

# ANALYZING CUSTOMER PERCEPTION ON STORE INTERIOR ATMOSPHERICS IN SELECT HYPERMARKETS OF NOIDA

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## ABSTRACT

Retail Sector is the most booming sector in the Indian economy. Some of the biggest players of the world are going to enter the industry soon. For this reason it is essential for retail stores to create a positive in-store environment, as a positive mood can easily increase the consumers' time and money spent.

## INTRODUCTION

Retail Sector is the most booming sector in the Indian economy. Some of the biggest players of the world are going to enter the industry soon. It is on the threshold of bringing the next big revolution after the IT sector. Although organized retail market is not so strong as of now, it is expected to grow manifolds. Over the past few decades, the retail industry has grown exponentially, resulting in a highly intensive and competitive market (Liaw, 2007). Today, it has become difficult for retailers to benefit only from their products, prices, promotions and place (Wanninayake & Randiwela, 2007). It is therefore essential that retail stores use store space opportunities effectively, in order to differentiate themselves from competitors in the retail market as well as provide consumers with a pleasant shopping experience. For this reason it is essential for retail stores to create a positive in-store environment, as a positive mood can easily increase the consumers' time and money spent (Spies et al., 1997). A positive and pleasurable in-store environment can be created by focusing on various elements such as music, scent, lighting, colors and flooring that excite the senses of shoppers (Berman & Evans, 1998).

The purpose of this study is to explore the influence of store atmospherics on consumers' buying behavior in retail stores. This research study aim to obtain a holistic view of the field of store atmospherics, which forms part of the retail industry. A consumer-centered response approach will be followed. Store atmospherics and its influence on consumers' buying behavior have received very little attention in the research work till date. The study will benefit retailers in India (especially North India region) as the consumers' views on in-store atmospheric elements and their influence on the consumers' buying behavior are determined.

Academically by comparing the findings obtained in the course of the research presented by other researchers in Literature Review help researcher for carried out further studies in the field. As, this research study will take a consumer-centred response approach to store atmospherics in an attempt to holistically consider this area of the retail industry. This research study explores an area from the retail industry that has received very little attention in literature.

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**LITERATURE REVIEW**

<b>Authors</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Atmospheric dimensions</b>	<b>Specifications</b>
Kotler	1973-1974	Four dimensions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• visual;</li> <li>• aural;</li> <li>• tactile;</li> <li>• olfactory</li> </ul>	This is the most early typology about dimensions of atmosphere and does not include the crowd and the employee dimensions
Baker	(1986;1994)	Three dimensions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ambient;</li> <li>• design;</li> <li>• social</li> </ul>	This typology takes into account the social dimension, but does not include the facility exterior-exterior design of the retail store
Bitner	(1992)	Three dimensions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ambient conditions;</li> <li>• spatial layout and functionality;</li> <li>• signs, symbols, and artefact</li> </ul>	This conceptual framework is the most complete one. Nevertheless, research on the employee side is rare
Berman and Evans	1995	Four dimensions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• exterior;</li> <li>• genral interior;</li> <li>• store layout;</li> <li>• interior displays</li> </ul>	This framework does not include human component and the ambient factors dimension is considered among
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>	This framework is inspired by Baker's (1986) typology
Turley and Milliman	2000	Five dimensions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• general exterior;</li> <li>• general interior;</li> <li>• layout and design;</li> <li>• point of purchase and decoration;</li> <li>• human variables</li> </ul>	This framework is built on Berman and Evans's (1995) typology. It includes the human variables. And we believe is the most complete one.

(Source: tabel produced by authors based on information from: Kotler (1973-1974), Baker (1986), Bitner (1992), Berman and Evans (1995), D'Astous (2000), Turley and Milliman (2000))

## OBJECTIVE OF RESEARCH

To analyze difference in consumer perception towards Store Atmospherics between TGIP & DLF Mall in Noida

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### a. Sources of Information

This research work is in the form of exploratory and its nature is also descriptive research Study. For conducting this research the information will be gathered from the Primary sources. The first hand primary data will collected through questionnaires.

### b. Sample design

**Sample Units-** Current study depends on customer visiting shopping malls.

**Sample Mall -**TGIP & DLF Mall in Noida

**Sampling Technique –** Convenience Sampling.

**Sample size –** 300

### c. Scaling

To meet the research objective of research Questionnaire was used as an instrument for collecting primary data. Looking to the nature of study the questionnaire will structured and mainly contained questions, which are closed ended. The response will be recorded and measured by using Nominal Scale and Likert Scale.

## RESULT

**Table: Sample Demographics**

Age	Percentage (%)	Education	Percentage (%)
20-30 yrs	48%	Under Graduate	40%
31-40 yrs	26%	Graduate	25%
41-50 yrs	12%	Post Graduate	35%
>50 yrs	14%		
Gender		Occupation	
Male	47%	Business	46%
Female	53%	Employed	54%

Majority of visitors/customers are from 20-30 years of age. 25 percent of consumers are between age of 31-40 years of age. 12 percent of consumers belong to age bracket of 41-50 years. A small proportion belongs to higher age group of greater than 50 years. 53 percent of respondents are female and 47 percent were male. Out of the total consumers, about 46 percent belong to business class and 54% is related to employed category. From the total respondents, 40 percent are under graduate, 25 percent are graduate and 35% is related to post graduate category. It showed that there is a balance in sample distribution with respect to education.

