

Impact of Fashion Trends on Visual Merchandising for Promoting Fashion Apparel Brands

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Abstract

A Fashion Retail Store is an embodiment of a fashion brand, and the art and science of visual merchandising position it as the best medium for creating and maintaining long-lasting customer relationships. Nowadays, clients have become progressively exposed to, and mindful of fashion trends as a result of various mediums accessible and dedicated to diffusing the latest fashion trends to consumers as fast as could be expected. The life expectancy of a particular style likewise has all the earmarks of being moving considerably more quickly than at any time in recent memory, evidently in light of the expansion in consumer fashion mindfulness and their interest to see new products on each visit to a store. This has become amazingly vital for a fashion brand to stand tall by laying out great visual marketing objectives that oblige the craft of show and store business and help maintain the brand image. Visual merchandising which consists of various elements, not only exposes the new style a fashion brand has in the store but also highlights the new fashion trends, which change every season. This as a result helps a brand to communicate with their audiences based on their fashion apparel preferences and creates a Fashion brand image in the viewers' or consumers' minds. This research aim is to find the impact of Fashion trends on visual merchandising in promoting Fashion apparel brands. An Exploratory Research design followed by descriptive research was adopted to investigate the impact through secondary data study, and primary data through Survey Method-online survey by distributing the Google form questionnaire through email, and social media is being followed to.

Keywords

Apparel Brands, Brand Image, Consumer Behavior, Fashion Trends, Visual

Merchandising

1. Introduction

Fashion trends have always been an important aspect of the fashion industry, driving the demand for new styles and designs. Visual merchandising, on the other hand, is an essential tool for promoting fashion apparel brands, enabling retailers to showcase their products in a visually appealing and engaging way. The impact of fashion trends on visual merchandising is a topic of significant interest in the fashion industry, as it explores the relationship between two critical components of the fashion retail landscape. This research paper investigates the impact of fashion trends on visual merchandising for promoting fashion apparel brands, analyzing how fashion trends influence the visual merchandising strategies of retailers, and how these strategies, in turn, impact consumer behaviour. The fashion industry is continually evolving, with new fashion trends emerging every season. These trends are often driven by fashion influencers, fashion shows, and fashion publications, among others. Keeping up with these trends is crucial for fashion apparel brands to remain relevant and meet customer demand. However, fashion trends can also pose a challenge for retailers, as they need to regularly update their visual merchandising displays to reflect these trends. Visual merchandising is an essential component of fashion retailing, as it plays a significant role in attracting and engaging customers. Effective visual merchandising strategies can create a compelling shopping experience for customers, leading to increased sales and customer loyalty. Retailers employ various visual merchandising techniques, including window displays, in-store displays, and product placement, to showcase their products and promote their brands. The impact of fashion trends on visual merchandising is significant, as retailers need to update their visual merchandising displays regularly to reflect these trends. For example, if animal prints are a popular trend in the fashion industry, retailers might use these prints in their window displays or in-store displays to attract customers' attention. Additionally, retailers might use different lighting or props to create a specific mood or theme that aligns with the current fashion trends. The impact of visual merchandising on consumer behaviour has been well-documented. Studies have shown that effective visual merchandising can influence customers' purchase decisions and increase sales. However, the study on the influences of fashion trends on visual merchandising strategies and, in turn, consumer behaviour, is an area that requires further investigation. In this context, the impact of fashion trends on visual merchandising for promoting fashion apparel brands is a significant area to be addressed and analyzed. This research paper aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on this topic, providing insights into how fashion trends influence visual merchandising strategies and how these strategies impact consumer behaviour. The findings of

this study can be used by fashion retailers and apparel brands to develop effective visual merchandising strategies that align with current fashion trends and drive sales.

2. Literature Review

The objective of this literature review is to provide a comprehensive overview of previous research works. This will help to identify key concepts, theories, and methodologies that have shaped the field. Additionally, it aids in the identification of research gaps, which serve as the basis for formulating further research questions.

This review has been divided into four categories as mentioned below and also as illustrated in **Figure 1**.

- Visual Merchandising and Display & Experience Design
- Visual Merchandising and Fashion Trends
- Visual Merchandising and Consumer behaviour
- Visual Merchandising and Brand Image

2.1. Visual Merchandising and Display & Experience Design (Arranged in Chronological Order)

This subsection reviews the existing research papers in the area of Visual Merchandising concerning Display & Experience Design.

(Tu, 2016) Store Windows, the main design factors include dynamic line design, colour design, lighting design, these a few respects music design. Windows theme is different according to different season, every season has the corresponding window paint with an image, the store will be with the main commodity in the quarter through the model in the shop window display, at the same time the display techniques based on modelling, props, posters, etc. To form a perfect window design. Window design directly affects the inside; so many shops will pay attention to the window, through the window to attract customers, which affects sales.

Naveena & Suganya (2018) mentioned that visual merchandising has an excellent future with a lot of new exploration in the market with creativity, displays and presentation. Visual merchandising in the future will surely be a strong platform for customers and retailers and will enhance the buying process. It is an

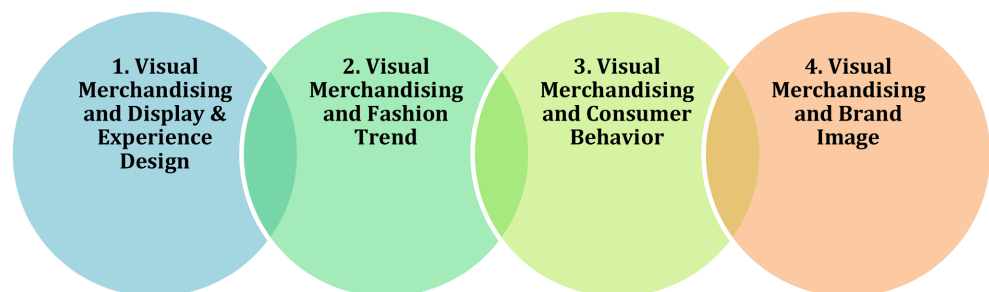


Figure 1. Categorization of literature review.

immensely growing professional field. The objective of this research is to analyze the customer's attitude and level of satisfaction toward the purchase of products through visual merchandising in retail stores. (Shilpa & Jayalakshmi, 2018) Windows display is the most significant aspect of a store or shop front. Windows can be exciting, price based or it is based on emotional stimulus, it can communicate about the products & services on offer, promote the image of the store & maximizes the sale of merchandise. It is the merchandise story that is to be promoted. A fashion retailer showcases the latest items on offer which may lend with seasonal themes autumn-winter, spring & summer combined with Holi, Diwali, Id, Valentine's Day and many more.

Upadhyay A. & Jauhari S. (2019) says that to attract customers' attention to apparel inside the store, mannequins can be used interestingly. There are stores where colourful/metallic mannequins are being used, just to stand out in the market and grab customers' attention. On the other side, stores have started rejecting ideal body type mannequins and adopted real-life body type mannequins like underweight, overweight and pregnant lady body types.

(Basu et al., 2022) Visual merchandising has evolved as an essential component of the retail store environment. It is regarded as a critical manifestation of the retail brand. Marketing historians suggest that visual merchandising gained prominence in the 18th century. Attractive public displays of merchandise, from planning the store window plan with mannequins to the internal arrangement of materials meant for sale, were helpful cues to convert prospects into buyers and promote sales. Retailers' growing need to transition from the "verbal engagement" of the sales personnel to a more subtle form of a "sensory experience"-based selling environment prompted the practice of visual merchandising. It was established as a "silent selling technique" that focused on the strategic display of merchandise to promote retail sales.

Singh & Shukla (2022) mentioned that Visual merchandising is evolving and is expanding its horizon for retailers as well as customer experience. Since the existence of visual merchandising, every aspect of factor is important but in today's competitive market, the priority of dimensions has been modified. There are many other dimensions of visual merchandising which a researcher can inculcate in further research to argue the over experience of contemporary customers.

2.2. Visual Merchandising and Fashion Trends

This subsection reviews the existing research papers in the area of Visual merchandising concerning Fashion trends.

(Jain, 2013) The traditional appearance of fashion stores is changing rapidly and contemporary designs have been possible through technological innovations. The growth in competition and the changes in consumer habits obliges businesses to introduce new designs to attract more customers. To fulfil the changing expectations of today's customers, apparel outlets have to understand the importance of shoppers' expectations and provide the right environment to lure

them. Effective visual merchandising can improve a store's brand image and increase sales. (Park et al., 2015) The analysis finds three dimensions of visual merchandising cognition: in-fashion, attractiveness, and function. A structural equation model confirms a conceptual framework for the influence of visual merchandising cognition on brand preferences. In-fashion and attractiveness have a significantly positive effect on brand aesthetic attributes. The function has an incredibly positive impact on brand functional attributes. Favourable attitudes toward visual merchandising directly transfer to favorable brand attitudes that are positively associated with purchase intentions. Arun Prasad & Vetrivel (2016) detected that most people are attracted to a store to buy a product after looking at the shop's visual and mannequin displays. In the case of apparel, a mannequin plays a great role in giving customers an idea of what are the latest trends and the visual appearance of the merchandise. A store window display is a great way to lure people into the store, as it gives them a look at stuff that they can assume to be present inside the store. They are also a great way to highlight certain types of merchandise.

