

A comprehensive study in exploring the significance of visual merchandising as a marketing strategy

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to integrate the store image, VM and related literature keeping in mind the outcome of framework of VM traits. The Distribution of Apparel Industry is divided between street markets, Luxury stores, multi brand retailers, and e-tailers (Bardhi and Arnould 2005) expanding the parameters of visual traits in the service scape. This diverse nature of distribution structure will shape the premise of the basis for this study which intended to investigate the thought processes and strategies for VM appropriation inside of fashion Retailing.

Keywords: Visual merchandising, Retail Marketing, Fashion Marketing

Introduction

'Everything begins with the eye', Clarke-Hill *et al.* (1999:34) cite Aristotle. This basic proverb encapsulates the significance of style as a major aspect of the utilization process (Martineau 1958; Kunkel and Berry 1968; Kotler 1973; Donovan and Rosstier 1982; Mills and Paul 1988; Bitner 1992; Lea-Greenwood 1998; Broadbridge and Doyle 1999; Bell 1999; Portas 1999; Kerfoot *et al.* 2003; Davis and Ward 2005).

In the comprehensively aggressive and dynamic design retail environment the Image of the brand is vital, and in the most recent decade with the headway of e-business, store image and visual marketing (VM) have turned into an inexorably imperative wellspring of upper hand and separation (Diamond and Pintel 2007, Easey 2009, Morgan 2010). Regardless of this huge industry pattern there remains an absence of experimental writing which embraces a vital business point of view in this field and this structures the method of reasoning for study. The examination on store f can be portrayed as grew yet dated and the little assortment of writing relating to VM is restricted as far as generalisability (Lea- Greenwood 1998; Kerfoot *et al.* 2003). The point of this study is to integrate the store image, VM and related writing keeping in mind the end goal to make a calculated system of VM traits. This model will then be explored within the Fashion retailing sector as this was recently identified by McColl *et al.* (2011) as playing a strategic role in their business model.

Literature Review

Cook and Walters (1991) recommend that an organization's business sector position is its reaction to its comprehension of the necessities, wishes and behavioral qualities of its objective client profile. Situating is characterized by Wortzel (1987) who proposes: "For a retailer, vital situating includes giving remarkable worth. Vital situating includes selecting and after that conveying to manage an incorporated arrangement of instruments also, correspondence procedures that distinguish and disclose the store to the client." (p 47)

From a buyer viewpoint, Levy and Weitz (2004) characterize situating as: "The outline and usage of a retail blend to make an image in the psyche of the client, with respect to its rivals." (p 176) Walters (1988) proposes a model of situating which was

produced subsequently of broad experimental examination inside of the retail business. Walters recommends that the four essential choice territories for retailers in adding to their showcasing technique are those of exchanging organization, stock methodology, client administration and client interchanges system. These choice ranges are, as indicated by Walters, the retail blend components which characterize the retailer situating methodology, and position the retailer as far as client desires and fulfilment. It is proposed that these components are the key elements for the retailer in imparting and setting up their upper hand and market position (Smith and Burns 1996), depicted through the image of the store (Kent 2003; Kerfoot, *et al.* 2003; Davies and Ward 2005) and conceptualized inside of the store image.

Store Image

Store Image is the methods by which the retailer situating technique is depicted to the client inside of the store (Walters 1988), and the methods by which the brand is depicted, strengthened and oversaw inside of the store (Kent 2003; Kerfoot, *et al.* 2003; Davies and Ward 2005). For retailers it offers a chance to emphatically impact in-store conduct and construct store steadfastness (McKenna 2000; Levy and Weitz 2004), and as opposed to the writing on retailer brand system, retail location image is a territory which has gotten significant exploration consideration (Martineau 1958; Kunkel and Berry 1968; Jolson and Spath 1973; Doyle and Fenwick 1974; Lindquist 1974; Marks 1976; Schiffman, *et al.* 1977; Sirgy 1982; Mazursky and Jacoby 1986; Zimmer and Golden 1988; Gagliano and Hathcote 1994; Lee and Johnson 1997; Thompson and Chen 1998; Birtwistle, *et al.* 1999; Kumar and Karande 2000; Leszczyc and Timmermans 2001). Martineau (1958) characterized store image as "the way that the store is characterized in the customers mind, halfway as an air of mental properties", whilst Hook (1989), establishes that store image: "Comprises of a blend of unmistakable or utilitarian variables and immaterial or mental elements that a client seems to be available." (p 31)

