation have collected.

The second part of the questionnaire survey was formed of 11 questions that comprised close-ended questions about the respondent's awareness of visual merchandising and stores atmospherics. This part aims to explore the effect of interior and exterior atmospheric on customers perception. The third part of the questionnaire was divided into 4 sections, and a total of 32 questions were asked. This section aimed to gather

respondents opinions about the visual quality elements that compose visual merchandising and store atmospherics such as colour, lighting, furniture and fixtures layout, and smell and sound. Measurement was carried out with a Likert scale to gather respondents' opinions ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”. Finally, the last part consists of the Likert scale to gather respondents' views about the stimulating effect of visual quality elements on users' decision to access and its role to impulse buying. That part of the questionnaire is divided into two by asking the influence of the exterior atmospheric and the influence of the interior atmospheric on users perception. Questionnaire survey sample could be seen as Appendix A. The Figure below presents the development stages and the outline of the questionnaire survey (see Figure 14).



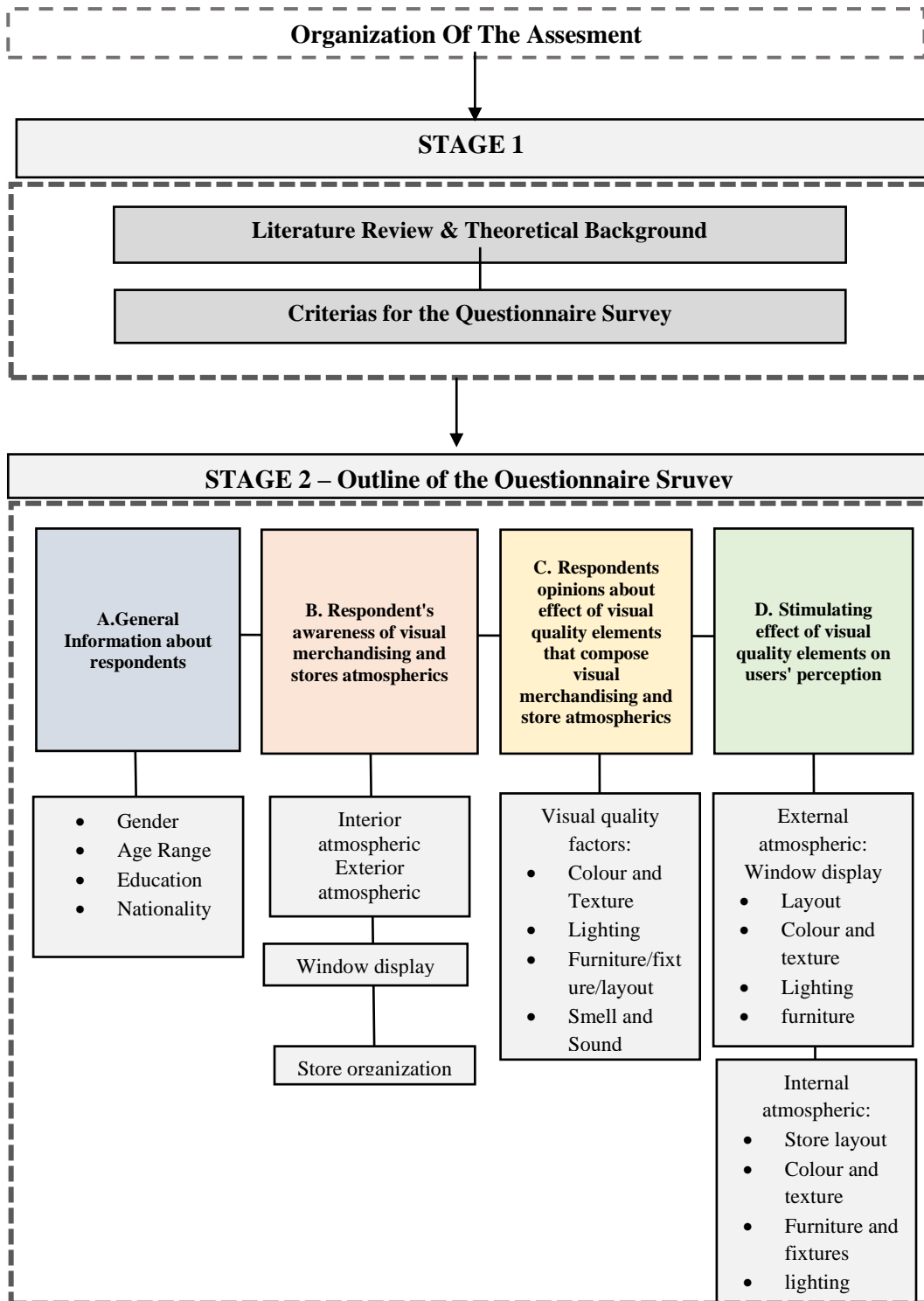


Figure 14: Organization of the Assesment ( By the Author)

### **Implementation process:**

First of all, the questionnaire survey was designed according to the criteria that are mentioned above. It was designed bilingual as English and Turkish before being submitted to the approval of Architecture Subcommittee and then to Research and Publication Ethics Board of EMU before implementing it. Approval of the board was achieved in January, 2021 (see Appendix B). Questionnaire Survey was implemented via the Google Forms digital platform for two months between March, 2021 and April, 2021. Survey was responded by one hundred forty-seven (147) participants. There were no limitations on location/place/participants for the questionnaire survey. Participants will voluntarily participate in the questionnaire and were chosen by a random sampling method. There was an aim to gather opinions of people with a variety of backgrounds in order to understand whether differences in age, gender and the educational background would reveal any similarity or difference in the research aims and objectives.

The people who answered the questionnaire were categorized according to 15-25, 25-35, 35-45, 45-55 and over 55. Occupation and nationality was queried by an open-ended questions.

## **4.2 Questioning the Stimulating Role of Visual Merchandising and Store Indoor Atmosphere on Customer Shopping Behaviour**

### **4.2.1 General Information About Respondent**

As a result of a random sampling, it has been revealed that the majority of the respondents who answered the questionnaire were between 18-25 (42.9%) and 25-35 (29.29%). Also, most of the respondents were female (81.6%), and the men were 27 people out of 147 (Figure 15). There is a wide range of occupations such as teachers,

managers, architects, interior architects, doctors, singers, lawyers, academicians, accountants, sales managers, even biologists. Moreover, there are seven different nationalities: British, Cypriot, Syrian, Egyptian, Turkish, Azerbaijanian, and American, who have responded to the questionnaire.

The people who answered the questionnaire were divided into five categories depending on their level of education: those high school, bachelors, masters, PhDs and others (Figure 16). According to the results, most of the people who took part in this questionnaire had degrees ranging from bachelors to masters. There were just two people with PhD. (Figure 16).