Following hypothesis is formed to test Store Atmospherics and consumer perception.

*H1 (null): There is a significant difference in consumer perception towards Store Interior Atmospherics between TGIP & DLF Mall in Noida*

*H1 (alternate): There is a significant difference in consumer perception towards Store Interior Atmospherics between TGIP & DLF Mall in Noida*

Mathematically,

$$H_0: \mu_{TGIP} = \mu_{DLF}$$

$$H_1: \mu_{TGIP} \neq \mu_{DLF}$$

Where,  $\mu_{GMall}$  and  $\mu_{DLF}$  are the hypothesized mean for perception towards Store Atmospherics between TGIP & DLF Mall.

**Table 1: independent sample ‘t’ test – Store Interior**

Group Statistics					
	Store	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Intr_atmosphere	DLF	150	4.1667	.94419	.07709
	TGIP	150	2.9933	1.18433	.09670
Intr_passage	DLF	150	3.1600	1.01055	.08251
	TGIP	150	3.1467	1.05796	.08638
Intr_Music1	DLF	150	3.7667	1.02595	.08377
	TGIP	150	3.0467	1.18342	.09663
Intr_Music2	DLF	150	3.8867	1.06523	.08698
	TGIP	150	3.8533	1.16657	.09525
Intr_trailRm	DLF	150	3.8000	.87470	.07142
	TGIP	150	3.8800	1.06134	.08666
Intr_AirCond	DLF	150	4.1000	.84146	.06870
	TGIP	150	4.2533	.82890	.06768
Intr_Color1	DLF	150	4.2800	.97705	.07978
	TGIP	150	3.2133	.97338	.07948
Intr_Color2	DLF	150	3.7267	1.17523	.09596
	TGIP	150	3.8133	.97888	.07993
Intr_furniture	DLF	150	4.0400	1.04836	.08560
	TGIP	150	3.6267	1.12654	.09198
Intr_personnel	DLF	150	3.4600	.58654	.04789
	TGIP	150	3.3400	1.19748	.09777
Intr_Knowdg	DLF	150	3.8267	1.25183	.10221
	TGIP	150	3.7400	1.27142	.10381

Independent Samples Test							
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means			
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Intr_atmosphere	EVA*	8.021	0.005	9.488	298	0	1.17333
	EVNA* *			9.488	283.907	0	1.17333
Intr_passage	EVA	1.751	0.187	0.112	298	0.911	0.01333
	EVNA			0.112	297.376	0.911	0.01333
Intr_Music1	EVA	5.399	0.021	5.63	298	0	0.72
	EVNA			5.63	292.124	0	0.72
Intr_Music2	EVA	2.966	0.086	0.258	298	0.796	0.03333
	EVNA			0.258	295.572	0.796	0.03333
Intr_trailRm	EVA	1.324	0.251	-0.712	298	0.477	-0.08
	EVNA			-0.712	287.508	0.477	-0.08
Intr_AirCond	EVA	0.478	0.49	-1.59	298	0.113	-0.1533
	EVNA			-1.59	297.933	0.113	-0.1533
Intr_Color1	EVA	0.379	0.538	9.472	298	0	1.06667
	EVNA			9.472	297.996	0	1.06667
Intr_Color2	EVA	16.625	0	-0.694	298	0.488	-0.0867
	EVNA			-0.694	288.567	0.488	-0.0867
Intr_furniture	EVA	9.765	0.002	3.29	298	0.001	0.41333
	EVNA			3.29	296.472	0.001	0.41333
Intr_personnel	EVA	74.659	0	1.102	298	0.271	0.12
	EVNA			1.102	216.603	0.272	0.12
Intr_Knowdg	EVA	0.198	0.657	0.595	298	0.552	0.08667
	EVNA			0.595	297.928	0.552	0.08667

\*EVA=Equal variance assumed

\*\* Equal variance not assumed

## CONCLUSION

Result table above provided with Levene's test for Equality of Variances. This test has been used with assumptions that the variances for the two groups viz. malls are equal. If this null hypothesis is rejected at 5 percent significance level, then test statistics for 'no equal variance' is considered for interpretation.

It was found that there is a significant perception gap between customer perceptions for two malls towards store interior. The result connotes that customer customers rate higher to DLF mall in some interior features as compared to TGIP. Customers perceive that DLF mall is better in maintain pleasant store atmosphere by pleasant odor/scent. Customer also liked background music of DLF mall as compared to TGIP. Colors theme and flooring at the DLF creates more attention. Respondents also rated high to DLF for lighting and use of natural lighting in the store as compared to TGIP. However, for the other remaining interior dimensions, both malls are standing equal.

From the above analysis, we can accept the hypothesis and state that there is a significant difference in consumer perception towards Store Interior Atmospheric between Mall & DLF Mall in Noida. Future research also can study other store atmosphere from different retail industries or sectors such as fashion, electronic, convenient, pharmacies and so on. Other than customers' experiences and their behavioral intention, other researcher also can see other element of customer's evaluation such as in terms of loyalty, retention, purchase decision, satisfaction, expectation, needs, wants, perception and many more. On the other hand, the researcher also can do a specific research about one of the store atmospheric factors. For an example, investigate the impact of visual merchandising to the customer's purchase decision. It is because conducting a more specific research can help the researcher to focus on the selected topics without having a deviation problem.

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