Most of the store Image writing expands upon right on time thinks about by Martineau (1958), Kunkel and Berry (1968) and Lindquist (1974), and has advanced from purchaser

conduct research, centering upon buyer impression of the components of store image, and their reactions to these components (Martineau 1958; Kunkel and Berry 1968; Jolson and Spath 1973; Doyle and Fenwick 1974; Lindquist 1974; Marks 1976; Schiffman, *et al.* 1977; Sirgy 1982; Mazursky and Jacoby 1986; Zimmer and Golden 1988; Lee and Johnson 1997; Thompson and Chen 1998; Birtwistle, *et al.* 1999; Kumar and Karande 2000; Leszczyc and Timmermans 2001). There has been next to no hypothetical advancement inside of the store image writing in the course of recent decades, with later studies testing for the presence of already recognized components, in any case, all the more as of late, an assortment of writing has advanced which suggests that store image and outline are the methods by which the brand is depicted inside of the store (Baker, *et al.* 1994; Porter and Claycomb 1997; Doyle and Broadbridge 1999; Collins-Dodd and Linley 2003; Kent 2003; Kerfoot, *et al.* 2003; Carpenter, *et al.* 2005; Davies and Ward 2005).

In the past few years a growing number of studies have evolved which focus on fashion retailing and, in particular, in the application of the principles of retail positioning (Walters 1988) and the theory and dimensions of store image (Schim and Kotsiopulos 1992; Birtwistle and Freathy 1998; Birtwistle, *et al.* 1999 Gallanis 2000; Kerfoot, *et al.* 2003; Paulins and Geistfield 2003) within the fashion retailing context. Although these studies do not extend theoretical knowledge of store image and positioning concepts, they do highlight the importance of store image in differentiation within the fashion retailing industry.

A little, yet significant, collection of writing has risen which assesses store image and brand image congruency from the point of view of the style retailer (Bread cook, *et al.* 1994; Doyle and Broadbridge 1999; Kent 2003; Davies and Ward 2005; Kent 2007; Kent and Stone 2007) and the buyer (Porter and Claycomb 1997; Collins-Dodd and Linley 2003; Kerfoot, *et al.* 2003; Carpenter, *et al.* 2005; Vahie and Paswan 2006). These studies recommend that retailers draw not just upon the customary components of brand character, those of name, image, bundling and promoting, additionally from the measurements recognized in the investigation of store image, along these lines bringing the brand image through the exterior of the store to the store itself through the signage, mind-set sheets, bundling and marking of own brands, to the format and staff conduct, focusing on the significance of inventiveness as store appearance, VM and in-store experience get to be essential to the center brand values (Backstrom and Johansson 2006; Kent 2007). Retailers, they propose in this manner, have an extensive variety of issues to consider and control when building up the retailer brand, especially the outline components of stock, VM, show and bundling, in-store advancement, area, environment and climate and space which have been given noticeable quality in late studies (Doyle and Broadbridge 1999; Kent 2003; Kerfoot, *et al.* 2003; Davies and Ward 2005), as techniques for imparting and dealing with the retailer brand.

There are clear cooperative energies between store image and VM, and this paper expects to highlight the likenesses which can be distinguished from the writing. With a specific end goal to accomplish this, VM will first be characterized and the primary qualities of the writing talked about, then the key qualities of every will be recognized in table arrangement.

Visual Merchandising

VM is hard to characterize briefly because of its blend of unmistakable and immaterial measurements, and the unpredictability of implications and connections credited to it by clients (Kunkel and Berry 1968; Greenland and McGoldrick 1994; Burt and Carralero-Encinas 2000). For the most part, it is perceived as being contained both interior and outer contemplations (Mills and Paul 1988), and Jernigan and Easterling (1990, p67) characterize it as the tasteful components which are composed pull in purchasers; "a method for improving an item according to the buyer to urge them to buy that item, it incorporates the entire part of the store and its image all around".

The sources of VM, or "presentation" as it were generally known can be depicted as dubious and barely recorded (Wheeler 1986, Wood 1982, Portas 1999, Morgan 2010, Pegler 2009). Plants and Paul (1988) recommend that show was first obvious in America at the turn of the twentieth century, whereby traders swarmed every one of their products in the window and presentations were disarranged with no connected rationale and worked simply to demonstrate the sort of merchandise the retailer sold.