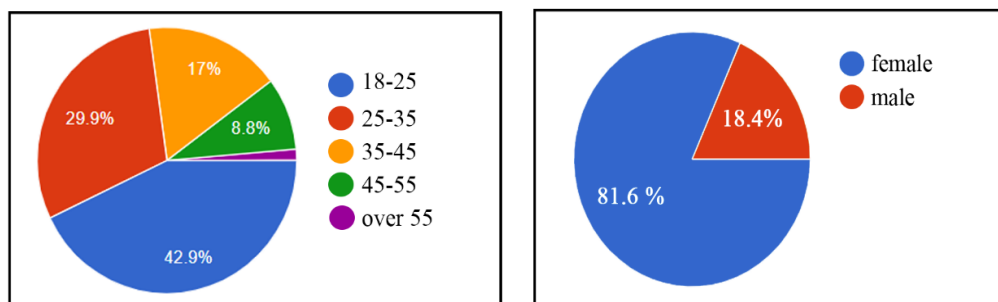


Figure 15: General information - age ranging and gender of the respondent

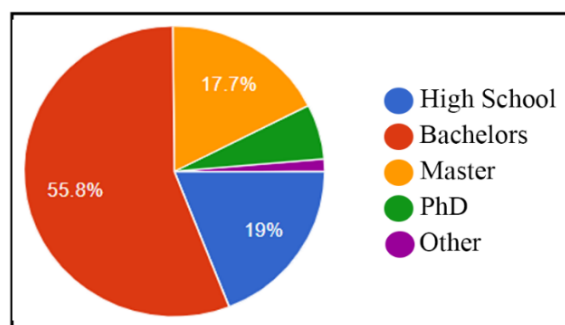


Figure 16: Education level of the respondents

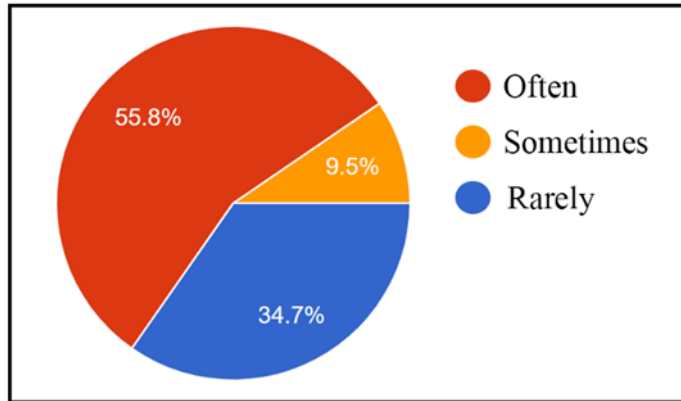


Table 14: Results of the presence of the respondent in the physical store.

Moreover, according to questionnaire survey 55.8% of people has stated that they often visit the retail stores and do shopping. Only 34.7% of people rarely visit the stores and do shopping (Figure 17).

#### 4.2.2 Awareness of Respondents About Concepts of Visual Merchandising and Store Atmospheric

Firstly, prior to a detailed investigation this research intended to learn the level of awareness about the subject of "*visual merchandising*". It has been achieved that the most of the people (81%) are aware of visual merchandising yet only 19% were ignorant ( Figure 18).

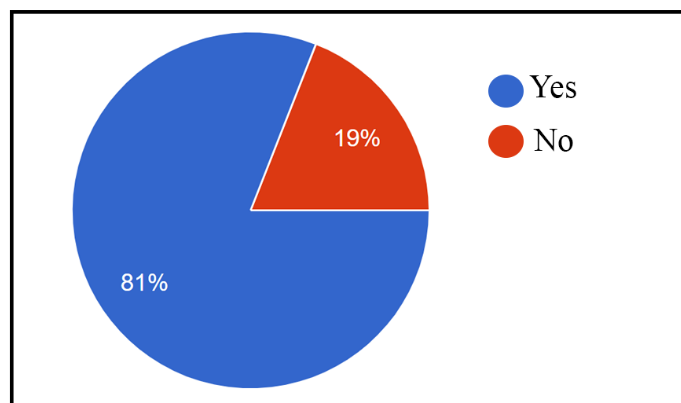


Figure 17: Awareness of respondent about visual merchandising

According to the result of the previous question, they were also asked if the unique design of the visual merchandising did take their attention and if it affects their shopping decision or not. Therefore, the result shows that, for most people, visual merchandising is effective on taking their attention besides it affects their shopping decision at the same time (Figure 19).

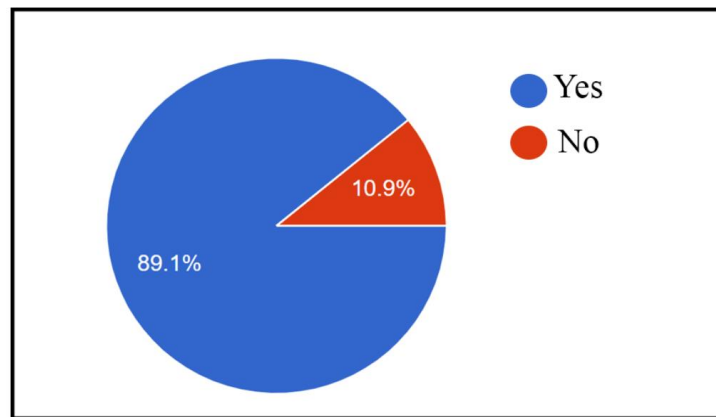


Figure 18: Shows the percentages of the visual merchandising affect the respondents and their shopping decision

The results show that most people are attracted by visual merchandising and their responds revealed that the most effective visual quality element is colour and then followed by the texture, lighting, furniture/fixture or props/signs (Figure 20).

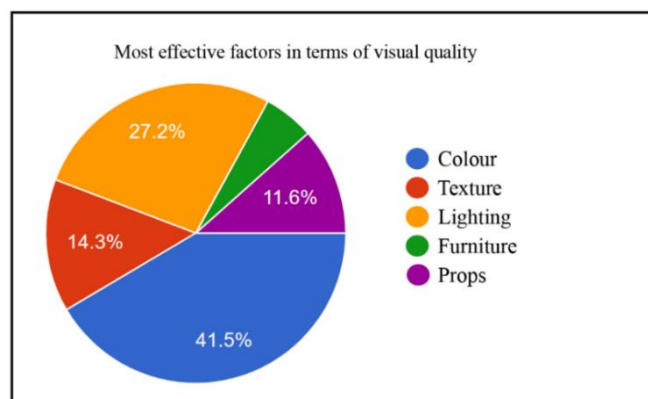


Figure 19: Results of the most influential factors in terms of visual quality results of the respondents

As it has been shown in the Figure 20, most of the participants are attracted by colour and lighting factors more than the other visual factors. Following that, it is achieved that the texture also has a significant part in taking attention and in attracting customers. Besides, props and signs were identified as the other effective visual quality aspects. However, it has been determined that participants are not interested in the furniture/fixture as the affecting factor for visual merchandising.

Furthermore, in the following stage of the survey, the participants were asked to choose one among the given four images of various window displays by considering the most effective one that takes their attention. These images were determined according to the use of visual design elements including colour, texture, lighting, furniture, placement in the window display and product variety.



Figure 20: Selected images for the questionnaire survey part B

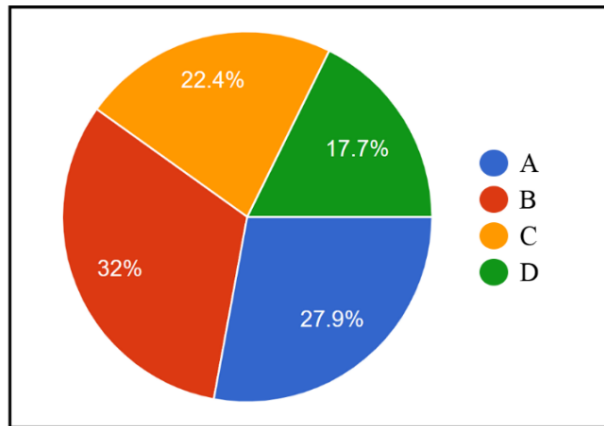


Figure 21: Results of the most effective window display design

As it can be seen from Figure 24, the result of the survey put forward that out of the 147 respondent, 47 respondents choose picture B, which has an achromatic colour scheme and creates contrast with colour design where the product is highlighted/emphasized. The second preferred one was picture A; 41 people selected picture A, which featured the colour factor and has a simpler layout arrangement for the window display. Picture D was the least selected (only by 26 people), which has a more complex layout arrangement with a mixture of different colours than the other three. Results were indicated that the respondents are more interested in the highlighted product display that has less complex colour schemes and texture combinations.