De Villiers et al. (2018) mentioned that factors such as brand attitude, brand experience and purchase intention can be positively influenced, resulting in consumers' purchase intention. Therefore, implementing innovative retail strategies in the fashion industry is of imperative importance to drive sales and increase profit margins. The study highlighted the importance of using innovation and creativity to create a competitive advantage within the fashion retail sector. Also recommended that future researchers consider other demographic groups as only one could have marginalized the results. (Kim et al., 2020) In the complex modern society and under intensifying competition, a strategic fashion VM must be implemented to suit the purpose and situation for consumer critical burial operations. Since the results of this study show different brain responses to VM types depending on the level of fashion involvement, it will be useful for companies or brands to understand better the level of fashion involvement of consumers targeted and create a store with the appropriate VM type. Consumers with high fashion involvement need to develop and apply new methods season by season so that the brain region involved in emotional empathy can be activated through creative VMs.

2.3. Visual Merchandising and Consumer Behavior

This subsection reviews the existing research papers in the area of Visual merchandising and its impact on consumer behavior.

(Rahul & Mandal, 2014) Visual merchandising is the most important variable in the in-store environment among the tested variables. It can significantly influence consumers' store choice decisions. Therefore, the application of more attractive visual merchandising materials in their promotions will help to obtain better results. The lighting, design layout and cleanliness are the key elements of visual merchandizing programs other than product display. Sampaio et al. (2017)

discussed the application of new technologies in visual merchandising, mainly associated with fashion brands. It demonstrates that traditional brick-and-mortar store formats need to be modified to interact with the buying expectation of the customer, mainly young people. Today companies know the importance of offering tangible and intangible goods to consumers upon purchase, including investments in technology in POS visual merchandising. From this research study, it is revealed that there is a significant impact of visual merchandising on customers' purchase decisions, but there is a lot more scope to research VM as a retail strategic tool from the retailer's perspective. The present study is confined to only the influence of VM on customers' purchase decisions, but it has not thrown adequate light on finding innovative ways to increase sales through VM. More research studies on Visual Merchandising have to be conducted on every specific retail segment to help the retailers to make appropriate decisions related to retail strategies for the smooth functioning of retail operations, which further enhances the overall efficiency of the firm and leads to profit maximization. (Sharan et al., 2017) Consumer behaviour studies have confirmed that the lure of a beautifully done up show window and a tastefully decorated facade, more often than not, prove irresistible as they walk in to check out what is on offer. It also ensures exclusivity since no two stores should look alike. Besides, when the mood and theme of such displays change at regular intervals, it makes certain that the store remains top of mind. Loyal customers have often been known to anxiously wait for the next display. "Stickiness" in retail formats is also ensured by the imaginative use of colours, lighting, space furniture and visual elements concerning in-store displays. Fast-moving fashion or fast fashion describes a scenario where fashion retailers implement a range of strategies to adequately meet market demand by ensuring that they have the right product, in the right place, at the right time. Fast fashion brands as well as local retail fashion brands offer many kinds of fashion products such as clothes, bags, shoes, and accessories, drive to global fashion trends. Fast fashion clothing always follows up and creates seasonal trends, and new products to the store with amazing speed, and window display transformation is usually two times a week. Antony Rinsey et al. (2019) mentioned that the purpose of visual merchandising is to attract, engage and motivate the customer towards making a purchase, which creates an impact on consumer buying behaviour. In fashion marketing and communications, one of the most important tools is the retail environment. Visual merchandising is the physical representation and communication cue of the brand or retailer, through the creative grouping and presentation of the merchandise. The world of visual merchandising is all about the fascinating tool of display which help in the transformation of shoppers into stoppers, walk-bys into walk-ins and passers-by into passers who-buy. It is the art of implementing effective design ideas to increase store traffic and store sales. Creating an attractive VM can draw the maximum amount of consumers in, promote a sale of the slow-moving product, announce a sale or welcome a season.

(Mubarak & Musthapha, 2020) The research explored how the visual mer-

chandising factors affecting the impulse purchasing of its customers as it is immediate with no pre-purchase decision. The findings showed that there was a positive vital link between the impulse buying behaviour of consumers and window display, mannequin display, floor merchandising and promotional signage and it was obvious that there was a significant association between the chosen visual merchandising practices and peoples' impulse buying behaviour. This indicates that these visual merchandising activities, which function as triggers that cause an impulse that eventually motivates a customer to make an unplanned buying decision when entering the shop, dramatically affect the purchasing habits of customers. The findings of this study provided sufficient evidence, that retailers can utilize visual merchandising to increase the desirability of products and to help customers be aware of the products as well as to create favourable attitudes.

(Mishra & Mishra, 2022a) Study state that consumers are more inclined towards the mannequin display and store display, the purchase decision is being taken after getting through these tools. Most of the purchases are impulse in nature so hardly a customer planned its purchases. Product placement, in-store Music and most importantly, assortment arranged in different colour combinations motivate a consumer to buy a product. Promotional activities and store signage are too important elements in any store to propel a consumer to take a purchase decision.

2.4. Visual Merchandising and Brand Image

This subsection reviews the existing research papers in the area of Visual merchandising concerning Brand Image.

(Menon, 2017) Study concludes that visual merchandising has gained the attention of marketers and brand managers. Through visual merchandising, a company can attract consumers and increase its sales in the market. Visual merchandising is an effective technique that can create a positive image for a brand in the eyes of consumers. Visual merchandising helps in creating a good impression of the brand among consumers. This creates an emotional bonding with the product and increases the impulse to buy it. In addition, the consistent display can also help in building trust among customers for your product. It is important for companies to consistently communicate the message of their brand to consumers. It is a fact that customers buy products not because of the product itself but because of the experience they have with it. They buy it because they like it, and this liking comes from their emotional connection with the brand. It is also important to note that customers do not buy products, they buy the emotions that come with them. (Dhaneswari et al., 2020) Visual merchandising has a significant influence on self-congruity, finding demonstrates that the better the visual display of merchandise in a retail fashion is, the more a consumer would associate the products with their personality and those of the other retail buyers. This self-congruity will lead to consumers patronizing the store. Also when consumers feel there is a similarity between the fashion products they purchase

at fast-fashion outlets with their self-image, or how they perceive other people see them, the consumers would have the intention to recommend the outlet to their relatives in the future.

(Batista et al., 2020) The analyzes carried out allowed us to conclude that the visual merchandising theme is still a relatively new field of research because although the first article identified that addresses the theme was from 1998, most of the analyzed articles were published five years ago or less. As a development field, there are few national citations, that is, few articles cited the works selected for analysis. This suggests that there are several opportunities for future research on the topic.

(Kumar, 2022) This study highlights the need for future researchers to pay more consideration to this field. This is a fascinating field for researchers who are concerned with conducting studies relating to this subject. Through this study, it was noted that the majority of researchers have not made extensive attempts to carry out such studies on the visual merchandising matter in the Indian retail fashion market. This study did not look at other parts affecting the store choice decisions. Further research can be made on the impact of location, customer services, car-parking facilities, and brand names linked with store choice decisions of customers in India. Mishra & Mishra (2022b) Display is a dimension which helps visual merchandiser to fetch consumers inside the store. It is the first impression of the store. Hence, all retail outlets must have a strong window display. The window display of the retail outlets should be changed at regular intervals with a proper colour and product information proposition so that consumers can come to know about the new arrivals. Product displays should be well organized so that consumers do not have to work hard in search of the thing they want to purchase. Mannequin displays also should display the best of the merchandising so the consumer sees it and can think how the same would look on them and can empathize with the apparel. Akhilendra & Aravendan (2023) present that Store Branding works as a signal. It allows consumers to quickly recognize the place and product as one they are familiar with or one they like. It acts as a memory cue, allowing consumers to retrieve relevant information from memory. This information may be about past experiences of the brand, brand perceptions or brand associations. The study suggests that in order to make VM work, the retailer utilizes VM to develop a powerful store image effectively. Image can be described as the overall look of a store and a series of mental pictures.

Bibliometric Analysis of Keywords in Literature Review

It's observed from Figure 2 & Figure 3 that most of the research which has taken place in the area of Visual merchandising is around Consumer behaviour, Buying behaviour, window display, marketing, Components of visual merchandising, Apparel-retail, Ambience decor, store atmosphere etc. The timeline map shows the recent study, which has taken place in this area, is store atmospheric and retail experience.

