

A Study On Impact Of Atmospheric - Music On Consumer Behaviour In Retail Outlets

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Abstract

This paper gives an overview of the influence of music in retail outlets in relation to consumer behaviour. The study is about finding out the impact of music on retail shoppers. The study was conducted at Hyderabad. For the purpose of the study exploratory research design is used. Convenience sampling method is adopted for the study. Survey method is used for collecting the data. The data is collected through intercepts at retail outlets. A well structured questionnaire is designed for the study and due care is taken to avoid any kind of ambiguity. The sample for the study is 100 respondents. This paper shows that there is influence of music on consumer behaviour.

Keywords: Atmospheric, consumer behaviour, retailing, retail store, music in retail outlets, music on consumer behaviour.

INTRODUCTION

Consumers are not buying product/services in the traditional sense any more. Customer today are looking at purchasing as experiential activity and would like to enjoy the entire process of buying from the word go to the post purchase stage. However due to changes in the marketing environment the technological revolution, information explosion, changing demographics of the consumers at large, evolution in the culture, the retailers can no longer afford to stick to the old ways of doing the business. The expectations of customers are moving more to the quality of the transaction and experience rather than mechanical chore of buying the products. Therefore the retailers have over time acknowledged these changes and are changing their marketing mix with much emphasis, all things being equal, on store atmospheric, which includes various elements like colour, lighting, visual merchandizing etc. While going through the process of buying the customers respond to various stimuli's in the store environment in addition to the tangible product or service.

In today's highly competitive market situation, organized retailers in India have a formidable task of meeting the competition from the small retailers on one hand and with a heavy infrastructure and costs of operation make the business profitable. The four Ps of marketing remaining the same, unless the retailers differentiate themselves and appeal to the five senses of the customers they would fail in attracting and retaining the customers. Today in addition to in store design and displays, retailers need innovatively use the various elements that appeal to the senses of the customers viz. (smell) perfumes and fragrances, flooring, colouring, lighting, graphics to create an environment evoking a WOW from the customers. It has been demonstrated by research over the years that sounds and music influence the shopping experience in retail atmospheric and can affect the consumers in tangible ways.

Music in the retail space can be honed to reflect the brand, enhance the customer experience and reinforce consumer aspirations, promoting higher sales and is come to occupy an important place in the store atmospheric.

The use of music has been studied in traditional areas such as psychology, on issues such as learning and human behaviour. Marketers use this feature as a motivator in the purchase decision of consumers shopping in different environments due to easy way of manipulation of the music and the fact that music isn't offensive to the consumer. Kotler (1973) exposed in his paper that the tangible product or service was only a small portion of the total consumption, the other part filled by the local atmosphere or from which the product was purchased or consumed and, in some cases, the atmosphere is primary product. Atmosphere as a marketing tool is defined by Kotler as a space consciously created to create certain effects on consumers and influence their purchase decision; the atmosphere consists of various elements such as brightness, size, smell, temperature, music, softness, smoothness and shape. The literature review done by Kellaris (2008) shows us that music was heavily used in consumer environments as motivating. In addition, the store, elements such as lighting, colour, style or music may have more immediate effects on decision making than marketing inputs that are not sent at the time of purchase. In 1982, Donovan and Russell adapted the model to retail as a way to better study the relations environment/behaviour from consumer with focus on the approach/remoteness using a scale of 36 items measuring consumer emotions. It is considered approaching behaviour the desire to stay in the environment, tendency to explore and interact, and the desire to communicate with others, feelings of satisfaction with the experience and purchase intent. The behaviour of remoteness is the desire to leave the environment, tend to ignore the details of the environment, a sense of dissatisfaction and low purchase intent.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Gueguen & Jacob (2010) conducted a study in a flower shop where consumers were exposed to an environment with romantic songs, pop songs (songs usually played at florists) and no music. The result was that consumers spent more time in the store when romantic music was played, but found no correlation between romantic music, pop music and music-free environment when the chosen factor was the average ticket spending by consumers.

The study Broekemier, Marquardt and Gentry (2008) sought to determine which of the two dimensions of music, happy/sad or within the popular music/non popular, had significant effects on the purchase intention. The research showed that when respondents were exposed to the dimension happy/sad, there was a direct effect on purchase intent; purchase intent however was higher when played happy music/popular music. Barbosa and Andrade (2009) investigated the effect of music on motivation and behaviour of sellers and influence on perception and consumer behaviour in a women's clothing store. Questionnaires were given to customers, vendors and cashiers/stockers, creating three situations, the first and the third playing music alternating with the usual music in store, and the second situation playing a disc with songs taken as a family (international soundtracks). The results showed a positive relationship to the items related to purchase intention and intention to return to the store. When played songs taken as familiar, the perception of time remained in the shop was below the other two situations. When it concerns the relationship between musical style, satisfaction and the amount of money spent in the store, the kind of music don't have influences in the amount of money that consumers plan to spend, but the musical style jazz and lounge music has strong influence and makes consumers spend more. Also found in this same study, the fact that the volume of music and gender affect consumer satisfaction. Other studies have related musical genres with the perception of time that the consumer stays in the store (differentiating male and female), the mood of the consumer during the shopping experience, the decision to return to the store and attitude approach/remoteness. Research found out that tempo of music did have a relationship with the amount of time that customer spent in the restaurant (Caldwell et al., 1999). Fast music tempo could decrease the amount of time customer spent in the restaurant. Based on S-O-R Model (Buckley, 1991) which is also