Following the quest of the visual merchandising factors and their effective role on the customers perception; the respondents were asked if they were aware of the visual quality factors effective on the store's interior atmospherics creation and the visual quality. Similarly, most of the respondents with their responses has shown an

awareness and agreed that visual quality factors significantly are interrelated to the store's internal atmosphere.

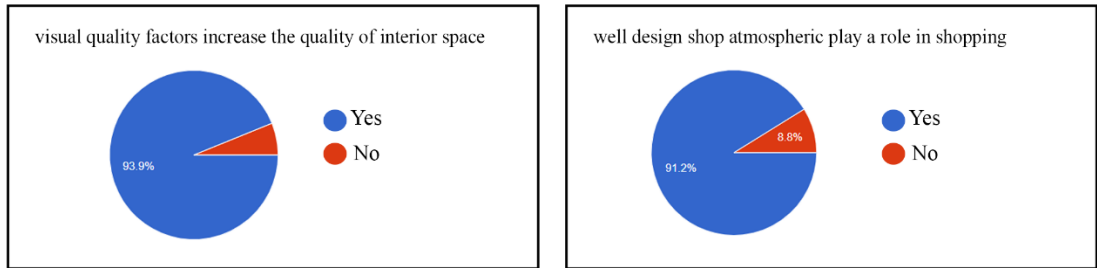


Figure 22: Effect of visual quality factors on respondents shopping behaviour

Besides, they were also asked to choose the most effective key elements which attract and encourage them to do unplanned shopping (impulse purchase) in the retail store. Based on the results (see Figure 26), it is noticed that most of the respondents choose store layout as the most important key element for their unplanned shopping activity within a retail store. In addition, 48.3% of them also select the store atmospherics as the key factor that attracts them. However, only 4.8% of people take exterior atmospherics into consideration.

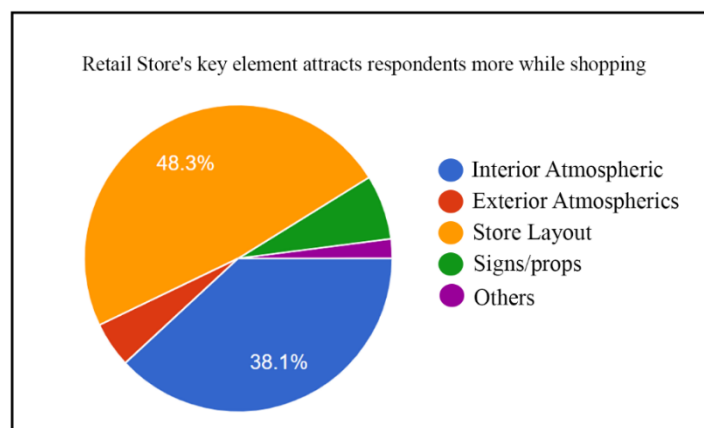


Figure 23: Results of the most attractive key elements for the retail store



Survey intends to achieve comprehensive results in order to determine which of the stated factors are the main effective ones by asking respondents to evaluate the effective factors which take their attention as a part of interior atmospheric (by rating them from the most effective to the least effective). Accordingly, the factors that they were asked to rate was colourful-colourless, light-dark, simple-complicated, large scale-small scale, positive smell effect-negative smell effect and soft music-loud music.

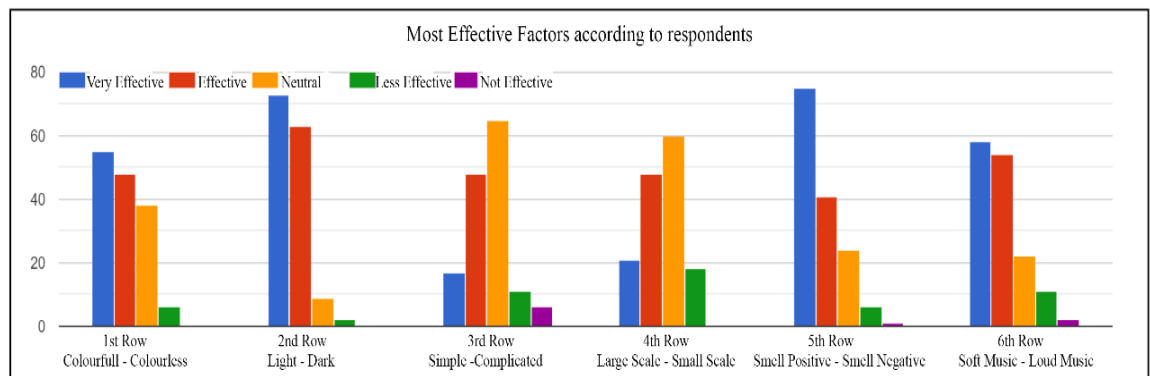


Figure 24: Evaluation results of the most influential factors according to respondents

Therefore, it has been revealed that the colour, light and smell are the most impressive factors due to noticeable results. It should be noted that results of the respondents present that there is a preference of a colourful atmosphere rather than a colourless one. On the other hand, 73 people chose light as a very effective factor of in-store atmosphere rather than a dark atmosphere. Furthermore, a considerable amount of the respondents (80%) have marked that positive smell is a very effective factor and has a significant impact on people stimuli.

On the other hand, results put forward that differences or characteristics of layout as simple to complicated is not an initial concern for them. On the other hand, it was

noticed that soft music within the atmosphere is one of the influential factors due to the fact that only two people out of 147 marked that the music is not a significant factor.

#### **4.2.3 Opinions About The Effect of Visual Quality Elements on Visual Merchandising and Store Atmospherics**

In the third part of the survey questionnaire, the participants were asked for their opinions about the visual quality elements of visual merchandising and the atmosphere of the store.

The purpose of this section is to measure the sensitivity of the participants about visual merchandising and to observe how the visual quality elements of merchandising and the store atmosphere affect the users' stimulation and how much they trigger the sense of buying.

Therefore, lighting, colour and texture, window display, layout, sound and odour are the visual quality elements addressed in this part of the questionnaire. Thus, in this section, the questions were asked to evaluate the effect of visual design factors in the window display and in-store design on respondents stimuli by rating them as the most effective to the least effective ( rate from 5 - 1: most - least). Accordingly, the effect of the above-mentioned visual quality elements in accordance with the respondents' ratings is explained one by one in the following.

##### **Lighting**

Effect of using bright and bold light at retail window display on the customers' stimuli was asked initially. According to the results, it has been obtained that the majority of

the respondent reflect a positive response to the use of bright and bold lights and thought that these are greatly impressing factors (Table 14).

On the other hand, answers illustrate that 22.4% of people were affected by exaggerated lighting design on the window display; however, at the same time, equally %22.4 of people are not affected. It could be said that this type of lighting design can not be taken as a concern on people's perception (Table 14).

Moreover, 27.9% of people are neutral for exaggerated lighting design on the window display. On the other hand, the quest of using dim light has revealed that 20.4% of people did not prefer the dim light on the window display, and there are only a few people (7.5%) who prefer dim light (Table 14).

Additionally, in the course of questioning the role of lighting in the retail store's interior, firstly, they were asked to state whether brighter task lighting in the interior atmosphere affects their shopping mode. Results revealed that the respondents strongly agree that more vivid task lighting positively influences their shopping mode. Furthermore, only a few people disagree (Table 14).

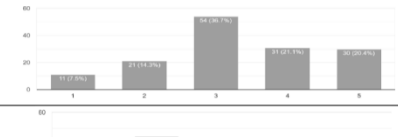
In addition, 30.6% of people prefer bright light in the interior atmosphere due to its role in increasing the comfort level and respondents' well-being in-store. 7.5% of people felt uncomfortable with the bright light in-store atmosphere (Table 14).