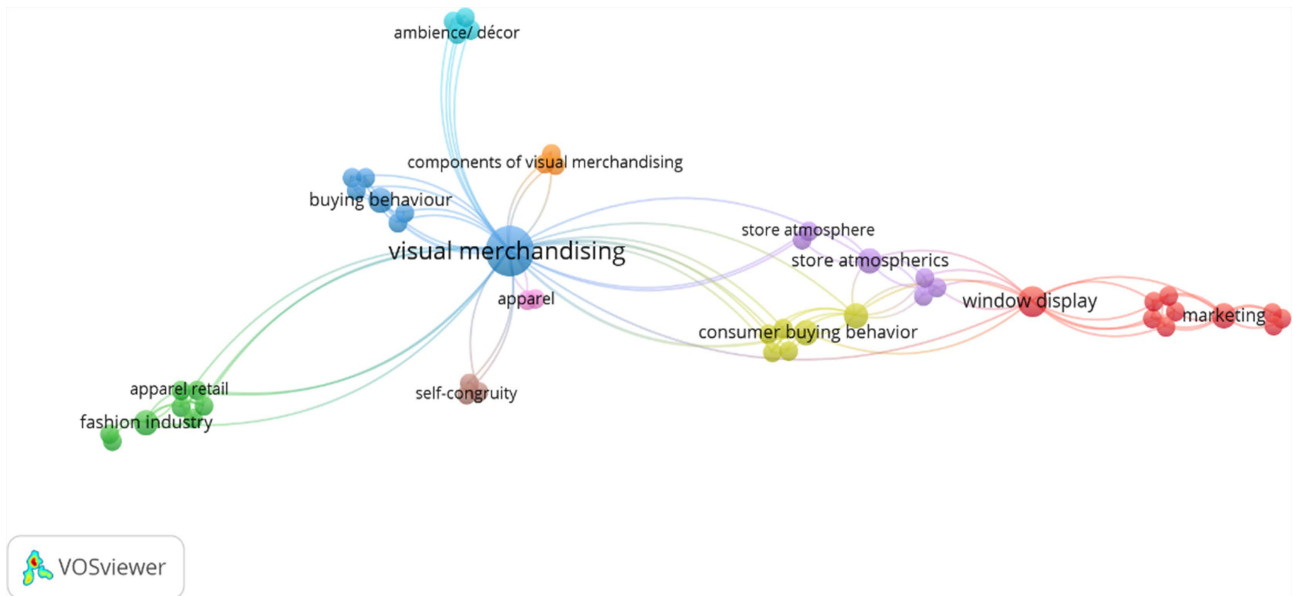


Figure 2. Bibliometric analysis of the networking keywords.

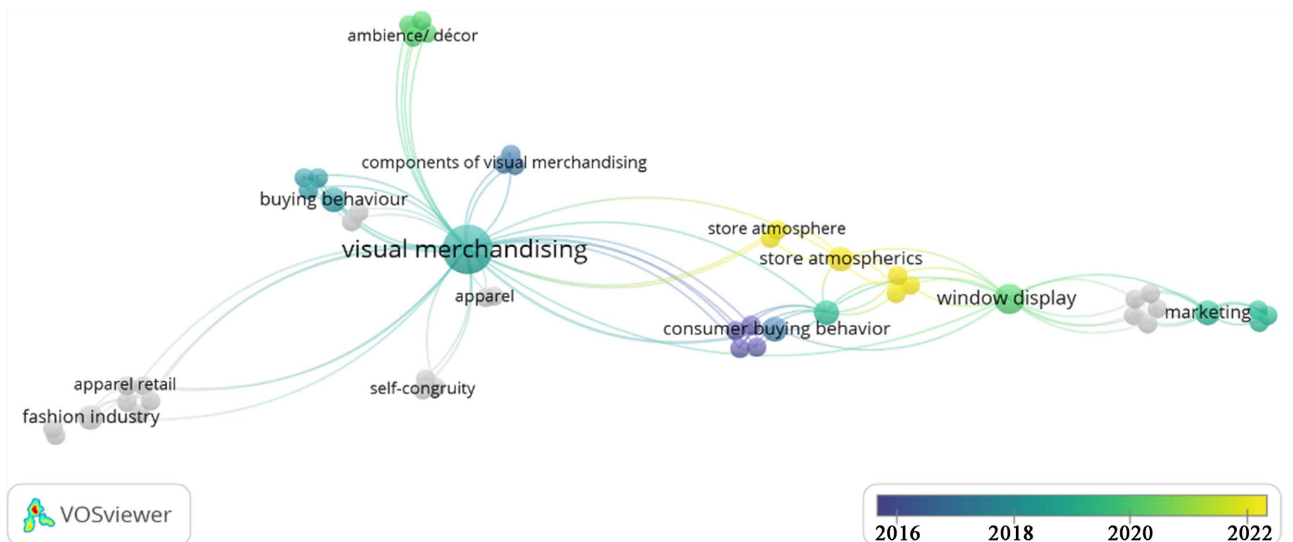


Figure 3. Bibliometric analysis of the keywords concerning the timeline.

2.5. Review Summary and Research Gaps

This review aims to summarize the existing literature and identify research gaps in this area. This review highlights the key findings and explores areas where further research is needed to enhance the understanding of the topic.

Key Findings:

Fashion Trend Alignment: Visual merchandising techniques should be aligned with current fashion trends to create a cohesive brand image and communicate the brand's identity effectively. This includes incorporating trendy colours, patterns, and styles into displays and store layouts.

Window Displays: Window displays are crucial in capturing the attention of passersby and luring them into the store. By reflecting the latest fashion trends

in window displays, brands can entice potential customers and create a desire to explore further.

Product Presentation: How products are presented within the store can significantly impact customer perception and purchasing decisions. Brands should consider incorporating fashion trends into product displays, including mannequins, racks, and shelving, to showcase the latest styles and encourage customer engagement.

Research Gaps:

Consumer Response: Limited research has explored the direct impact of fashion trend-aligned visual merchandising on consumer behaviour, including purchase intentions, brand perception, and overall shopping satisfaction. Future studies could investigate these relationships to provide empirical evidence and insights.

Long-Term Impact: Most studies focus on the immediate impact of fashion trends on visual merchandising. However, understanding the long-term effects of trend-aligned visual merchandising on brand loyalty, customer retention, and sustained business growth of the fashion apparel industry is an area that requires further investigation.

3. Objectives

The main aim of this research is to investigate and analyze the impact of fashion trends on visual merchandising for promoting fashion apparel brands. Specifically, the research aims to achieve the following objectives:

- 1) To assess the role of visual merchandising in promoting fashion apparel brands and understand the importance of visual merchandising in effectively communicating brand identity, creating brand recognition, and influencing consumer behaviour within the context of fashion retail.
- 2) To explore the relationship between fashion trends and visual merchandising and investigate how fashion trends influence the design and presentation of fashion apparel in retail spaces.
- 3) To understand and analyze consumer perceptions and preferences regarding visual merchandising strategies in fashion retail.

By accomplishing these objectives, this research will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on visual merchandising and its relationship with fashion trends. It will provide valuable insights and practical guidance for fashion apparel brands to effectively utilize visual merchandising as a promotional tool in a dynamic and trend-driven industry.

4. Statement of Research Problem

This research seeks to address the following research problem:

- 1) What strategies do fashion apparel brands employ to align their visual merchandising efforts with current fashion trends?
- 2) How do consumers perceive and respond to visual merchandising tech-

niques influenced by fashion trends?

3) What is the impact of fashion trends on visual merchandising for promoting fashion apparel brands?

4) What is the relationship between visual merchandising, fashion trends, and consumer behaviour, such as brand engagement and purchase decisions?

By addressing these questions, this research aims to bridge the gap in knowledge regarding the impact of fashion trends on visual merchandising for promoting fashion apparel brands. The findings will provide valuable insights for fashion industry professionals, retailers, and marketers, enabling them to better understand and leverage the interplay between fashion trends and visual merchandising strategies to enhance brand visibility, and consumer engagement, and ultimately drive sales in the competitive fashion retail landscape.

5. Research Methodology

Exploratory Research in qualitative nature, has been done by collecting data from secondary sources, this has been followed by a Bibliometric analysis to understand the subject better and explore the possibilities of further study. This has helped the researcher identify the gap areas and formulate the research questions and objectives. Descriptive Research—it is qualitative and quantitative in nature; the survey method was adopted to collect the primary data. The data collected were analyzed to identify patterns and relationships. Further, it was discussed to conclude with the findings.

5.1. Target Population and Sample Size

The target population is the segment of consumers who are inclined toward fashion apparel. Exploratory research with primary data collection through a pilot study is used as a preliminary step to understand the general attitudes and behaviours of the consumers. With a sample size of 100, researchers can conduct an initial meaningful exploratory analysis, while managing resources efficiently. Collecting data from a larger sample may be time-consuming, costly and logistically challenging which would be achieved in the main research to be done with a focus on larger population. Hence, Convenience sampling was used to collect the primary data here wherein a total of 112 responses were received and considered for analysis and interpretation.