However Wood (1982), Laermans (1993) and Morgan (2010) repudiate, contending that shows with elaborate dramatic displays were clear in French retail establishment Le Bon Marche no less than 50 years prior. In the mid nineteenth century the landing of the retail chain position in the UK, London and France, and the propels in innovation which permitted vast sheets of glass to be made were key empowering influences inside of the showcase field (Wheeler 1986, Morgan 2010). The development of a gathering of fashioners and designers in the twenties who were fascinated by retail plan essentially influenced show hypothesis and practice (Anon 1984). Portas (1999) and Rawthorn (1999) both refer to the charging of Salvador Dali by New York store Bonwit Teller as urgent in hoisting the significance of presentation. Moreover, Honeycombe (1984) contends that Gordon Selfridge of Selfridge's retail establishment likewise added to freeing show, raising it to a workmanship and accordingly shaping showcase into a calling.

The 1950's to mid-1970's, described by a clear development in consumerism, implied impressive advancements in VM for instance Mills and Paul (1988) report that shows were acknowledged as business workmanship. This period was moreover imperative as the principal scholastic writing developed. These incorporated the previously stated study by Martineau (1958), and Kotler (1973) and the original paper on shading by Itten (1961). These creators were the first to record passionate and behavioral impacts as an aftereffect of the control of the retail environment and tactile boosts. Different creators, Lindquist (1974), Kunkel and Berry (1968) and Merhabian and Russel (1974) promoted this methodology and this bunch focused on the customer conduct point of view. Lea-Greenwood (1998) notes constraints to these studies as in Lindquist's (1974) rundown of store image variables and Kunkel and Berry's (1968) arrangement of store image parts, the impact of window presentations is missing. Besides, those groupings of store image parts which do exist are altogether identified with the in-store experience (Lea-Greenwood 1998). The monetary atmosphere of the eighties was one of blast and extreme rivalry in western nations, and while in the past retailers depended in plain view as absolutely luring, here the

store environment started to be overseen as a key offering gadget and the term visual marketing was made (Ghosh 1990). To outline, Walsh (1992) reported that 86 for each penny of UK retailers set out on some type of plan program amid 1980-1987. Research distributed in this decade, took after on in the natural brain research vein of the prior decade, and a plenty of store image concentrates on rose up out of the USA (Donovan and Rosstier 1982, Millmann 1982, Zimmer and Golden 1988, and Bellizzi, Crowley and Hasty 1982). Be that as it may, these concentrates likewise just investigated store image and VM from the observation of the customer. Interestingly, it was amid this time of great rivalry that VM was initially recognized as a trait of the store environment and was in this manner considered a legitimate component of the promoting blend (McGoldrick 1990). It was right now Porter (1985) fused VM and store environment into the 'showcasing and deals fragment' of his 'worth chain' which was a noteworthy affirmation to the vital business estimation of VM. Different creators which support this point of view include: Kotler and Rath (1984); Fitch and Woodheusen (1987); Walters (1989); and Mills and Paul (1998). It took till the mid-nineties for VM to be obviously recognized inside of the retail environment writing (Bitner 1992; Ghosh 1990). In the most recent decade VM research has been worried with the incorporation and use of VM standards inside of an online setting (Khakimjanova and Park 2005, Ha *et al.* 2007, Park *et al.* 2008, Ha and Lennon 2010, Im and Ha 2011).

Store Image and VM Attributes

Kerfoot *et al.* (2003) and Morgan (2010) distinguishes that VM has developed from being a particular movement termed as "presentation" to end up a complex all-encompassing procedurincluding the blend of various properties. However because of fracture inside of the writing there is little agreement in respect to what these qualities are, yet Lea-Greenwood (1998) and Davies and Ward (2005) recommend this would be valuable. Table 1 underneath speaks to a blend of characteristics between the store image and VM writing with relating writers.

Table 1: Store image and visual Merchandising Attributes

Store image attribute	Author	Visual merchandising attribute	Author
Advertising	Berry (1968), Stephenson (1969), Jolson and Spath (1973), Marks (1976)	In-store advertising	Mills and Paul (1988), Harris (1998), Davies and Ward (2005)
Delivery	Jolson and Spath (1973), Lee and Johnson (1997)	N/A	
Displays	Jolson and Spath (1973), Bawa, et al. (1989), Iyer (1989)	Presentation methods Assortment Organisation Category co-ordination Sample displays Featuring	Hines and Bruce (2006), Lusch et al. (2011), (Easey 2009), Mills and Paul (1988), Jackson and Shaw (2000), Newman and Cullen (2002), Morgan (2010), Bell and Ternus (2007), Pegler (2009), Diamond and Pintel (2007), Harris (1998), Ha et al. (2007), Lea-