In turn, the result of the following question presents that only 28 people did prefer dim light on the interior of the retail store, but 29 people disagree since dim light is not a proper solution for highlighting the object and not taking their attention (Table 14).

Furthermore, additional results show that most respondents (31.6%) strongly agree that illumination level in the shelf and hanger areas is also another essential factor for their shopping mood (Table 14). This is because the illumination level in these areas help them to detect the products quickly and trigger instant stimuli.

Additionally, at the end of questioning the role of the lighting factor, it was asked to rate if the lighting factors are one of the key elements on respondent satisfaction level and whether is an essential factor that stimulates their attraction level. Survey results have revealed that the majority of the respondents thought; it was a critical stimulation factor during their visit to the retail store. It helped them pursue products quickly and increase during their visit to the retail store. It helped them pursue products quickly and increase their comfort level and well being in-store (Table 14).

Table 15: Results of the Lighting Factor on Visual Merchandising and Store Atmospheric ( By the Author)

Effect Of The Ligting Elements Factor On Visual Merchandising And Store Atmospherics						
Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Table
Bright and bold lights in window shop attraction	39%	24.5%	15%	15%	6.1%	
Exaggerated lighting design in the window shop	15.6%	22.4%	27.9%	22.4%	1.6%	
Use of dim lighting design in the window shop	7.5%	14.3%	36.7%	21.1%	20.4%	
The brighter task light in-store atmosphere has a positive effect on respondents'	17%	30.6%	26.5%	18.4%	7.5%	
The comfort level of the brighter task light in-store atmosphere	41.5%	25.2%	19%	6.8%	7.5%	
Dim accent light in-store atmosphere determine the quality of the items	46.3%	27.9%	14.3%	4.1%	7.5%	
The illumination level in the shelf and hanger	31.3%	19%	19%	8.2%	6.8%	
The rate of the lighting factor on respondents satisfaction level and stimulation level	12.9%	19%	29.9%	19.7%	18.4%	

### Colour and Texture

The second part of the visual quality elements of visual merchandising and store atmospherics was the quest for the colour and texture factors. Most of the respondents agree that usage of the colour increases the quality of the visual merchandising and the store atmospheric (Table 15). Also, most of the respondents mentioned that a mixture of colours in the window shop helped to generate complements and harmonies in pallets, and this takes attraction (Table 15).

Furthermore, it has been achieved that generally, people recognize the product in the window display with soft colours. According to 86% of the respondents, using soft colours on window displays helps them to perceive the products better (Table 15) although they mentioned that the use of warm colours such as yellow and orange on the window display was not created a higher attraction level for people to enter the store.

On the other hand, it was found that bold colours and shapes create more attraction for the respondents (40%). Most people agree that bold colours and shapes on the window display make more attractive and inviting effects on respondents. In contrast, 65 out of 147 people did not prefer vibrant and bright colours in the store interior. According to the responses, the use of vibrant, bright colours has no impact as a stimulating factor.

However, users were divided into two when they were asked to rate whether using too many dark colours such as black and grey in the store creates a monotonous feeling in the in-store atmosphere or not. Accordingly, twenty people rate that they strongly agree while the other 20 rates as strongly disagree. There are other 44 people who rate this matter of colour usage as neutral (Table 15 ).

In addition, when it was asked whether the store colours should be compatible with the furniture and accessories of the store in order to reflect the store atmosphere, it was determined that many users agreed with this issue. According to the data, the compatibility of store colours with other design elements in-store design plays an important role for users. Moreover, according to the responses received in the other question, it has been determined that the use of colour is stated as important. However, only a very few 2% of the respondents have stated that colour inside the store is not

important one of the most important and remarkable elements of in-store interior design (Table 15).

Table 16: Results of the Colour and Texture Elements on Visual Merchandising and Store Atmospheric ( By the Author)

Effect Of The Colour and Texture Factor On Visual Merchandising And Store Atmospherics						
Question	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	Table
The use of colour increases the quality of visual merchandising and store atmospherics.	42.9%	24.5%	18.4%	7.5%	6.8%	
A mixture of colours helps generate complements and harmonies in pallets and takes attraction	38.8%	29.3%	17%	9.5%	5.4%	
The rate of the soft colours in window design and attraction level	29.3%	29.3%	24.5%	10.2%	6.8%	
The attraction level of warm colours and inviting factor to store	14.3%	29.9%	36.1%	11.6%	8.2%	
The rate of the Bold shapes and colours take my attraction level	13.3%	40%	33.3%	6.7%	6.7%	
The rate of the vibrant, bright colours used in the interior	9.5%	16.3%	29.9%	25.9%	18.4%	
The use of black and grey creates a monotone feeling in-store	13.6%	19%	29.9%	23.8%	13.6%	
Usage of the colours of the store with furniture and fixtures of the store to reflect a store atmospherics	33.3%	25.9%	24.5%	10.2%	6.1%	
Satisfaction level and attraction level through the colour and texture	23.8%	24.5%	36.1%	12.9%	2.7%	

In general, according to all the answers received, it has been determined that the colour is a significant factor for many users. The use of colour and texture both in the showcase and in the store is a factor that instantly affects the user. Due to the fact that

the use of colour and texture creates diverse effects on people, and it is an element that ultimately affects the atmosphere of the store and window display, it could be said that it is a factor that triggers the stimulation centre in clothing stores (Table 15).

### **Display Units and Layout**

The third part was the quest for factors of display units and layout. First of all, the awareness of users about the design and layout of the showcase was questioned by asking whether the boldly designed exhibition units in the showcase attracted their attention or not. According to the answers received, it was noted that 46% of the respondents find the boldly designed showcases as pretty remarkable and remarked that they are inviting them into the store (Table 16).

In addition, 51% of the participants indicated that the layout of the showcase is an important factor and that crowded or complex designed showcases negatively affected their perception and they lost the concept of purchasing (Table 16).

On the other hand, most people indicated that if the retail store has a single-window display, female and male product items should be separated in the window display. According to the results of the survey, 58 respondents respond that when mixed-gender display design is preferred, that acts as a misleading factor on the perception and reduces the attraction (Table 16).

Moreover, the majority of the respondents (38.8%) strongly agree that different window displays and regularly changing concepts of the window display have an essential impact on people's stimulation level and highly attract customers for the shopping. On the other hand, results have revealed that only a few respondents (8



people-4.5%) mentioned that changing display concepts neither alter their perception nor their shopping mode (Table 16).

On the other hand, survey results have put forward that the majority of the respondents (51.7%) strongly agree that it is significant to organize display units in store indoor environment according to product, colour, size, etc. Therefore, it positively impacts respondents' stimulation and quickly triggers the shopping behaviour. Only one respondent stated that it is not an essential issue for shopping behaviour (Table 16).

Likewise, according to the results, it has been achieved that the well-organized shelf arrangement in store indoor environment increase respondents satisfaction and comfort level (Table 16). Moreover, respondents agree that well-designed display units and shelf arrangements create a comfortable circulation that makes them stay more in

the retail store, stimulate their perception, and encourage them to buy products (Table 16).

Table 17: Results of the Display Units and Layout Elements on Visual Merchandising and Store Atmospheric ( By the Author)

Effect Of The Display Unit and Layout Design Factor On Visual Merchandising And Store Atmospherics						
Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Table
The use of the bold display design on the window display	31.3%	29.9%	21.8%	10.2%	6.8%	
Negative effects of the complex or crowded window display according to respondents	34.7%	23.1%	21.8%	10.2%	10.2%	
Mixed-gender design on a window display of the retail store	32.7%	20.4%	29.3%	7.5%	10.2%	
Changing displays designs on a respondents attraction level	38.8%	29.3%	16.3%	10.2%	5.4%	
The importance of the arrangement of the products according to colour, size, etc	51.7%	20.4%	15%	12.1%	0.7%	
Perception level and comfort level in terms of well designed interior layout	33.3%	33.3%	26.7%	3.3%	3.3%	

### Sound and Smell

The sound and smell factors were the fourth part of the quality elements of visual merchandising and store atmospherics. In other words, sound and odour were the critical elements for creating an atmosphere. Firstly, respondents were asked to rate the effects of soft music in the background of the retail store. And hence, survey results put forward that most people agree on the use of soft music and indicated the positive impacts of this factor on their shopping time (Table 17).