5.2. Questionnaire Design & Development

In exploratory studies, where the primary goal is to gather preliminary insights, the strict requirements for reliability and validity testing may be less necessary. It is typically conducted in the early stages of research when there is limited existing knowledge regarding the topic of interest. Hence the questionnaire was designed thoughtfully incorporating the basic principles of questionnaire design. These principles include clarity, relevance, avoiding bias, logical flow, and providing response options that capture a wide range of perspectives. While strict

reliability and validity testing may not be required, certain steps were taken to enhance the credibility of the findings. This includes ensuring that the questions are conceptually aligned with the research objectives and engaging in a thorough review of the questionnaire by experts to assess its content validity. A semi-structured questionnaire was developed which is brief, simple, and straightforward, covering the relevant aspects of the research topic with a mix of closed and open-ended questions and LIKERT's scale.

6. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The data/responses collected by distributing the survey questionnaire were sorted and the questions were analyzed based on the key responses relevant to the research objectives, illustrated and presented through tables and charts with 30 interpretations as follows:

6.1. Demographic Information of Respondents

It can be observed from **Table 1** that 73% of respondents are from the age group of 18 - 24 years, 14.30% from the age group of 25 - 31 years, and 6.30% from the age group of 32 - 38 years and 6.30% from the age group of 39 - 45 years.

Out of 112 respondents, 75% are female and 25% are male as shown in **Table 1**.

Table 1. Demographic data of respondents.

Demographic Parameters	Categories	Responses (%)	Responses (Nos)
Age (Years)	18 - 24 Years	73.20%	82
	25 - 31 Years	14.30%	16
	32 - 38 Years	6.30%	7
	39 - 45 Years	6.30%	7
Gender	Female	75%	84
	Male	25%	28
Occupation	Student	57.14%	64
	Communication Designer	18.75%	21
	Fashion Designer	8.04%	9
	Fashion Professional	8.04%	9
	Private Sector	3.57%	4
	Housewife	2.68%	3
	Business	1.79%	2
Socio-Economic Class	Middle	54.46%	61
	Upper-Middle	43.75%	49
	High	1.79%	2

Respondents are from different occupations that 57.14% of respondents are students, 18.75% are communication designers, 8.04% are fashion designers, 8.04% work in the fashion industry on different levels, 3.57% works in the private sector on various profiles, 2.68% are housewives and 1.79% of respondents are in business.

From **Table 1**, it can also be observed 54.46% of respondents mentioned that they belong to the Middle class, 43.75% mentioned Upper-middle class and only 1.79% mentioned that they are from the High class.

6.2. The Geographic Location of the Respondents

Respondents are from various parts of India, few are from different countries but they are Indian Citizens, From **Table 2**, it is observed that 33.93% of respondents are from Uttar Pradesh, 26.79% from Delhi NCR, 6.25% from Karnataka and 6.25% from Maharashtra too. 5.36% of respondents are from Kerala, 3.57% from Rajasthan, 2.68% each from Gujrat and Madhya Pradesh, 1.78% from Punjab & West Bengal and 0.89% each from Assam, Bihar, Haryana, Jharkhand, Odisha and Telangana.

6.3. Fashion Awareness

From **Figure 4**, it can be observed that 84.8% of respondents considered themselves

Table 2. Geographic location of the respondents.

State	Responses (%)	Responses (Nos.)
Uttar Pradesh	33.93%	38
Delhi NCR	26.79%	30
Karnataka	6.25%	7
Maharashtra	6.25%	7
Kerala	5.36%	6
Rajasthan	3.57%	4
Uttarakhand	3.57%	4
Gujrat	2.68%	3
Madhya Pradesh	2.68%	3
Punjab	1.78%	2
West Bengal	1.78%	2
Jharkhand	0.89%	1
Odisha	0.89%	1
Telangana	0.89%	1
Assam	0.89%	1
Bihar	0.89%	1
Haryana	0.89%	1

fashion-conscious and they are aware of fashion, and 15.2% considered themselves not fashion-conscious consumers.

6.4. Frequency of Shopping from Retail Space

When asked about how frequently they do shopping, 51.8% of respondents said whenever there is a need, 24.1% buy once in a month, 19.6% do it once in 3 months, 2.7% said once in 6 months and 1.8% will do it during special events/occasions as shown in **Figure 5**.

6.5. Money Spent on Buying Apparel Products While Shopping

From **Figure 6**, it is observed that 90.2% of respondents spend 5 k to 10 k in

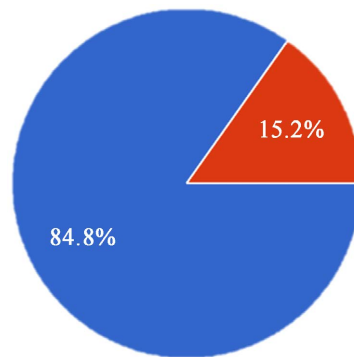


Figure 4. Awareness towards Fashion.

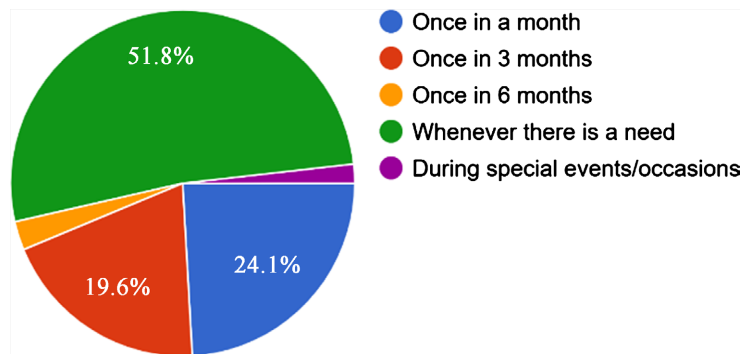


Figure 5. Frequency of shopping.

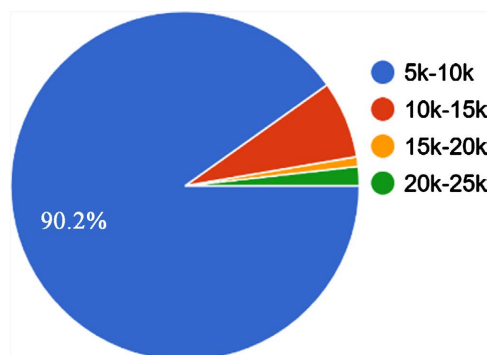


Figure 6. Money spent on buying apparel.

shopping apparel, 7.1% spend between 10 k - 15 k, 1.8% spend between 15 k - 20 k and 0.9% spend between 20 k - 25 k.

6.6. Preference in Buying Branded & Non-Branded Items

It is observed from **Figure 7** that 75.9% of respondents prefer buying branded Apparel whereas 24.1% preferred Non-branded Items.

6.7. Mode of Shopping

It is observed from **Figure 8** that 10.7% of the sampling population prefer online shopping, 18.8% prefer Offline shopping whereas 70.5% of respondents prefer both.

6.8. Preference for the Type of Retail Store

It is observed from **Figure 9** that 62.5% of respondents prefer the multi-brand store whereas 37.5% of respondents prefer going to Exclusive Brand Store.

6.9. Role of Store Fashion Display in Influencing the Customers

It is observed from **Figure 10** that 55.4% of respondents get influenced by the store display of a branded store and would prefer shopping from there, 40.2% of respondents may opt for the same however only 4.4% of respondents said no when it comes to getting influence by the store display.

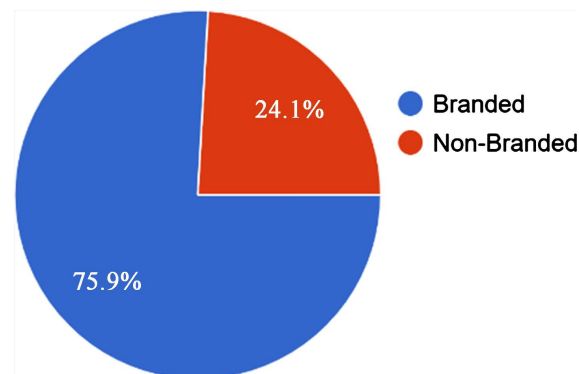


Figure 7. Preference in buying branded & non-branded items.

