VISUAL MERCHANDISING AND IMPULSE BUYING INTENTION: INVESTIGATING CONSUMERS OF SPORTS PRODUCTS

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ABSTRACT

As the concept of large retail stores gains ground in India, the practice of Visual Merchandising as a critical form of product and retail marketing is growing exponentially. This study focuses on how the factors of visual merchandise. i.e., light, layout, and window display influence the impulse buying intention for sports products. We used literature to model and test the determinants of consumers' impulse buying behaviour for sports products. Data from 202 respondents were evaluated using descriptive statistics, multiple regression, and correlation through SPSS. The analysis via multiple regression validated that window display predominantly influences the impulse buying intention of sports product consumers. The other elements of visual merchandising, i.e., light and layout, were also found to influence impulse buying intention positively while sports product purchases. This study will help marketers and practitioners to create strategies to boost impulse buying intention through visual merchandising to get a competitive advantage and business sustainability, especially among sports enthusiasts.

Keywords: Visual Merchandising, Light, Layout, Window Display, Impulse Buying Intention, And Sports Products.

INTRODUCTION

The retail industry in India is emerging as one of the most fast-paced and dynamic industries because of the entry of numerous brand-new players Indian Brand Equity Foundation, 2022. India is the 5th largest global destination in retail space Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 2022; Indian Brand Equity Foundation, 2022. In today's competitive world, every retailer tries to attract customers, looking for innovative ideas and techniques to attract their goods and services (Medrano & Olarte-Pascual, 2016). Visual merchandising is one means; it helps retailers create a consumer-friendly atmosphere by creating a unique retail design and merchandising (Law et al., 2012). Visual merchandising helps combine various merchandising elements to create an attractive store environment that directly impacts the consumers' emotional state at the store (Zolkifly & Baharom, 2016; Park et al., 2015). Visual merchandising enhances sales and revenue (Zibafar et al., 2021; Yaoyuneyong et al., 2014). Visual merchandising is more than just an appealing display of products for sale; there are several other factors, including layout, window display, and lights should also be thoroughly coordinated to offer customers with pleasurable experience in the stores (Vieira, 2013; Law et al., 2012; Mohan et al., 2013). Retailers spend maximum effort in creating a distinct identity via visual merchandising techniques to give a cheerful mood to consumers, intending to enhance purchase intention, store loyalty (Sadachar et al., 2021; Lombart et al., 2018; Law et al., 2012)

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and repeat purchases (Spangenberg et al., 2006). In addition to stimulating a positive affective response from customers, visual merchanding also leads to impulse buying behavior.

Impulse buying behavior is considered an unplanned purchase by the consumer (Bellini & Aiolfi, 2019). Impulse buying behavior is a quick process that does not involve pre-planning or intention to buy beforehand. Generally, the customers do not plan to purchase the product in advance, and the decision is made on the spot. According to impulse buying behaviors occur when customers have a persistent, anticipatory, and intense need to purchase something immediately. It is an investment made for a specific reason, and the choice to purchase something is not based on deep thoughts (Iyer et al., 2020; Zafar et al., 2021). Impulse buying behavior has increased substantially worldwide due to the covid-19 pandemic (Addo et al., 2020). The government of India is promoting the sports sector as a strategy to create revenues and jobs and to draw investment in the country. For this purpose, the Government of India, in their financial budget 2021-22, allocated 869 crores (The New Indian Express, 2022). According to a report by sports retail market in India accounts for 3.38 billion dollars, and it is expected to grow at a 10% CAGR. The Indian sports market is also one of the biggest export markets worldwide (Sports Goods Companies, Sports Goods Manufacturers in India - IBEF, 2022). For the financial year, 2021 total of US$ 268.52 million in sports goods were exported (Sports Goods Companies, Sports Goods Manufacturers in India - IBEF, 2022). Sports retailers try and develop a unique in-store experience by following unique strategies. They create shopper's purchase journey in experiential terms by creating an evocative store atmosphere, leveraging some atmospheric elements, and positioning several touchpoints in their stores (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016), such as digital video walls, screen displays related to sports to stimulate, amaze and in some ways in exciting their customers. Sports and retail scholars have focused less on the customer buying behavior and the factors that lead to purchase decisions. In the sports marketing area, researchers have focused more on sports sponsorship (Lee & Suh, 2020; Blake et al., 2018; Dietl et al., 2017; Walraven et al., 2012; Hartland et al., 2005; Speed & Thompson, 2000). However, some studies have focused on sports brand and repurchase intention (Mortimer et al., 2018), store atmospherics stimuli, i.e., music (Uhrich & Koenigstorfer, 2009). Few researchers have studied sports products in merchandise licenses (Kim & James, 2016; Kwak et al., 2015; Phillips et al., 2014; Cheng et al., 2014; Walsh et al., 2014). But no recent study on sports products shows consumer behavior toward impulse buying. What influences this impulse buying is also a big concern for the sports retailer. Therefore, visual merchandising elements have not been used earlier to study impulse buying behavior toward sports products. Hence this paper's primary purpose is to analyze the impact of visual merchandise on impulse buying behavior for sports products or merchandise. This paper tries to identify essential visual merchandise elements influencing consumers' impulse buying intentions for sports products (Barlı et al., 2012; Kim & Su, 2020).