Moreover, as a result of the survey, it has revealed that *good music* leads people to stay more in a store and increase the shopping satisfaction and comfort level. Only 20 % of the respondents mentioned that music is not a specific criterion for their shopping behaviour (Table 17).

On the other hand, most of the respondents (104 out of 147) agreed that *scent* is a crucial factor for the interior atmosphere. Answers demonstrate that the indoor atmosphere's scent is the key factor which is directly affecting respondents' shopping mood (Table 17).

Table 18: Results of the Sound and Semll Factors on Visual Merchandising and Store Atmospheric ( By the Author)

Effect Of The Sound and Smell Factor On Visual Merchandising And Store Atmospherics						
Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Table
The soft background music affects respondents	23.3%	36.7%	23.3%	13.3%	3.3%	
The comfort level and shopping satisfaction during the good background music	16.7%	33.3%	23.3%	20%	6.7%	
The scent of the indoor atmosphere is a key factor and directly affect respondents shopping mood.	48.3%	22.4%	16.3%	6.1%	6.8%	

Results put forward that the most people care about the smell and music factors. Especially they strongly agree that when people attract by the good smell, they prefer to stay in retail store more, and good background music motivates them to do shopping.

Besides, they agreed that the smell and sound have a significant impact on people; thus it has a triggering strategy on people's stimulation.

#### **4.2.4 Opinions about the Stimulating Effect of Visual Quality Elements on Users' Perception of Access and Impulse Buying**

In the fourth part of the questionnaire survey, it was asked respondents to state their opinions about the stimulating effect of visual quality elements. They were further asked to state how do these elements act as the factors of perception in directing them to access the store and as the factors of impulse buying. That part of the questionnaire is divided into two sub-sections. First of all, it has queried how the exterior atmospheric of the retail store stimuli the respondent. According to this purpose, respondents were asked to rate four pictures in the given questions, which have shown four different exterior window display designs, including the diverse arrangements of the mannequins, colours, textures, lightings, and layout. The second part has queried the respondent's stimuli to the interior atmosphere of the retail store. Therefore, respondents were asked to rate three different interior retail store images, including various colour schemes, interior layout, and lighting designs.

#### **Influence by Exterior Atmospherics**

For the exterior atmospheric perception, Figure 28 illustrates the given four images. This part of the questionnaire is divided into two parts. Four pictures which was given in the first part has different window designs that were created using different visual design elements; they were selected with an aim to determine how much each different one affect the users.

Accordingly, *Picture A* highlighted the products exhibited with a minimal showcase design as well as a monochromatic colour palette. *Picture B* is applied in a showcase

design in which striking colours stand out, with mannequin placement and products in colour harmony with the showcase. *Picture C* used the harmony of warm tones and a geometric design with a single mannequin and a single product in the showcase design. On the other hand, *Picture D* uses a dispersed mannequin design and colour and texture elements.

According to these images, respondents firstly were asked to choose the most attractive one to which invite them to the store.



Figure 26: Selected Images Part C For The Exterior Atmospheric Factors

According to their answers, most respondents choose picture A among the other pictures. Picture A has a soft colour scheme rather than vibrant colour schemes. Also, the general background of the display is more minimal style and highlight the products more.

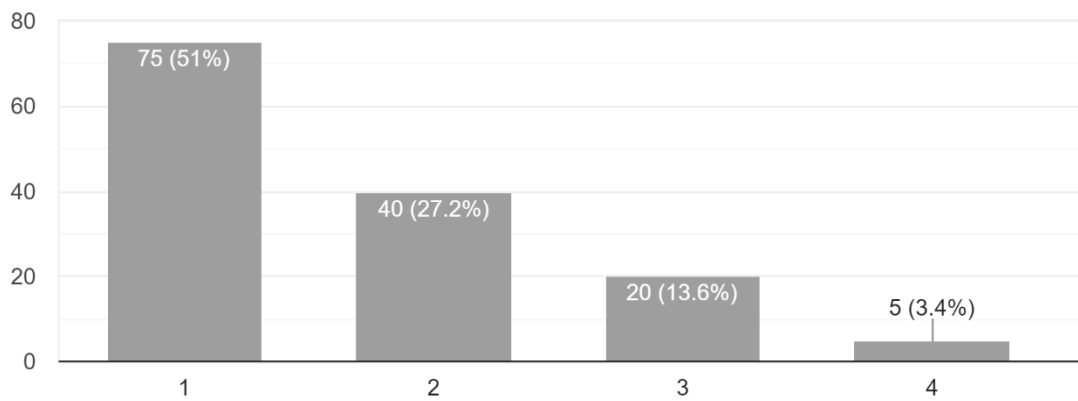


Figure 27: Results Of The Most Attractive Window Display For The Respondents

Moreover, they were asked to state how product range on the window display effect them and results revealed that people prefer to see product range. According to the answers, 36.7% of respondents chose picture D. Because the arrangement of the retail display has an extensive range of merchandise and creates an inviting atmosphere for the people. On the other hand, none of the respondents chooses picture D. Therefore; it could be said that most people prefer to see the range of the products on window display more than attractive design while deciding to access the store (see Figure 26).

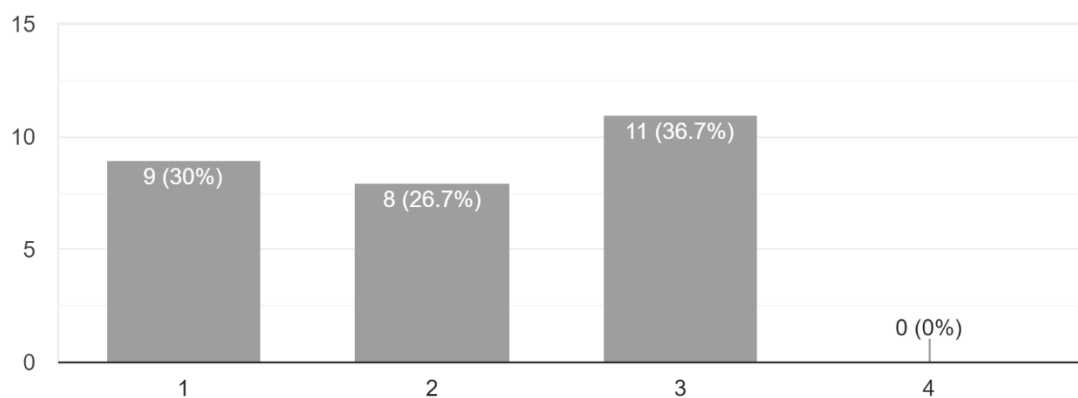


Figure 28: Result Of The Different Product Range In The Window Display And Their Effect On The Respondents