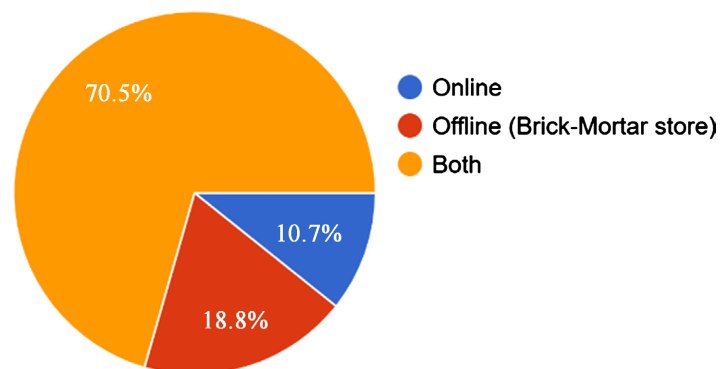


Figure 8. Preference in the mode of shopping.

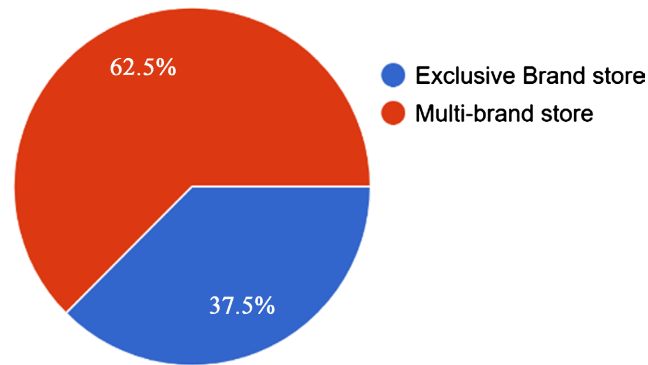


Figure 9. Types of retail store.

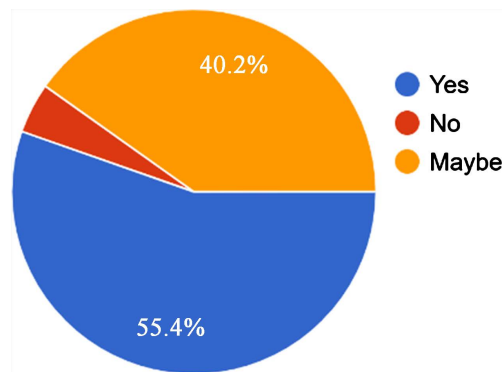


Figure 10. Role of store fashion display in influencing the customers.

6.10. Most Influencing Retail Brand Store Element

Figure 11 shows that 74.1% of respondents suggest that Merchandise display is the most influencing element in the store followed by window display which was preferred by 69.6% of respondents, promotional offerings, point of sale display, Light, Music & store space, Mannequin Display, Store Exteriors graphics & Signages, Brand logo, Ceiling suspended props & talkers and Floor vinyl and in-store wall graphics.

6.11. Most Influencing Store Display Elements in Order of Preference

From **Figure 12**, It is observed that when asked to rank their preferences, respondents gave 1st preference to these influencing store display elements—24.1% of respondents opted for window display followed by Merchandise Display 19.6%, Store exterior graphic and signages 17.0%, In Store Mannequin display 3.6%, Brand Name Logo 7.1%, Promotional offering 10.7%, Point of sale display 6.2%, Ceiling suspended props & talkers 1.8%, Floor vinyl & store wall graphics 1.8% and Lighting, Music and store space 8.0%.

6.12. Connect between Store Display and Brand Image

It is observed from **Figure 13**, that 48.2% of respondents strongly believe that there is a link between store display and brand image, again 48.2% of respondents

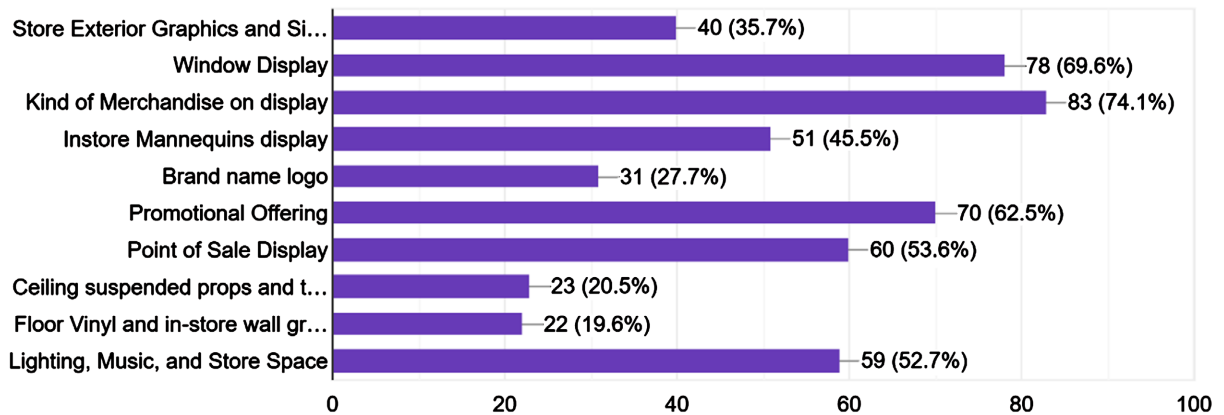


Figure 11. Most influencing retail brand store element.

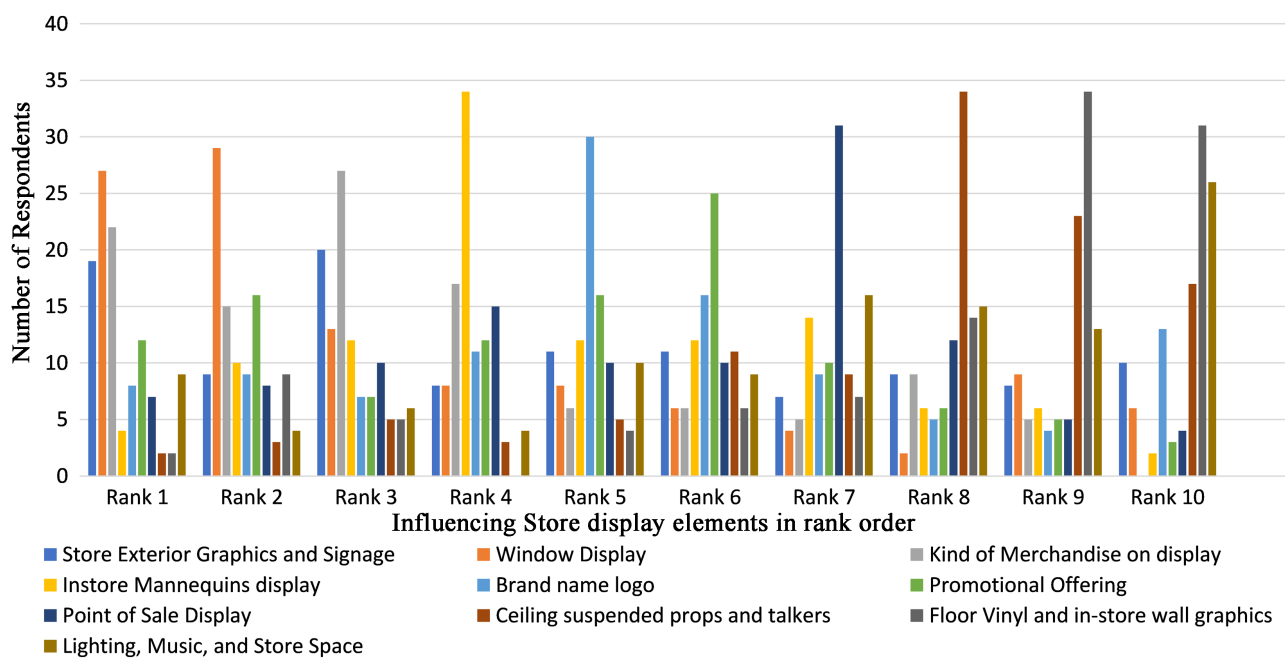


Figure 12. Influencing factors store display elements in order of preference.

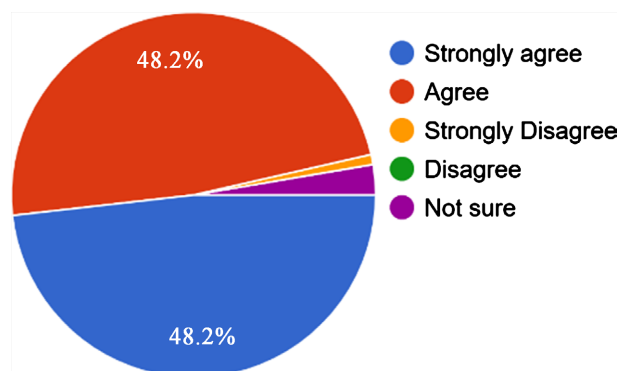


Figure 13. Connect between store display and brand image.

agree with the statement. Only 2.7% and 0.9% of respondents opted for not sure and strongly disagree respectively.

6.13. Relation between Attractive Store Display and Fashion Brand Promotion

From **Figure 14**, it is observed that 96.4% of respondents strongly believe that there is a relation between attractive store display and Fashion brand promotion and only 3.6% think otherwise.