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

This study is based on Stimulus-Response (S-R) framework to measure the impulse buying intention of consumers. The S-R framework states that environmental stimuli affect consumers' overall actions. The present study adopts the S-R framework by using the elements of visual merchandising (Light, Layout, and Window display) as the environmental stimulus (S), which impacts consumer response (R), i.e., impulse buying intention.

Visual Merchandising

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According to (Wu et al., 2015), visual merchandise has been defined as *"The activity or process of presenting and displaying merchandise combining the effective design of environments and spaces."* In retailing, most of the information is collected via the eyes of the customers; therefore, the role of visual merchandising is vital. Visual merchandising also helps in enhancing the shopping experience (Jakhar et al., 2020). Effective visual merchandise will increase the amount of pleasure the customers gain from their shopping experience. Visual merchandising improves the store's attractiveness and its perceived image from the customers' viewpoint. A favorable state of mind acts as a contextual cue for assessing the perceived quality, image of store and product, and purchase intention. A positive store atmosphere is also positively related to customer satisfaction (Jalil et al., 2016). Generally, the two significant areas covered in visual merchandising are store interior and exterior. The store's exterior includes banners, window displays, signs and logos, a retail façade, and exterior designs. The window display is the essential element of visual merchandising as it is the store's first impression; therefore, it should be impactful (Diamond & Diamond, 2003). At the same time, the interior includes layout and light. Store interior impacts the consumer's desire to browse and purchase. The success or failure of any product depends on its visual merchandising (Bailey & Baker, 2021), which includes the exterior or interior, which imparts a positive image and attracts, attention, desire, behaviour, and customer interest (Ebster, 2011). Numerous studies explore not only the impact of visual merchandising on buyer behaviour but also peculiarities of behaviour, i.e., impulse buying (Cengiz, 2017).

Light

Lighting in a retail store is defined as *"A set up of lights to create special effects and means of enhancing and lighting up the environment and the way light falls on the products in a different environment"* (Freyssinier et al., 2006). Lighting is one of the most critical atmospheric factors in the retail store. Light is essential in highlighting the product or the entire store (Biswas et al., 2017). An appealing store with better-illuminated merchandise might attract consumers to check out the store, linger, and make a purchase (Summer and Hebert, 2001). A retail store with suitable lighting tempts the consumers to check out the store and creates a desire to make impulsive purchases (Hashmi et al., 2020; Hoyle, 2020). It affects a consumer's emotional state and induces the consumer's mood (Tantanatewin & Inkarojrit, 2016). The purpose of lighting Ambiance and lighting are related, as the literature suggests that lighting affects mood, emotions, perception, atmosphere, and spatial impressions. Research shows that a higher light level emotes more pleasant emotions (Siamionava et al., 2018); some studies also indicate no such effects (Hygge & Knez, 2001). In a study by, a standard lighting level positively affected the time spent in the supermarket (Barros et al., 2019). While the red colour of lighting in the retail stores negatively influences the time spent by the customers. Based on the above, the following hypothesis is developed:

H_1: *Light has a positive impact on impulse buying intention*.

Layout

Store layout refers to internal space management, which is an essential factor in-store atmosphere (Turley & Milliman, 2000). The layout is considered an important variable as it affects consumer shopping behaviour, like sales and time spent in the store (Mowrey et al.,

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2019). (Jalil et al., 2016) found out that a good layout helps sales to increase as customers spend more time in the store. Therefore, the retailers need to understand and maximize the sales volume per sq. foot of the given selling space. Store layout includes customer traffic patterns, permanent structures and fixture locations (Liao & Tasi, 2019). The layout also refers to how the products are displayed on the shelves to induce consumers' attention towards the product as a cue (Guerreiro et al., 2015). There is a topic of common interest in the visual merchandising display area: whether the orderliness of the product display is messy or neat. It was seen that the orderliness of the product display not only affected the consumer's perception and aroused their inference of contamination and popularity. According to, contamination states that when consumers see a messy display, they infer that many have touched the product. Therefore they feel disgusted and ignore the product. Whereas popularity means when a consumer assumes a product to be popular because of his herd mentality, this was observed when the selves were not fully stacked. Hence the following hypothesis is proposed:

H_2: *Layout has a positive impact on impulse buying intention*.