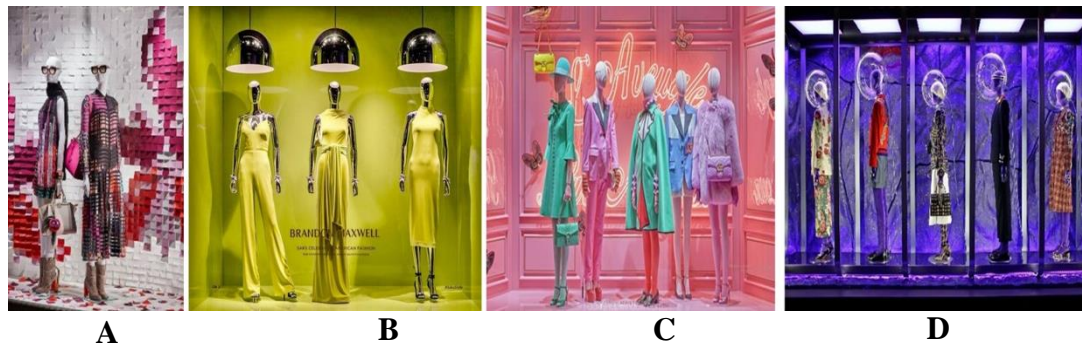


Figure 29: Selected Images Part C For The Exterior Atmospheric Factors

On the other hand, in the second part, four different pictures were used in order to question the role of colour, texture and lighting elements on the user as the trigger factor. *Picture A* is rich in colour and texture and focused on the product. In *Picture B*, a single striking colour is preferred, and a single product is used. In *Picture C*, a design was created in which soft colours are used together, but mannequins are placed within a concept and highlighted with lights and texts. Finally, in *Picture D*, a design was created in which neon colours stand out with light and mannequins are placed in line with a concept (Figure 27). And hence, results revealed that 52 people chose picture B, which has a bright yellow colour and an attractive window display; instead of highlighting the product design highlights the window display to take more attraction. But respondents also choose picture A with a similar percentage that has a rich texture content with a monochromatic colour scheme (Figure 28).

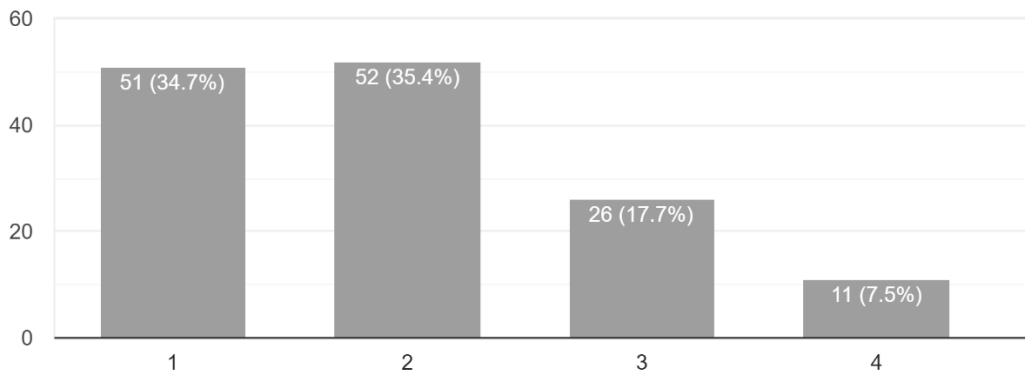


Figure 30: Shows The Results Of The Colour Variations With A Well-Organized Window Display

Moreover, when questioning the lighting design on the window display. Many respondents choose picture A. It could be noted that the proper lighting design makes merchandising appealing and hence attracts customers. Therefore, it increases people's perception and triggers the stimulation while deciding to enter the retail store and do shopping. Overall, for the window display perception, respondents indicated that if the design of the window display is more crowded more colourful, it decreases the attraction level and does not trigger the stimulation quickly. They also state that the exterior of the retail store, especially in the exterior atmosphere, must highlight the product range.

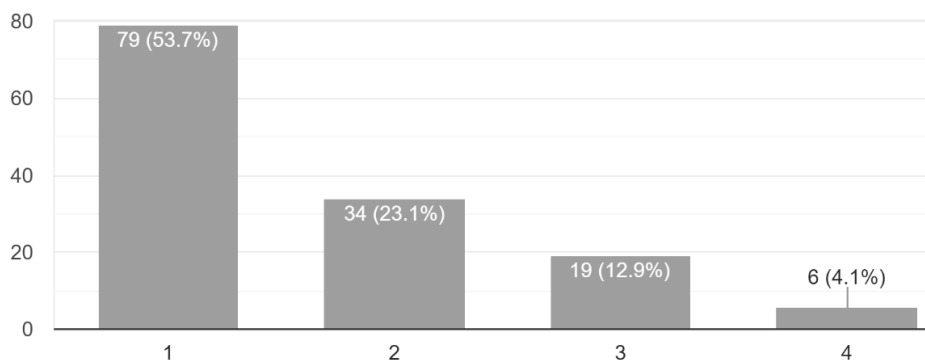


Figure 31: The Effects Of The Proper Lighting Selection On The Window Display



## **Influence by Interior Atmospherics**

For the interior atmospheric perception part of the questionnaire, three different pictures were selected to measure how much the users were affected by the interior atmosphere, and they were asked to evaluate the questions given according to the selected pictures (Figure 30). Different in-store quality was provided by the articulation of visual design elements in the selected three pictures. In *Picture A*, colour and texture elements are used minimally and simply, revealing the product range more. In addition, a bright but simple light design has been applied. In *Picture B*, texture elements rather than colour have emerged. While the lighting elements are used more brightly and simply, the product placement and visuals have come to the fore. Finally, *Picture C* added a different dimension to the store as a result of overuse of light and colour elements.



Figure 32: Images For The Questionnaire Part D – Influence by Interior Atmospherics

Accordingly, *Picture A* was stated as more comfortable in terms of interior layout organization compared to the other two retail store layouts. It has a more straightforward organization and comfortable product placement, which increases the customer's comfort level (Figure 30). Moreover, when the respondents were asked to choose the attractive displays, they preferred pictures *B* and *C*.

On the other hand, most of the respondents strongly agree that window display design must be reflected in the interior design atmosphere. Customers believed that the exterior of the window display was the first sign for the invitation of the store. When they enter the store, they try to recognize the consistency of the atmosphere. When they perceived the character of the design, it has been indicated that this has directly triggered the stimulation and impulse buying.

At the end of the questionnaire survey, respondents were asked to indicate their preference of retail store location for shopping. Most of the respondents indicate that they prefer to go shopping in shopping malls. Generally, people mentioned that they like shopping malls because they can see all the retail stores together and this motivates them to do more shopping. But some of the respondents believed that streets are much better because it's easy to eliminate the shops and open-air motivates them more.

