

Consumer Buying Decisions- A Study On Mood Buying Based On Music, Lighting And Color.

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Abstract: The paper attempts to identify the influence of atmosphere of a market, mall or store, unconsciously on a prospective consumer vis a vis the influence on mood and buying. There have been earlier studies on this area, however there is a less work undertaken on the synchronous effect of various atmosphere generators of a market place or sales area.

The response of a consumer towards various store layouts, music, temperature, lighting etc. cannot be similar and subtle changes can lead to change in actions and buying decisions taken by an individual. Therefore, this study attempts to present a view of various ways to see the relation between atmosphere of a sales area and evaluation of products being considered for purchase, through the dynamism of moods. Additionally, two important environmental cues namely music and lighting (color) under which purchase is undertaken is also studied to see its effect on evaluation of a product.

1. INTRODUCTION

Even after the rising sales of products through online channels, still many of us visit a super store or usual grocery store regularly with our shopping cart(s) full of products. However, if one asks each consumer as to why they have chosen a particular brand of cornflakes or shampoo or a specific sun protection cream, they may find it hard to motivate the choices they make. Unconscious choices are many times major drivers in influencing purchase decisions which stem from a consumer's mood. It can be easily understood by applying the concept on one self, you are in a grocery store near you, to choose a liquor for your family friends coming to dine at your place in the evening, The volume of consumers in the store is adequate, neither too many, nor too less, the floor is clean and spanking and the liquor aisle is wide and has lot of variety. An all time favorite song which you have not heard recently is playing in the store, while you're about to choose between a regular brand of whiskey and a known, little more expensive single malt. All these factors positively influence your mood and after short deliberation and inspired by that beloved song of yours being played, you decide to buy the expensive single malt. Was this particular choice predetermined or has the vibes and aura of the store significantly impacted the end product choice of you as a consumer? When it comes to colors, its effects can vary across the globe. For instance, in most of Europe, white is a color of joy and celebrations and is associated with marriages and holy functions. However, in other places especially in India, white is a color of melancholy and sadness while red is considered as the colors of happiness and joy.

If one has to choose colors for business or certain display its effects should be first considered. The following are generally perceived color references

White: Purity, Sophistication, Grace.

Red: Aggression, Passion, Fun.

Black: Esteem, Authority, Evil.

Yellow: Welcoming, Calm, Joyous.

Purple: Wealth, Worthy, Richness

Blue: Peace, Youth, Loyalty.

2. BACKGROUND

(Ropoport., 1982; Bitner, 1986; and chiu). Earlier studies on the effect of purchase environments on purchase intentions have shown that a store's environment can majorly influence the behavior of a consumer as it completely affects consumers' moods (North and Hargreave, 1998) researched on the impact of songs being played in a store setting on the choice of a product choice and they made a conclusion that music has the potential to direct the choice of product one may buy. (Arnie and Kim, 1993). In the above context stated that classical music may reinforce a consumer to intentionally buy a dearer wine as compared to the top music chart being played at that time. This study is not singularly confined to noticing the effect of music on buying mood alone. In addition to music, the effects of color and light will also be noted, as research has proved a notable relationship amongst the environmental cues along with purchasing pattern.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

It has already been proven that the buying environment plays a vital role in a consumer's buying decision. Therefore, this study shall primarily focus on understanding the reasons behind:

- i. Affect of mood on positive and negative product evaluations.
- ii. Affect of sales area atmospherics on the mood of a consumer.

4. THE EFFECT OF MOOD ON PRODUCT EVALUATIONS

Mood is a state of emotion which may majorly influences the behavior of people and it can be temporary for a lesser time or it can be for a considerable duration as well. . The response to stimuli is also affected by the type of mood in which one is. For instance, a depressed may lead to a negative form of reaction; however joyous mood may make an individual more responsive and receptive. Moods may last longer and are different from what emotions are. (Bitner and Obermiller, 1984) stated "respondents who viewed retail products in an emotionally appealing environment rated products more positively than subjects who viewed the same products in an uncomfortable environment because the mood was positively influenced by the environment."