Window Display

Most research on window display has focused on the impact of window display and behavioural intentions (Lecointre-Erickson et al., 2018; Krasonikolakis et al., 2018; Lange et al., 2016). Window display visually communicates the value proposition in the target market and promotes buying behaviour (Chang et al., 2014). A window display is not limited to exterior decor but also comprises a point of sale, sales personnel, atmosphere and merchandising (Zhou & Wong, 2004). A pleasurable window display draws the shoppers to retail outlets and makes them remain longer (Jain et al., 2014). Previous research has shown a favourable association between impulsive buying behaviour and window display (Chang et al., 2014). The relation between impulsive buying behaviour and window display differs from consumer to consumer and from product category to another (Badgaiyan & Verma, 2015). Retail stores change window displays constantly to promote impulsive purchasing (Prashar et al., 2015). Shoppers pay even more interest to an appealing, pleasing display; consequently, they are prone to buy instantly (Miao et al., 2019). Shoppers use window displays while shopping to identify what the store offers and to decide whether to get in the store (Miao et al., 2019; Oh & Petrie, 2012). This research recommends that direct exposure to attractive window displays influences shoppers' senses, responses to these sensorial and their cognitive assumption of what the retail store offers. Thus, the following hypothesis is posited:

H3: Window display has a positive influence on impulse buying intention.

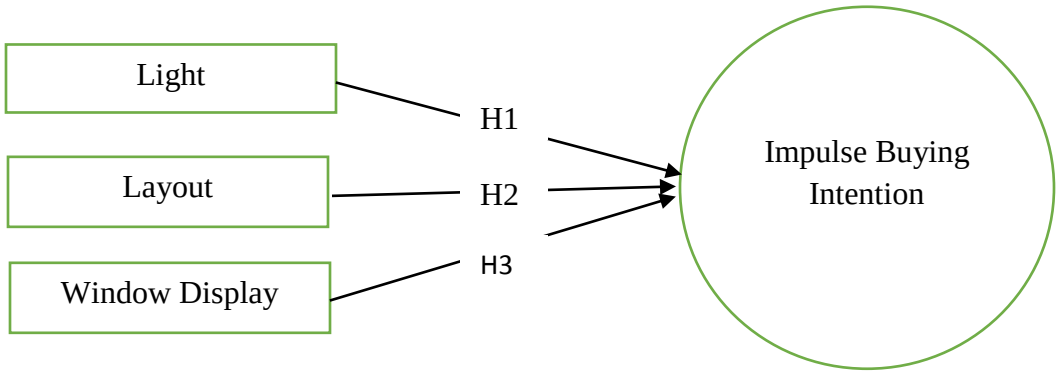

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FIGURE 1
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK METHODOLOGY

Sample

For this study, we have used online forms to collect data across India. A total of 456 respondents were approached, of which 254 agreed to participate in the study. After removing the 52 incomplete questionnaires, the final pool of respondents was 202. The sample size was adequate to get a result, as stated that a response between 30-500 is considered satisfactory. The respondents were told that this research is undertaken only for academic purposes. The study sample considered young consumers involved in any form of outdoor sports and also involved in purchasing sports products. Their participation was purely voluntary Figure 1.

The structured questionnaire used closed-ended questions under three sections. Section one explored the demographic profile, age and gender. Section two consisted of the respondents' personal experience with visual merchandising elements' impact on their purchase behaviour. Finally, section three evaluated the impact of visual merchandising elements on impulse buying intention.

Measures

The constructs in this research study were measured using a Likert scale (Five-point scale), ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The measurement items in this research were adapted from previous studies; after that, it was modified according to the context and research model. For visual merchandising elements, the light had 4 items adapted from (Summers & Hebert, 2001), whereas the layout and window display had 3 items each adapted from Soomro et al. (2017), respectively.

The survey was self-administered, with interviewers present to deal with any problem or queries. The survey was conducted at different times of the day throughout the week and also on the weekend. Generally, individuals completed the survey in about 20 minutes .

Analysis and the results

Table 1 represents the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The sample size of 202 respondents comprised 54% males and 46% females. Most respondents were of young age (90 per cent) between 20-30 years old, and 5 per cent were less than 20 years and 31-40 years old each. This shows that the respondents were young and almost had a balanced population of males and females, keeping the gender biasness out.

TABLE 1
DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

	Frequency	**Percentage**
Gender		
Male	109	54.0
Female	93	46.0
Age		
Less than 20	10	5.0
20-30 year	182	90.0
31-40 year	10	5.0

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Consumer Experience of Sports

Table 2 shows the respondent's prior experience in any form of outdoor sports. The findings showed that most of the respondents were involved in casual sports (90.6 per cent), and only a few were involved in professional sports (9.4 per cent). These respondents, on average, spent less than 100 ₹ in a year; this was evident since most of the respondents were involved in casual sports, therefore their spending.