known as Stimulus, Organism and Response (S-O-R) model could help to explain how it works. This model involves 3 different stages (Figure 1) Stimulus, Organism and Response. In the Stimulus stage, individual involve himself in a restaurant with slow tempo music being played. The slow tempo music impact the level of arousal on the individual (Organism) and response after experiencing level of arousal by determines the amount of time spent in the restaurant.

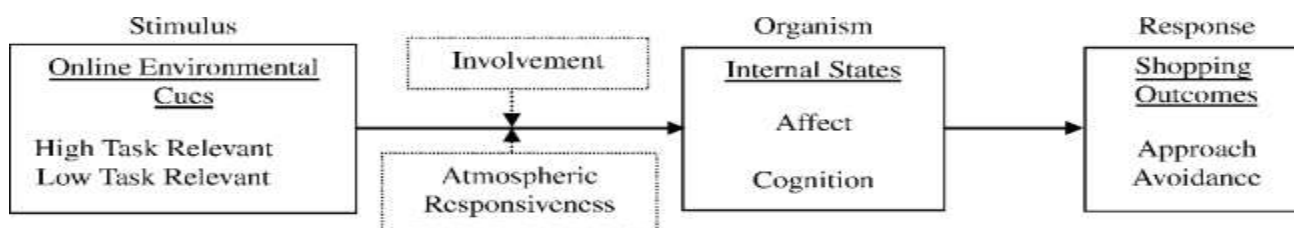


Figure 1: S-O-R model

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To find out whether Listening to Music creates a relaxed atmosphere while shopping in the Stores.
- To find out whether Music motivates the Customers to buy more.
- To find out whether Pleasant atmosphere created by Music make Customers to spend more time in the store.
- To find out whether Music in the Store makes waiting in the 'Q' more comfortable.
- To find out the Customers' intention to recommend Stores to the others due to pleasurable environment created by the Music in the Stores.
- To find out the Customers' intention to visit the Store again.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of the study Exploratory Research Design is used. Convenience sampling method is adopted for the study. Survey method is used for collecting the data. The study was conducted in Hyderabad city. The data is collected through intercepts at stores during the period of 01/06/14 to 15/07/14 i.e., 45 days. A well structured questionnaire is designed for the study and due care is taken to avoid any kind of ambiguity. The sample for the study is 256 respondents. Nominal scale is used for all the variables except age, income, family size where in ratio scale is used.

Sample Design:

The sample size of 256 Consisted of customers who were of:

- Different age groups
- Different educational background and
- Different occupations.

Research hypothesis:

1. **HO: Listening to music does not create relax atmosphere in the Stores.** **H1:**
Listening to music creates relax atmosphere in the Stores.
2. **HO: Music does not motivate customers to buy more.** **H1:**
Music motivates customers to buy more.

3. **HO: Pleasant environment created by the Music does not make customers to spend more time in the Stores.** **H1: Pleasant environment created by the Music makes customers to spend more time in the Stores.**
4. **HO: Music in the Stores does not make waiting in the ‘Q’ more comfortable.** **H1: Music in the Stores makes waiting in the ‘Q’ more comfortable.**
5. **HO: Pleasant experience in the Stores due to Music does not make customers’ to recommend the Stores to the others.** **H1: Pleasant experience in the Stores due to Music makes customers’ to recommend the Stores to the others.**
6. **HO: Pleasant experience in the Stores due to Music does not result in customers’ visiting the Store again.** **H1: Pleasant experience in the Stores due to Music results in customers’ revisiting the Store again.**

Data Analysis and Interpretation:

The data collected from the primary source has been tabulated and this forms the major basis for the research study:

The data which has been collected through the questionnaire from the respondents is coded and analyzed for interpretation. Simple as well as sophisticated statistical tools were used to analyze the data that is collected for arriving at feedback and conclusions. **Percentages, Cross Tabs, Non – Parametric tests, etc were used to analyze the data.**

The statistical package SPSS was used to do the analysis of the data collected.