6.14. Informative Store Display

From **Figure 15**, it is observed that 26.8% of respondents find store displays to be informative all the time when it comes to Fashion trends whereas 73.2% of respondents find the same but sometimes. It is to be noted that none of the respondents opted for the none option.

6.15. What is Fashion?

When asked what fashion to you is, 45.5% of respondents opted that it is a way to express their inner self, 42% opted for comfortability, 6.3% for looking cool & trendy and 6.3% for looking sober and mature. Refer **Figure 16**.

6.16. Keeping up with Season's Fashion Trends

From **Figure 17**, it is observed that 37.5% of respondents follow the Fashion trend very closely, 34.8% of respondents are not sure and 27.7% of respondents do not follow the fashion trends according to the season.

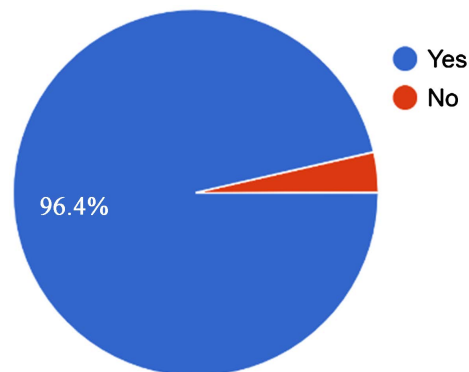


Figure 14. Relation between attractive store display and Fashion brand promotion.

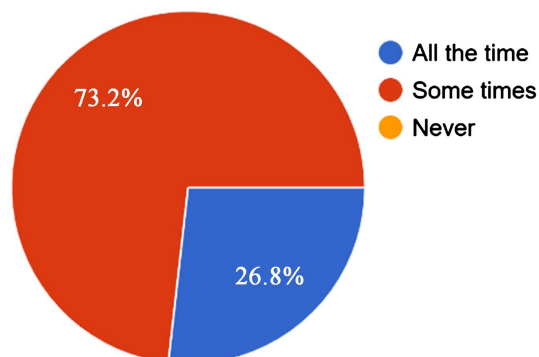


Figure 15. Informative store display.

6.17. Sources of the Latest Fashion Trend

From **Figure 18**, it is observed that 54.5% of respondents refer to Social media to know the latest fashion trends, 17.9% refer to Fashion blogs, 12.5% refer to Fashion shows, 8% get to know from friends and social groups, 4.5% refer to store display, 1.8 refers to Fashion TV and 0.9% refer to billboards.

6.18. Sources of the Latest Fashion Trend in Order of Preference

From **Figure 19** it is observed that social media platforms have been opted as the 1st rank by 43.75% of the respondents, followed by fashion blogs 20.5%, fashion shows 16.07%, store displays 9.8%, friends & other social groups 6.25%, Fashion

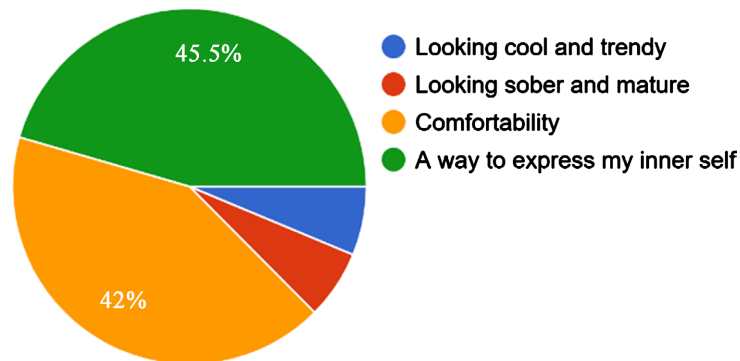


Figure 16. What is fashion.

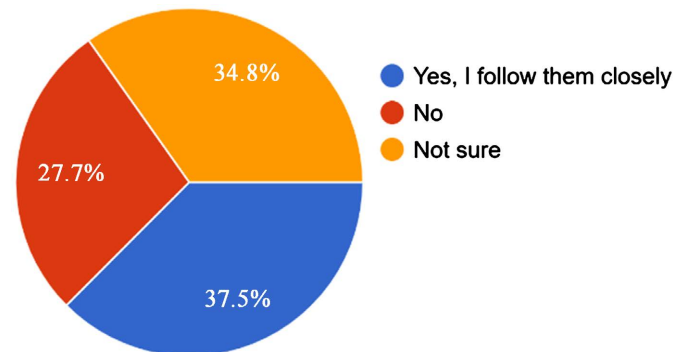


Figure 17. Keeping up with season's fashion trends.

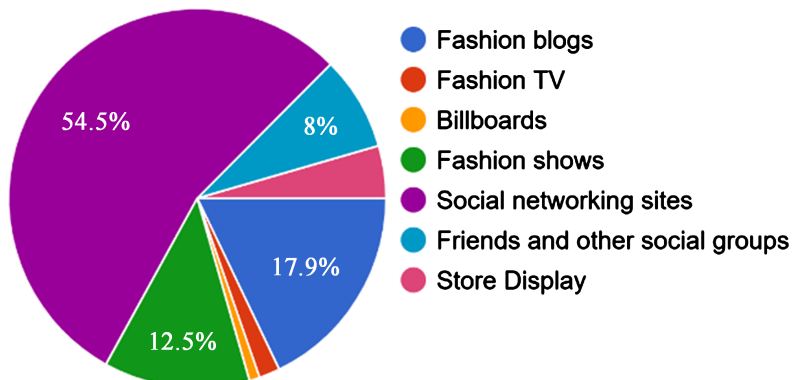


Figure 18. Sources of the latest fashion trend.

TV 1.78% and billboards 1.78%.

6.19. Purchase Intention as per Current Season's Trends

It is observed from **Figure 20** that 20.5% of respondents always make sure of purchasing merchandise as per seasons trend, 25.9% often do that and 36.6% of respondents do it sometimes. It is observed that 13.4% of respondents rarely follow it and 3.6% of respondents do not follow the same.

6.20. Window-Shopping for the Latest Fashion Trends Awareness

From **Figure 21**, it is observed that 20.5% of respondents very often do window shopping to know the latest fashion trends, 30.04% of respondents do it often and 33.9% do it sometimes. 10.7% of respondents do it rarely and 4.5% of respondents are not really into it.

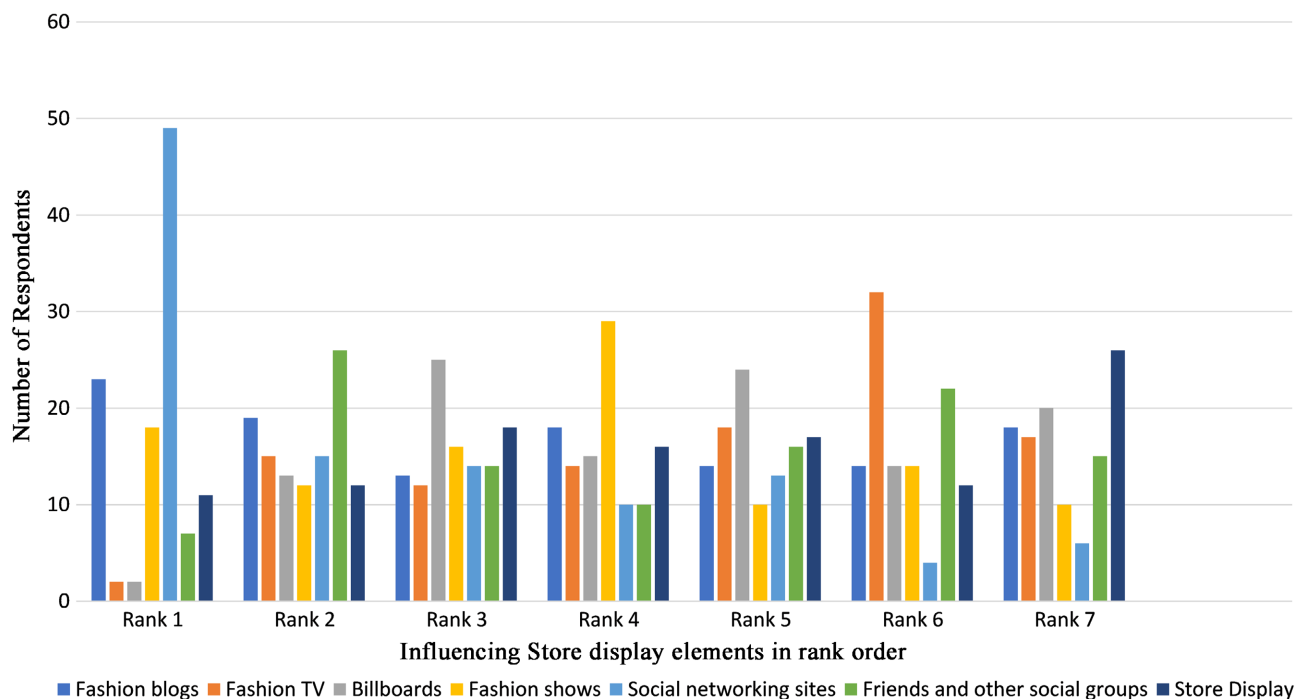


Figure 19. Sources of the latest fashion trend in order of preference.