(Spangenberg et al., 1996; Chebat & Michon, 2003) concluded that a mix of various feelings which may result in one's mood becoming positive will eventually result in a higher rating and better feedback by the consumer.

(Donovan & Rossiter 1982), concluded that the review of a product being good is very much dependent on the mood which a customer is having. In their research they ascertained that feelings of positivity are also an outcome of positive mood possessed by an individual.

(Mehrabian and Russell, 1974; Chebat and Mixon, 2003). Psychological cues are the intermediary factor with regards to environmental cues and behavior of a consumer. The environmental cues play a major role in the happiness of a respondent, his enthusiasm, and the will to make a purchase decision.

(Gooley et al, 1997) matched satisfaction of a customer via 2 different stores of a similar brand with similar variety, pricing and quality checking response from samples which consisted of seventy six users each week. These customers were questioned thrice i.e. when they were shopping inside the store; at the entrance and when they move from the cash desk towards exit.

The idea of study was to see how moods influence seven specific variables i.e.: shopping time, return intent, liking exhibition, satisfaction, exhibition, time volunteering and amount of money put on random items picked by a consumer for purchase. They concluded that positive store atmosphere enhances the satisfaction level of a product through choice of a customer and positive mood

5. MUSIC

Music is an important art and it largely forms as biggest accepted art forms across the globe with multiple genres and types to choose from. To many, music is a way of expressing one's feelings and emotions. Globally it has been acknowledged that music reduces stress, improves efficiency and aids in creativity. No wonder, marketers use music as an aid to help their sales in super stores and kiosks.

The music being played act as a cue for certain response elicited by the customers, for instance classical music usually induce customers towards an expensive purchase. It is believed that classical music is usually seen as a royal and elegant form of music, thus it elicits such response. It was further seen that while browsing through a store, people tend to purchase French wine when French music is played and interestingly they tend to purchase German wine in case German music is played which clearly shows the power of music and how it affects the subconscious.

5.1 The affects of positive and negative music on buying

(Ahmad, Nawaz and Rana, Afsheen, 2015). Concluded that people get inspired by listening to music and it gets them into the other mood. People feel that music strongly impacts their behaviors as well as mood. They found that people in majority are interested in listening to music and further believe that it channelizes them in both positive and negative ways.

5.1.1 The affect of positive music

(Hargreaves and North 1998) concluded that a cafeteria's perception was that of an elegant place owing to the playing of classical music in it; during times when easy listening genre was used as a preferred type, people perceived the cafeteria to be very dignified and elegant place. These results suggested that music which is positive usually have a definite effect on the sentiments of a consumer.

Similarly, in a bank setting, the public in the bank found it to be inspiring the moment classical music was being played which naturally enhanced the consumer's mood. As a result, the time spent became tolerable and consumers felt like staying in the bank.

5.1.2 The affect of negative music.

Music styles can of course also have a negative impact on consumer mood. A renewed look towards the study undertaken by North & Hargreaves suggests that various styles of music lead to a negative influence on the mood of a consumer. Pop music is perceived as optimistic for cafes and in such places if no music or any other genre is played, the customers would not feel inspired.

(Khalifa, Roy, Rainville, Dalla Bella & Peretz 2008) noted that melancholy in music reduces one's excitement level, leading to a drop in heart beat and blood pressure level. Thus, low or gloomy music substantially becomes an important factor leading to negative mood. Such songs (sad) are catalyst to one linking the same with sad situations in their life.

6. THE IMPORTANCE OF LIGHTING AND COLOR

From the perspective of understanding your consumer, it is essential to note the influence of lighting and color and on the behavior of a consumer. Sales officials and Managers can take help of this information to influence the mood of the customer and increase the sales of their products. (Babin et al., 2003, Areni & Kim, 1994 and Crowley, 1993) suggested that after several studies, lighting and color seemed to be having a lot of significance which can influence the perception of consumers in a market setting or sales area.