Data analysis:

Demographic analysis of the respondents:

| GENDER | | |
|----------------|------------|------------|
| | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
| FEMALE | 72 | 28.1 |
| MALE | 184 | 71.9 |
| TOTAL | 256 | 100 |
| AGE | | |
| | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
| 20-25 | 168 | 65.6 |
| 26-35 | 60 | 23.4 |
| 36-45 | 20 | 7.8 |
| 46-55 | 4 | 1.6 |
| 56-65 | 4 | 1.6 |
| TOTAL | 256 | 100 |
| MARITAL STATUS | | |
| | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
| MARRIED | 68 | 26.6 |
| UNMARRIED | 188 | 73.4 |
| TOTAL | 256 | 100 |
| QUALIFICATION | | |
| | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
| 10+2 | 28 | 10.9 |
| GRADUATE | 134 | 52.3 |
| PG | 52 | 20.3 |
| PG+ | 38 | 14.8 |
| PROF. | 4 | 1.6 |
| TOTAL | 256 | 100 |
| SOCIAL STATUS | | |
| | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
| MIDDLE | 162 | 63.3 |
| HIGH MIDDLE | 68 | 26.6 |
| UPPER MIDDLE | 14 | 5.5 |
| UPPER UPPER | 12 | 4.7 |
| TOTAL | 256 | 100 |

| TYPE OF THE FAMILY | | |
|---------------------|------------|------------|
| | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
| JOINT | 80 | 31.2 |
| NUCLEAR | 176 | 68.8 |
| TOTAL | 256 | 100 |
| MEMBERS IN A FAMILY | | |
| | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
| 1 | 16 | 6.3 |
| 2 | 140 | 54.7 |
| 3 | 60 | 23.4 |
| 4 | 16 | 6.3 |
| 5 | 16 | 6.3 |
| 6 | 8 | 3.1 |
| TOTAL | 256 | 100 |
| OCCUPATION | | |
| | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
| STUDENT | 110 | 43.0 |
| HOUSE WIFE | 14 | 5.5 |
| EMPLOYEE | 80 | 31.3 |
| PROF. | 30 | 11.7 |
| BUSINESSMEN | 22 | 8.6 |
| TOTAL | 256 | 100 |
| FAMILY INCOME | | |
| | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
| 20K-50K | 106 | 41.4 |
| 51K-70K | 68 | 26.6 |
| 71K-90K | 18 | 7.0 |
| 91K-110K | 22 | 8.6 |
| 111K-130K | 14 | 5.5 |
| 131K+ | 28 | 10.9 |
| TOTAL | 256 | 100 |

Source: Survey Data.

CHI- SQUARE RESULTS:

| Alternate Hypothesis (p=0.05) | Pearson Chi- Square | D.F | Significance Two sides | Table value | Alternate Hypothesis |
|--|---------------------|-----|------------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| Listening to music creates relax atmosphere in the Stores while shopping. | 38.5 | 16 | .001 | 26.3 | Accepted |
| Music motivates customers to buy more. | 56.5 | 16 | .000 | 26.3 | Accepted |
| Pleasant environment created by the Music makes me to spend more time in the Stores. | 29.7 | 16 | .019 | 26.3 | Accepted |
| Music in the Stores makes waiting in the 'Q' more comfortable. | 29.7 | 16 | .044 | 26.3 | Accepted |
| I will recommend the Stores to others. | 69.9 | 16 | .000 | 26.3 | Accepted |
| I will visit the Store again. | 149.4 | 12 | .000 | 26.3 | Accepted |

FINDINGS:

- Listening to music creates relax atmosphere in the Stores.
- Relax atmosphere created by the Music in the Store motivates customer to buy more.

- Pleasant environment created by the Music makes customers' to spend more time in the Stores.
- Music in the Stores makes waiting in the 'Q' more comfortable for the customers'.
- Pleasant experience created by the Music in the Store motivates customers' to recommend the Stores to others.
- Pleasant experience created by the Music in the Store motivates customers' to revisiting the Store again.

SUGGESTIONS:

- Always music influence human mind and emotions, hence impacts buying behaviour.
- Loud music distracts consumers spending more time in the malls.
- Customers prefer light music and announcements regarding offers, discounts and new introductions over loud music.
- Always music does not influence consumers to purchase more.

CONCLUSION:

The study brings out the fact clearly that music is versatile and has ability to relax people physically, mentally and emotionally. Due to its capability to engage people it can contribute to stores environment. Music by creating relaxed store environment and creating a relaxed state of mind for customers' makes waiting time in 'Q's comfortable but does not motivate the customers to buy more. Pleasant experience in the outlets due to music creates and spreads good word of mouth leading to more foot falls in the stores.

Music can be used as a catalyst by the retailers to create differentiation. Music therefore can be rated as very important element in the store environment and can be strategically used by understanding demographics and psychographics of its target market, and can create stimulating audio environment in the stores making customers feel relaxed very important element in the store environment and can be strategically used by understanding demographics and psychographics of its target market, and can create stimulating audio environment in the stores making customers feel relaxed, comfortable, delighted and spend more time in the stores and translating it into more sales.

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