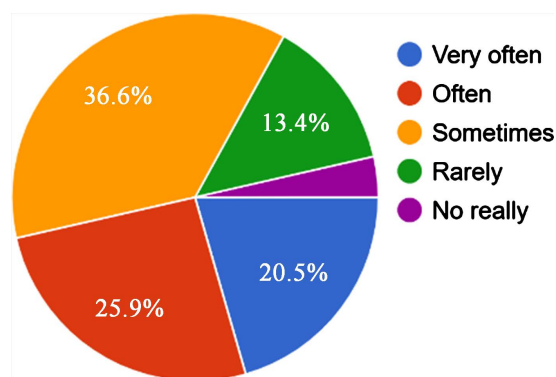


Figure 20. Purchase intention as per current season's trends.

6.21. Store Window Display and Color Trend

From **Figure 22** it is observed that 86.6% of respondents believe that store window display spread awareness about the latest colour trend, 11.6% of respondents are not sure of it whereas 1.8% of respondents do not agree with the statement.

6.22. Store Window Display and Silhouette Trend

It is observed from **Figure 23** that 77.7% of respondents agree with the statement of window display spreading awareness about silhouette trend, 14.3% are

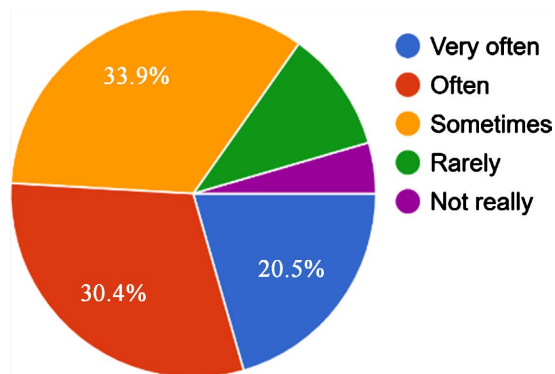


Figure 21. Window-shopping for the latest fashion trends awareness.

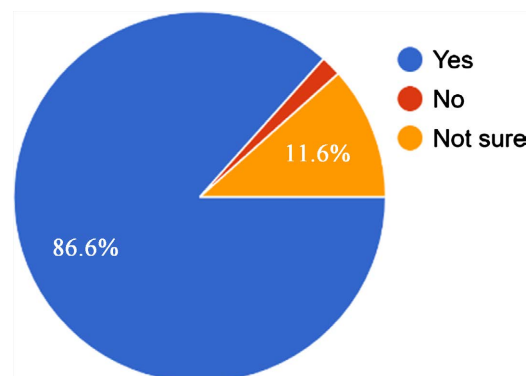


Figure 22. Store window display and color trend.

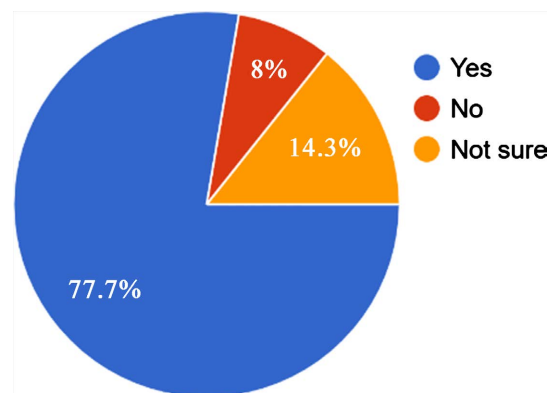


Figure 23. Store window display and silhouette trend.

not sure of it whereas 8% said no.

6.23. Store Window Display and Fabric Trend

It is observed from **Figure 24** that 64.3% of respondents agree with the statement of window display spreading awareness about the Fabric/New Materials trend, 27.7% of respondents are not sure of the same whereas 8% said no to it.

6.24. Store Window Display and Latest Fashion Look/Style

From **Figure 25**, it is observed that 87.5% agree with the statement that window displays help communicate the latest Fashion style/look, 8% of respondents are not very sure of the same and 4.5% of respondents said no to this.

6.25. Awareness about Store Display According to the Seasons

It is observed from **Figure 26** that 98.2% of respondents are aware of the fact that store displays regularly get changed according to the season. Only 1.8% of respondents are not aware of it.

6.26. Role of Mannequin Styling and Store wall Display on the Latest Trends

It is observed from **Figure 27** that 98.2% of respondents feel that Mannequin

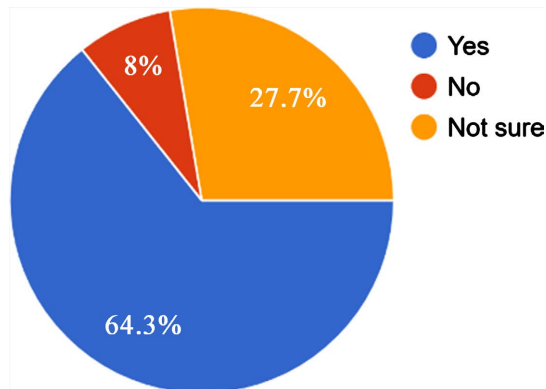


Figure 24. Store window display and fabric trend.

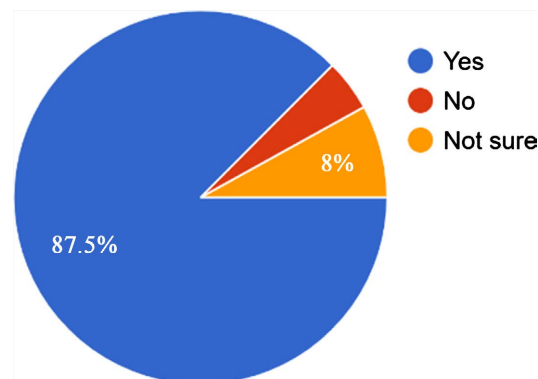


Figure 25. Store window display and latest fashion look/style.

styling and store wall display helps in communicating the latest trends. Only 1.8% of respondents disagree with it.

6.27. Attractive Merchandise and Mannequin Display Promote Unplanned Buying

From **Figure 28**, it is observed that 33.9% of respondents strongly agree with the statement that attractive merchandise and mannequin displays promote unplanned buying, and 58.9% of respondents agree with it. 5.4% of respondents are not sure of it and 1.8% disagree with the statement.

6.28. Role of Fashion Apparel Brands in Influencing Buying Decision

From **Figure 29** it is observed that 59.8% agree to get influenced by fashion apparel brands, and 26.8% strongly believe in the same. 7.1% of respondents are not sure, 3.6% disagree with it and 2.7% strongly disagree with the statements

6.29. Influence of Product Display (Retail Store) in Making a purchase decision

It is observed from **Figure 30** that 16.1% of respondents very often get influenced by the certain product/ style displayed in the store and make purchases, 37.5% often do the same and 36.6% of respondents do it sometimes. 8.9% of

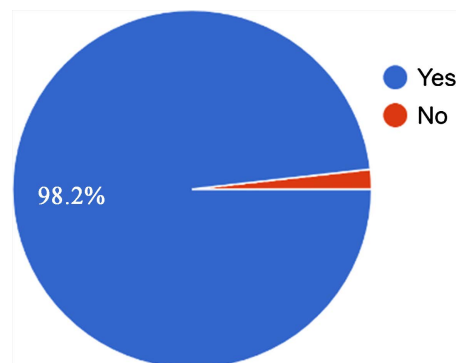


Figure 26. Store display according to the seasons.

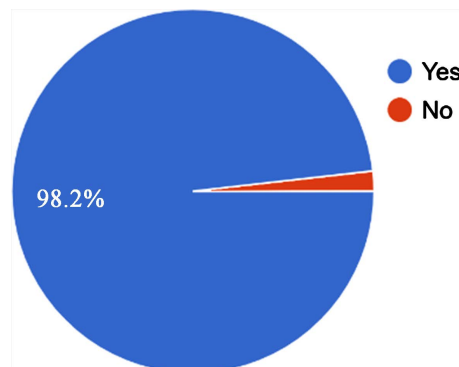


Figure 27. Role of Mannequin styling and store wall display in communicating the latest trends.