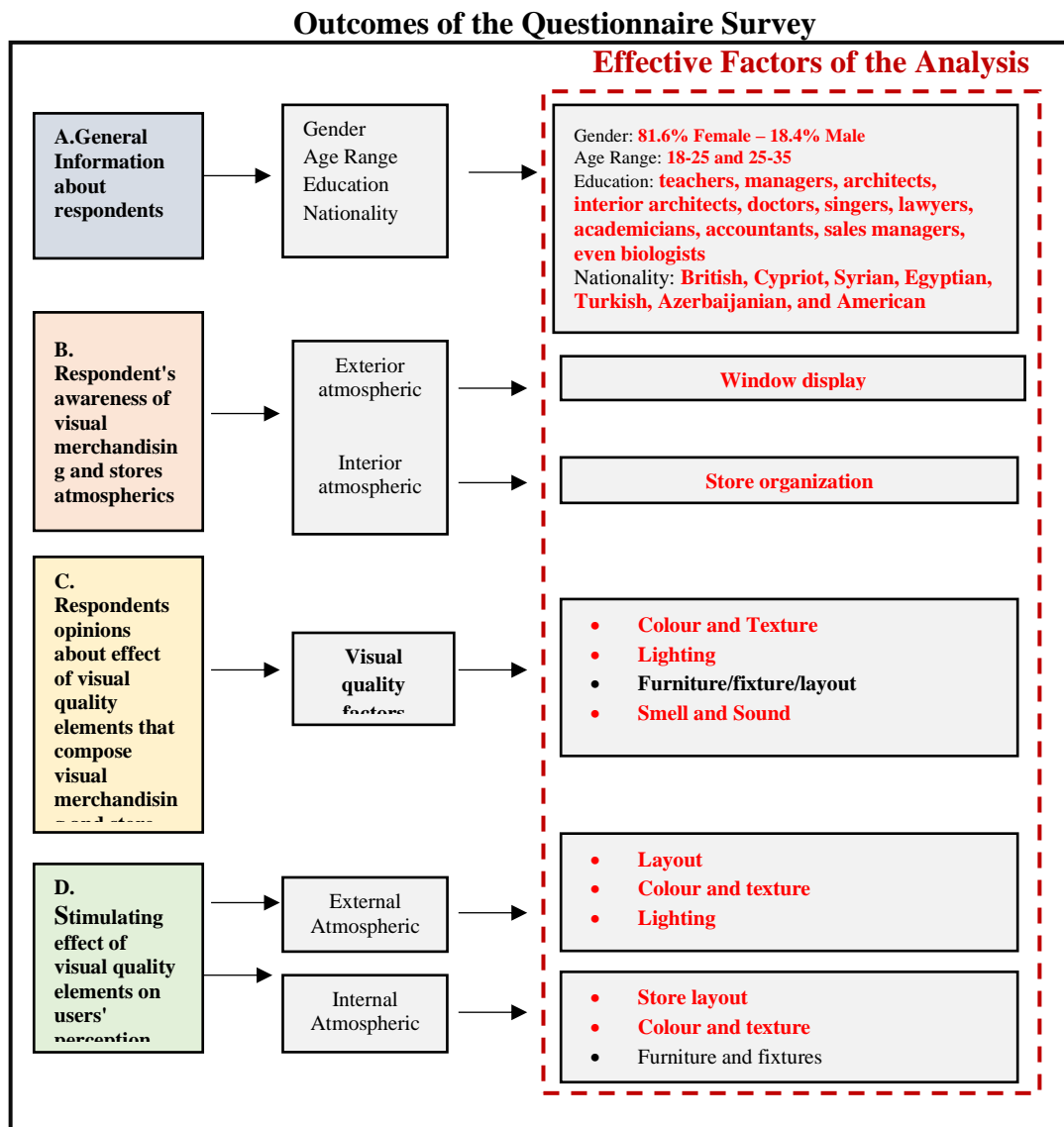


Figure 33: Outcomes of the effective factors of the questionnaire survey

According to the results of the questionnaire survey, it has been determined that the customers' impulse buying is influenced by colour and texture, lighting elements, layout factors in mix clothing stores according to the findings of this survey. In addition, the survey shows that characteristics of the inside environment, such as shop layout, furniture and fixtures, colour and texture, and lighting, have a stimulating influence on consumers' perceptions of visual quality in the exterior. Moreover, smell and sound are also essential components to consider when creating a retail atmosphere.

## **Chapter 5**

### **CONCLUSION**

Companies are facing many competitors in today's economic market. In order to increase their sales and to satisfy their customers, they need to consider customers behaviours within the stores and take actions accordingly. Therefore, in due course, understanding customers behaviour interrelated to the store qualities requires evaluating store atmosphere and store environment. For this reason, the concept of visual merchandising is introduced. There are diverse issues that have a direct effect on the stated matter and visual quality elements and their role on customers' impulse buying is the foremost effective one. Hence, this research have addressed the stated problem by conducting a questionnaire survey in order to answer the research question by examining the effect of interior design visual quality elements on customers' impulse buying behaviour.

Research has initiated with a literature review and the results of the literature review identified the visual quality factors, that are colour and texture, lighting, furniture, scent and sound. These elements have direct links to the interior atmosphere and exterior atmosphere of the window display and store internal organization. According to the results of this research, it has been attained that these elements directly affect customers' impulse buying behaviour. Furthermore, research indicated that visual quality elements of the external atmosphere including colour and texture besides lighting has a stimulating effect of on customers perception besides factors of the

internal atmosphere including store layout, furniture and fixtures, colour and texture, and lighting. In addition, it should also be noted that scent and sound are the other store atmosphere elements that must be taken into account. Hence, research results have revealed that these elements need to be applied as strategic tools in order to influence potential customers due to the fact that they partake an assisting role to create direct communication between the customer and the product.

As a result of the survey carried out, this research has primarily underlined three points:

1. The majority of the respondents are aware of the visual merchandising elements and also are conscious of the attractiveness of visual quality elements. However, according to the results of the survey, certain visual elements were drawn more attention to customers stimulation.
2. Among requested visual quality elements; *colour and texture, lighting design, store interior layout*, and *odour/scent* were determined as the most significant triggering factors regarding impulse buying behaviour of the customers.
3. The results of the survey pointed out that visual merchandising elements on window display design is the instant triggering element on customers perception. Moreover, it has been achieved that although window display is essential to stimulate customers behaviour; they also require consistency of design in-store atmosphere as well.

Consequently, this study concludes that some elements have significant effect regarding customers preferences. Accordingly, first of all, window displays which use colour and texture elements drew more attention. However, results also pointed out that a mixture of colour and texture combinations decrease the level of customers demand to enter the store as strongly agreed by most of the respondents. They prefer

monochromatic colour schemes with minimal textures to highlight the product more than complicated colour applications. Therefore, the survey indicated that colour and texture affect people's perception before entering the store.

On the other hand, study also conclude that the use of colour and texture significantly impacts customers' perception of the store atmosphere and compatibility of in-store design with the window display also has a significant impact on customers. People agreed that colour must be complemented with the other interior design elements. Moreover, well-designed colour schemes with the interior atmosphere of the store increase users' comfort and trigger stimulation centre promptly.

Secondly, the other conclusion of this study is that fashion retail stores should have carefully select the ideal lighting in order to create the right atmosphere and provide visually attractive settings with lighting. When it comes to perceptions of a space, lighting plays a significant role. According to the results, this thesis revealed that bright and bold lighting selection has an essential impact on customers perception level. Bright lighting features on window display has a positive impact on customers stimulation level and affect the shopping mode definitely.

Furthermore survey results put forward that the store interior layout is one of the essential elements of visual merchandising. Half of the participants (50%) have stated that well-designed display units and shelf layouts increase circulation, encouraging customers to spend more time in retail stores, stimulating their perception, and encouraging them to purchase more products. Therefore, fashion companies need to consider store interior layout as an important part of their marketing strategy. They

should design the interior of the stores in a more organized and appealing way to attract more customers.

At last but not the least, survey results have put forward that the odour/scent has also a significant impact on customers emotional perception. Accordingly, majority of the respondents have agreed that odour was one of the fundamental factors of the interior atmosphere. Therefore, this survey indicates that indoor atmosphere odour/scent is one factor that directly affects customers' shopping mode. In addition, the result illustrates that the bad odours in the stores repel customers, and they are more attracted to good smelling stores. For this reason, applying fresh and welcoming sense in stores by particular expressions in the interior atmosphere should be considered when it comes to encouraging buying behaviour.

The main aim of this thesis was to illustrate the effects of visual merchandising elements in fashion store interior and exterior atmosphere, and to dissociate how it affects the customers shopping behaviour. The research showed that certain design elements encourage more buying behaviour because of the way of their application in the fashion retails interior and exterior design and on display units. It has pointed out that there is a direct link and relationship between customer and store atmosphere. It has been achieved as a result of this research that customers are more attracted to organized displays, minimal textures that highlight the product, monochromatic colour schemes, harmony and welcoming odours. The combinations of these elements in fashion stores attract more customers, and they seem to select these stores for shopping.