			Greenwood (2008), Kerfoot et al. (2003), Omar (1999)
Dressing rooms	Mazursky and Jacoby (1986), Grise and Harver (1990), Lee and Johnson (1997)	Design services	
Design and communication of brand image	Baker, et al. (1994), Porter and Claycomb (1997), Doyle and Broadbridge (1999), Collins-Dodd and Linley (2003), Kent (2003), Kerfoot, et al. (2003), Carpenter, et al. (2005), Davies and Ward (2005)	Design integrity Graphics In-store personal communication services Cash point communications Concept ideas and images	Hines and Bruce (2006), Mills and Paul (1988), Newman and Cullen (2002), Morgan (2010), Bell and Ternus (2007), Pegler (2009), Lea-Greenwood (2008), Kerfoot et al. (2003), Davies and Ward (2005)
Fashionability and appropriateness of merchandise	Fisk (1961), Rich and Portis (1964), Dommermuth and Cundiff (1967), Berry (1968), Stephenson (1969), Jolson and Spath (1973), Bearden and Woodside (1976), Marks (1976), Bearden (1977), Schiffman, et al. (1977), Mazursky and Jacoby (1986), Schim and Kotsiopoulos (1992), Stanforth and Lennon (1997)	Major trends	Diamond and Pintel (2007), Kerfoot et al. (2003), Davies and Ward (2005)
Merchandise information	Mazursky and Jacoby (1986)	Communications Signs Tickets	Hines and Bruce (2006), Easey (2009), Mills and

		Product information Education Active promotion Packaging	Paul (1988), Jackson and Shaw (2000), Newman and Cullen (2002), Morgan (2010), Bell and Ternus (2007), Pegler (2009), Diamond and Pintel (2007), Harris (1998), Kerfoot et al. (2003)
Merchandise quality	Berry (1968), Mazursky and Jacoby (1986)	N/A	
Store appearance	Marks (1976), Sirohi and Kotsiopoulos (1992)	Store façade Décor and walls Floors Ceilings	Hines and Bruce (2006), Lusch et al. (2011), Easey (2009), Mills and Paul (1988), Newman and Cullen (2002), Morgan (2010), Bell and Ternus (2007), Pegler (2009), Harris (1998)
Parking	Jolson and Spath (1973), Bearden and Woodside (1976), Bearden (1977), Mazursky and Jacoby (1986), Leszczyc and Timmermans (2001)	N/A	
Post transactional satisfaction	Fisk (1961), Coppett (1988)	N/A	
Pricing	Fisk (1961), Berry	N/A	

strategies	(1968), Jolson and Spath (1973), Bearden and Woodside (1976), Bearden (1977), Mazurky and Jacoby (1986), Bawa, et al. (1989), Iyer (1989), Sirohi and Kotsiopoulos (1992), Stanforth and Lennon (1997), Leszczyc and Timmermans (2001)		
Rest rooms	Berry (1968)	N/A	
Returns policies on adjustments	Berry (1968), Jolson and Spath (1973), Mazurky and Jacoby (1986), Dotson and Patton (1992), Schim and Kotsiopoulos (1992), Lee and Johnson (1997)	N/A	
Sales personnel	Fisk (1961), Rich and Portis (1964), Berry (1968), Stephenson (1969), Jolson and Spath (1973), Marks (1976), Bearden (1977), Mazurky and Jacoby (1986), Dotson and Patton (1992), Schim and Kotsiopoulos (1992), Sirohi and Kotsiopoulos (1992), Lee and Johnson (1997), Reynolds and Beatty (1999), Leszczyc and Timmermans (2001)	N/A	

Store atmosphere	Berry (1968), Stephenson (1969), Jolson and Spath (1973), Bearden (1977), Mazurky and Jacoby (1986), Schim and Kotsiopoulos (1992)	Lighting Heating and Ventilation Colours Sound/Hearing Textures/Touch Entertainment Sight Smell Taste	Lusch et al. (2011), Mills and Paul (1988), Jackson and Shaw (2000), Newman and Cullen (2002), Morgan (2010), Bell and Ternus (2007), Pegler (2009), Diamond and Pintel (2007), Kerfoot et al. (2003), Ha et al. (2007), Davies and Ward (2005)
Store hours	Jolson and Spath (1973), Mazurky and Jacoby (1986)	N/A	
Store layout	Mazurky and Jacoby (1986)	Store layout Fixture Interior partitioning Modular systems	Hines and Bruce (2006), Easey (2009), Mills and Paul (1988), Morgan (2010), Bell and Ternus (2007), Pegler (2009), Diamond and Pintel (2007), Harris (1998), Kerfoot et al. (2003), Ha et al. (2007)
Store location	Fisk (1961), Berry (1968), Stephenson (1969), Jolson and Spath (1973), Bearden (1977), Schiffman, et al. (1977), Mazurky and Jacoby (1986)	Store Location	Davies and Ward (2005)

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