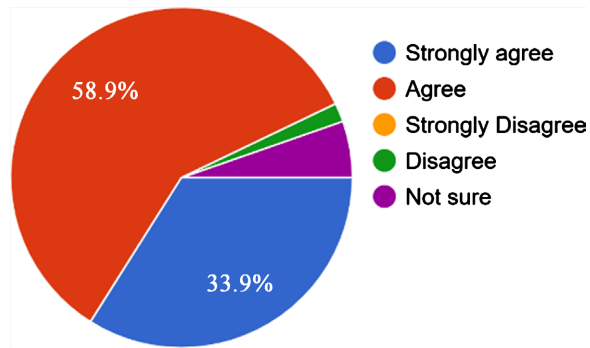


Figure 28. Attractive merchandise and mannequin display promote unplanned buying.

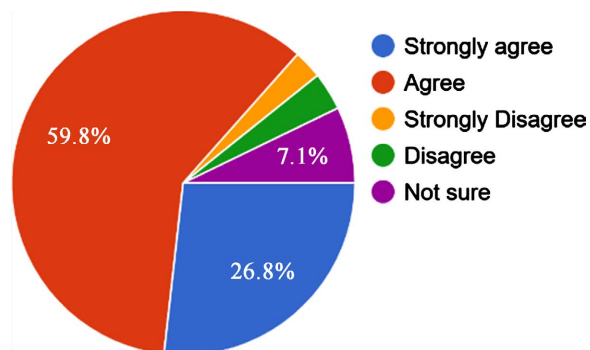


Figure 29. Role of fashion apparel brands in influencing buying decision.

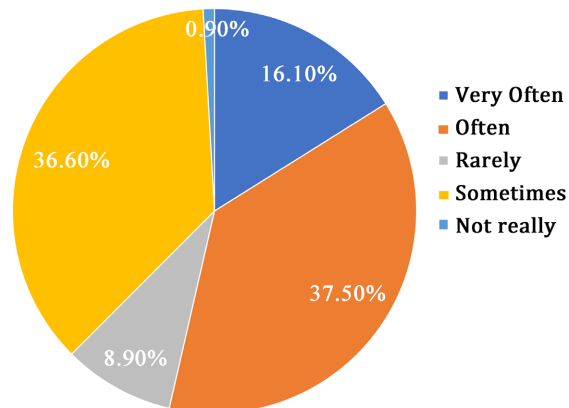


Figure 30. Influence of product display (retail store) in making a purchase decision.

respondents rarely get influenced and 0.9% are not really into it.

6.30. Role of Visual Merchandising in Fashion Brand Image

From **Figure 31**, it is observed that 97.3% of respondents feel that Visual merchandising of a store helps in creating a Fashion Brand Image and only 2.7% of respondents are not sure of it. It is to be noted that none disagree with the statement.

7. Research Outcomes-Findings and Discussions

This research aim is to provide valuable insights into the impact of fashion trends on visual merchandising for promoting fashion apparel brands. By

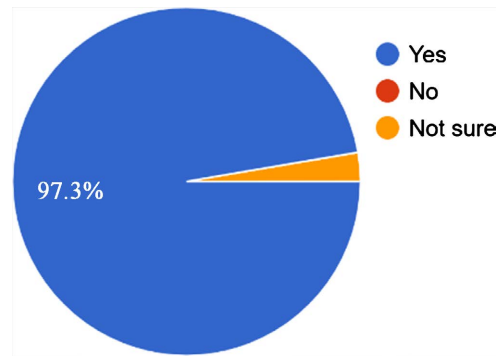


Figure 31. Role of visual merchandising in fashion brand image.

understanding the dynamic relationship between fashion trends, visual merchandising techniques, and consumer behaviour, fashion brands can effectively leverage these insights to enhance their brand image, engage consumers, and drive sales in the competitive fashion industry.

7.1. Role of Visual Merchandising in Promoting Fashion Apparel Brands

Key Findings & Discussions: Visual merchandising plays a significant role in promoting a fashion apparel brand, it is observed from **Figure 10** that 55.4% of respondents get influenced by the store display and opted for various store display elements (**Figure 11**) to be influential like merchandise display (74.1% of Respondents) of the store, window display (69.6% of respondents) etc. Respondents found a strong connection between Store display and the Image of the brand as per data observation (**Figure 13**, 48.2% of respondents strongly believe and 48.2% of respondents agree with the statement) and agree that an attractive store display is essential in promoting a fashion brand in this competitive market (**Figure 14**, positive response from 96.4% of respondents).

7.2. Relationship between Fashion trends and Visual Merchandising

Key Findings & Discussions: The relationship between fashion trends and visual merchandising is interdependent and influential. By effectively incorporating fashion trends into their visual merchandising strategies, fashion apparel brands can attract and engage consumers, enhance brand identity, and ultimately drive sales. As observed and shown above, most respondents find, store displays informative (**Figure 15** 26.8% of respondents find store displays to be informative all the time when it comes to Fashion trends whereas 73.2% of respondents find it sometimes). Customers nowadays are very fashion-conscious (**Figure 17**) and they refer to various sources for making themselves aware of popular fashion trends, as per observed data social media platforms play an important role in this (**Figure 18** which shows 54.5% of respondents refer to social media to know the latest fashion trends). Customers are aware of fashion seasons and as per data, they refer to window display many times to get to know the popular fashion

trends (**Figure 21**, 20.5% of respondents very often do window shopping to know the latest fashion trends, 30.04% of respondents do it often and 33.9% do it sometimes). Most of the respondents confirmed that store window displays are a good communicator of the latest colour (**Figure 22**, 86.6% of respondents believe that store window display spread awareness about the latest colour trend), silhouette (**Figure 23**, 77.7% of respondents agree with the statement that window display spread awareness about silhouette trend) fabric (**Figure 24**, 64.3% of respondents agree with the statement of window display spreading awareness about the Fabric/New Materials trend) and style/look (**Figure 25**, 87.5% respondents agree with the statement that window displays help communicate the latest Fashion style/look). They also found the mannequin and store wall display to be very informative when it comes to communicating the latest trends (**Figure 27**, 98.2% of respondents confirmed that Mannequin styling and store wall display helps in communicating the latest trends). Visual merchandising can shape and popularize fashion trends, influencing consumer preferences. Therefore, brands must stay attuned to the ever-changing fashion landscape and leverage visual merchandising as a powerful tool to connect with consumers in the competitive world of fashion retail.

7.3. Consumer Perceptions and Preferences on Visual Merchandising Strategies

Key Findings & Discussions: As shown in **Figure 28**, 33.9% of respondents strongly agree and 58.9% of respondents agree with the statement that attractive merchandise and mannequin displays promote unplanned buying. Respondents also confirmed that an already-established fashion brand influences their product choice and buying decision (**Figure 29**, 26.8% of respondents strongly agree and 59.8% of respondents agree with the statement). It is also observed from **Figure 30** that 16.1% of respondents very often, 37.5% often and 36.6% of respondents sometimes get influenced by the certain product/style displayed in the store and make purchases. Further respondents strongly believe that Visual merchandising plays a vital role in building the Fashion brand image (**Figure 31**, 97.3% of respondents confirmed that Visual merchandising of a store helps in creating a Fashion Brand Image in the consumer mind). Therefore, Understanding the target audience and regularly adapting visual merchandising strategies based on consumer preferences can contribute to a more engaging and successful retail experience.

8. Limitations and Future Research Directions

The impact of fashion trends on visual merchandising for promoting fashion apparel brands is an interesting and relevant research topic within the field of Visual Merchandising, Fashion trends studies, consumer behaviour and marketing. However, like any research topic, it has certain limitations and scope for future research.

- 1) This is a preliminary study to understand the inclination of all the stakeholders so that major research could be conducted in future using larger sample size.
- 2) Since the aim was to explore the topic and find the responses, research hypotheses could be articulated and tested using statistical tools to strengthen the research outcome.
- 3) The majority of the data have been collected from consumers to understand the Fashion trend's influence on Visual merchandising. In the future information can be collected from Visual merchandisers and consumers to conclude.
- 4) Further research can also elaborate on the point that how visual merchandising helps in creating a fashion brand image in the consumer's mind.
- 5) Future studies can revolve around certain brands to find the more specific result for generalization. In that, both International and national brands can be considered.
- 6) A specific geographic location with presences of fashion apparel consumers and fashion brand stores for the study could be selected for future research.

9. Conclusion

The research paper explored the impact of fashion trends on visual merchandising as a strategy for promoting fashion apparel brands. Visual merchandising plays a crucial role in capturing the attention of consumers, creating a desirable brand image, and ultimately driving sales. By incorporating current fashion trends into visual merchandising strategies, fashion apparel brands can effectively communicate their brand identity and connect with their target audience. The research highlighted several key findings. It emphasized the significance of staying updated with the latest fashion trends to remain relevant in the industry. By understanding and analyzing fashion trends, brands can align their visual merchandising efforts to appeal to the preferences and aspirations of their target customers. Fashion trends are dynamic and constantly evolving, requiring brands to stay alert and responsive. Overall, the research highlighted the significant impact of fashion trends on visual merchandising for promoting fashion apparel brands.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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