This research can be useful for future studies and could be further studied since there is a scarcity of studies conducted on this subject in the recent times. Existing literature was not up-to-date and there is a need to conduct further studies in this study field to fill the gap. Taking conditions and possibilities of the current era, considering effect and impact of digitalization is the other dimension which was not included in this study. Results of the survey is limited to the respondents and study results have revealed that as a result of the random sampling the majority of the respondents range from 18-35. It is believed that an extended survey which will be applied to a variety of participants will end-up with more comprehensive results. Diversity will bring an opportunity to make correlations among different participants and hence to use this data for a detailed design and implementation of fashion retail stores that is varying in line with user differences such as age, gender, culture and so far.

The last but not the least, this study conclude that the role of the visual merchandising element revealed by this research should be taken into account by different researchers and by designers whilst stimulating customers and in creating appealing stores. In addition, elements mentioned above regarding interior and exterior atmosphere should be emphasized and regarded as key factors on marketing strategies of fashion retail stores.



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URL4: [https://images.slideplayer.com/27/9061741/slides/slide\\_25.jpg](https://images.slideplayer.com/27/9061741/slides/slide_25.jpg)

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URL 19: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/833869687233059904/>

URL 20: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/330592428887179735/>

## **APPENDICES**

# Appendix A: Questionnaire Survey

## A. General Information About Respondent

- **Gender**  
Female  Male
- **Nationality:** .....
- **Age:**  
18-25  25-35  35-45  46-55  Above 55
- **Education:**  
High School  Bachelor  Master  PhD  Other
- **Profession:** .....
- **How often do you shop in physical stores?**  
Often  Sometimes  Rarely  Never

## B. Awareness of Visual merchandising and Store Atmospherics

- **Are you aware of visual merchandising?**  
Yes  No
- **If your answer is yes, do you think the special design of visual merchandising takes the attention of the customer?**  
Yes  No
- **Do visual merchandising affect your shopping decision?**  
Yes  No
- **Do visual merchandising affect your shopping mood?**  
Yes  No
- **What are the most effective factors for you in terms of visual quality?**  
Color  Texture  Lighting  Furnitures/Fixtures  Props/Signs

Which of these visual merchandising would you choose?

A



B



C



D



- **Do you think visual quality factors increase the quality of interior space?**  
Yes  No
- **Do you think visual quality factors effect the quality of interior atmospherics of the store?**  
Yes  No
- **Does well design shop atmospheric play a role in your shopping?**  
Yes  No
- **Which of the following Retail Store's key element attracts you more while shopping?**  
Interior Atmospheric  Exterior Atmospherics  Store Layout   
Signs/props  Others
- **In the table below, there are 6 pair of words. Each word represents one effective factor of interior atmospherics. Please evaluate the effective factors that take your attention in terms of interior atmospherics?**

	Very Effective	Effective	Neutral	Less Effective	Not Effective	
Colourful						Colourless
Light						Dark
Simple						Complicated
Large- Scale						Small- Scale
Smell Positive Effect						Smell Negative Effect
Soft Music						Loud Music

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

- **Lighting**

I.	Bright and bold lights in window shop attract my attention to look at it	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
II.	Exagerated lighting design in the window shop misleads my perception	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
III.	Prefer dim light in the window shop, to perceive items clearly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
IV.	Brighter task light in-store atmosphere has a positive impact on my shopping decision	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
V.	Dim accent light in-store atmosphere determine the quality of the items	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
VI.	The dim ambient light in-store atmosphere has a negative effect on my shopping mood.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
VII.	Clarity light increase my wellbeing and comfort in-store atmosphere	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

VIII.	The illumination level in the shelf and hanger areas allows me to detect the products	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
IX.	Lighting used in the trial cabin affects my product perception	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
X.	Lighting factors are one of the key element on my satisfaction level and important factor that stimulate my attraction level.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutal</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

- **Use Of Color**

I.	The use of colour increases the quality of visual merchandising and store atmospherics.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
II.	In the window shop, a mixture of colours helps generate complements and harmonies in pallet and takes attraction.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
III.	I prefer soft colours in window design and it's helping me to perceive items.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
IV.	Warm colours such as yellow and orange create attraction and invite me to the store.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
V.	Bold shapes and colours take my attraction and invite me to the store.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
VI.	The vibrant, bright colours used in the interior of the store are eye-straining and create a negative effect for me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
VII.	Cool colours such as green and blue have a calming effect on me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
VIII.	Using too many dark colours such as black and grey creates a monotone feeling in-store atmospherics.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
IX.	It is important that colours of the store should be aligned with furniture and fixtures of the store to reflect a store atmospherics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
X.	Colour Factors are one of the key element on my satisfaction level and important factor that stimulate my attraction level.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

- **Display Units and Layout**

I.	Bold display units take my attraction and inviting feeling in-store on me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
II.	Crowded mannequins arrangement has a negative impact on my shopping behaviour.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
III.	I don't prefer to mix gender(women and man) mannequin arrangement in a single-window shop.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
IV.	Changing Display concepts often have a positive impact on consumer attraction.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
V.	Organization of display units in store indoor environment according to product /colour/ size/ etc.. Has a positive impact on my shopping behaviour.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
VI.	Well organized shelf arrangement in store indoor environment increase my satisfaction and comfort.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
VII.	Well-designed display units and shelf arrangement creates a comfort circulation and make me stay longer in store.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
VIII.	Display units and layout Factors one of the key element on my satisfaction level and important factor that stimulate my perception and encourage me to buy products.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

- **Sound and Smell**

I.	Soft music in the background in-store atmosphere has a positive effect on my shopping time.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
II.	Music is a key factor in my shopping satisfaction and comfort.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
III.	Very loud and techno music are in store atmosphere have a negative effect on my shopping behaviour.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
IV.	The scent of the indoor atmosphere is the key factor and directly affect my shopping mood.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



D. Opinions about the stimulating effect of Visual quality elements on users perception directing to access and impulse buying.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

• Influence by exterior atmospherics



I. Whenever I see an attractive window display, I tend to join the shop.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
II. whenever I see outfits with a new style or design on the display, I tend to buy it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
III. If the retail display has a large range of merchandise, i'm going to step into the store.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
IV. I'm inspired to walk into the store because of its exterior appearance, signage, and commercial display images.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



V. The colour variations are well organized and make me feel comfortable and i tend to join the shop.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
VI. Proper lighting allows merchandise appealing.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutal	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

• **Influence by Interior atmospherics**



I.	Once I walk into a store, I'm very motivated to purchase something if the store atmosphere is appealing and organised.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
II.	When searching the store i prefer to buy items presented in visually attractive displays.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
III.	If an interior store may not display the merchandise in the same way as a visual display, i will not buy anything.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
IV.	The fact that the visual elements on exterior atmospherics can be maintained interior atmospherics also has a stimulating effect on the shopping phenomenon.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutal</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

• **Location of the Retail Store**



I.	I prefer to do shopping in malls instead of streets/avenues.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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## Appendix B: Scientific Research and Publication Ethic Board Report



**Eastern  
Mediterranean  
University**  
*"Virtue, Knowledge, Advancement"*

99628, Gazimağusa, KUZEY KIBRIS /  
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E-mail: bayek@emu.edu.tr

Etik Kurulu / Ethics Committee

**Reference No:** ETK00-2021-0027

25.01.2021

**Subject:** Your application for ethical approval.

**Re:** Nuvit Köseoğlu (19500638)

Faculty of Architecture

EMU's Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Board (BAYEK) has approved the decision of the Ethics Board of Architecture (date: 22.01.2021, issue: 03) granting Nuvit Köseoğlu from the Faculty of Architecture to pursue with her MA thesis titled **"Studying the Stimulating Role of Visual Merchandising and Store Indoor Atmosphere on Customers Shopping Behavior: Case of Clothing Stores"** supervised by Prof. Dr. Nil Paşaoğlulari Şahin.

Best Regards

Prof. Dr. Yücel Vural

Chair, Board of Scientific Research and Publication Ethics - EMU

YV/şk.

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