6.1 *Positive versus negative color and lighting.*

Just like music, the lighting and color affect the performance of humans as they are responsible for triggering reactions.

(Babin et al. 2003). Cool colours are usually associated with wavelengths which are short. Such (cool) colors usually enhance one's feelings towards a certain environment and ultimately enhance their mood On the other hand, warm colors are linked with longer wave lengths and orange and red are typical colors for such category. Warm colors like these enhance consumer's mood and resulting perception much lesser than cooler colors. (Belizzi, Crowley & Hasty, 1983) suggested that Cool environments of a store are usually preferred by customers as opposed to warmer environments This research further proves that selecting cooler colors enhances the mood and eventually the consumer product ratings.

7.2 Importance of color intensity

Intensity simply refers to the how bright a particular color is. A color may be at its full intensity if it is not toned and mixed with two extreme colors i.e. black or white it is called as pure hue. A color's intensity is thus changeable with the mixing of black or white to it. In store management and designing, the intensity of lighting an important phenomenon to decide the shop atmosphere. Research into how lighting effects consumer's mood shows that using softer lighting as compared to brighter lighting also affects the mood of a consumer.

7.3 Intensity of Lighting

(Areni & Kim, 1994). Brighter lighting influenced buyers to examine and handle more goods Little research was done on this subject until 1994, so the conclusions appear to be completely unfounded. However, the research is done (Valdez & Mehrabian, 1994; Bellizi and Hite, 1992). Just like music, color and lighting also plays a vital role and influences a shop's atmosphere, cooler shades enhance a consumer's mood with respect to a particular environment where as warmer shades color may considerably decrease mood of a consumer. (Mehrabian, 1976; Areni & Kim, 1994). The color and lighting intensity in business environments can be handy and may prove to be useful for enhancing a consumer's mood. Using soft and warm lights and mild colors leads to a favourable affect on a consumer's mood as it makes a consumer senses improved well being in such case (Markin, Lillis & Narayana, 1976) suggested that softly lit store can has the probability to make a consumer stay in the store for a longer duration since he feels it as comforting and does not lead to anxiety. Thus it means that there is a positive influence of soft lighting in the indoors on a consumer's mood. However, it is also observed that more lumens and brighter lights can entail more no. of mood changes. A consumer may not feel like staying longer in a store premises owing to the bright light since it leads to lack of consumer comfort.

7. CONCLUSION

There is significant literature to put forth and reach to a conclusion that consumer's mood is a vital as well as bridging factor between atmosphere of a shop and other dependent factors of consumer behavior. Pleasant moods have a positive effect on product reviews and unpleasant mood can have varying influences on product ratings. Studies done in this regard conclude that if the mood of a consumer is negative or unpleasant, it may lead to a negative or positive outcome, evaluation, feedback and purchase decision Via the various reviews studied and put forth it is thus obvious to conclude that product evaluations do get influenced by various very significant super market/ store atmospherics, specifically music, lighting and color as they influence mood to a large extent. A pleasant mood thus favorably affects the evaluations of a product , however an unpleasant mood can go both ways which can eventually lead to both positive as well as negative evaluation of a service or product.

8. SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The increasing no. of brand stores along with dynamism in consumer emotions and mood is a consistent matter of research in the field of consumer psychology. For future research, combinations of several environmental characteristics can be studied and correlated with emphasizing the role of each such variable in influencing the customer behavior. In addition to this, empirical research can be undertaken to check the impact of other variables like material of construction used like wood, tiles, the lay out and temperature vis a vis consumer buying behavior. In addition to the above , study can

also be undertaken to identify the amount of money time and money spent in a super market or store in relation to the type of set up and furnishings along with other already mentioned variables it has. The research in this field can prove beneficial to the marketers and store owners and can be helpful in enhancing the standard of grocery shopping by providing a better and more comfortable environment.

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