TABLE 2
CONSUMER PRIOR EXPERIENCE IN OUTDOOR SPORTS

	Frequency	Percentage
Level of involvement in sports		
Casual	183	90.6
Professional	19	9.4
Average spent on sports products in a year?		
Less than 100 ₹	161	79.7
1000-2500 ₹	31	15.3
2500-5000 ₹	7	3.5
More than 5000 ₹	3	1.5
Continuous Involvement in sports		
More than 15 years	54	26.7
More than 10 years	44	21.8
More than 5 years	26	12.9
More than 1 year	23	11.4
Not involved	55	27.2

Construct Validity

To assess construct validity, factor analysis was applied using principal component analysis with varimax rotations. Factor analysis is a data reduction method applied to reduce a large number of variables to a smaller size of underlying variables, which classify and sum up the needed particulars in the variables. A principal component matrix with varimax rotation was selected as an extraction technique to test the validity of the constructs for the fourteen items. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was applied to confirm the appropriaten

ess of proceeding with the analysis to decrease the number of items and determine the dimensions of latent variables. Those items that failed to load on a single factor at 0.50 or less were supposed to be dropped; however, there were no items in this study. The factor analysis technique of dropping an item continued until all the items loaded at 0.50 or higher on one factor. Factor analysis findings for light, layout, window display and impulse buying intention were shown below.

Light

Four items were included in the visual merchandising element of the light factor. The principal component analysis was applied for this factor analysis with 86.601% variance. As

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highlighted in Table 3, the KMO measure of the sampling adequacy for this factor was 0.868, and all the items had a factor loading of above 0.50. The Bartlett test of sphericity was significant (X2 = 795.3018, p< 0.01). Evaluation of the anti-image of the correlation matrix was also well above the acceptable level of 0.50. There was just a single factor with an eigenvalue higher than one that was extracted. Rotation was not required for this case since only a single factor was extracted. This single factor extracted was used for further analysis (Ballantine et al., 2015). Especially the factor loading for all the light items varies from 0.911 to 0.945, which surpasses the 0.50 threshold.

TABLE 3
FACTOR LOADING FOR LIGHT

Measures	**Loading**
The store is well lit	0.928
The store is correctly lit (neither too bright nor dull)	0.911
The lighting in the store is pleasant	0.938
Good lighting will enhance apparel buying decision	0.945
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of the sampling adequacy	0.868
Percentage of variance explained	86.601

Layout

The layout factor comprised three items, and no items were removed since all the loading surpassed the threshold value of 0.50, as recommended by Table 4. The Bartlett test of sphericity was significant (X2 = 795.3018, p< 0.01). Evaluation of the ani-image of the correlation matrix also surpassed the acceptable level of 0.50. Just a single factor with an eigenvalue higher than one was extracted, and 85.198% of the variance was explained (Dey & Srivastava, 2017). The KMO measure of sampling adequacy was 0.757, which surpassed the acceptable limit of 0.50. Rotation was not required for this case since only a single factor was extracted. This single factor extracted was used for further analysis. The Factor loading for all the items of layout varies from 0.914 to 0.930, which surpassed the 0.50 threshold.

TABLE 4
FACTOR LOADING FOR LAYOUT

Measures	**Loading**
A good store layout makes it easy for consumers to find desired products	0.914
The aile should be designed in a way that avoids in-store traffic jams	0.930
Consumers often intend to buy unplanned products if the store has proper product shelving.	0.926
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of the sampling adequacy	0.757
Percentage of variance explained	85.198

Window Display

The KMO measure of the sampling adequacy for the window display was 0.722, and none of the three items was dropped from the analysis. The factor loading of all the items was greater than the threshold value of 0.50 Table 5. The Bartlett test of sphericity was found to be significant (X2 = 448.315, p< 0.01). Evaluation of the ani-image of the correlation matrix also surpassed the acceptable level of 0.50. Just a single factor with an eigenvalue higher than one was extracted, and 85.397% of the variance was explained (Gupta et al., 2021). The KMO measure of sampling adequacy was 0.722, which surpassed the acceptable limit of 0.50. Rotation

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was not required for this case since only a single factor was extracted. This single factor extracted was used for further analysis. Factor loading for all the window display items varies from 0.895 to 0.952, which surpassed the 0.50 threshold. The second item came up as the most domineering item in this factor compared to the other remaining items.

TABLE 5
FACTOR LOADING FOR WINDOW DISPLAY

Measures	Loading
The window display explains the image of the store	0.925
Good window display influences consumers to visit the store	0.952
A window display is a good source for retailers to advertise promotional campaign	0.895
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of the sampling adequacy	0.722
Percentage of variance explained	85.397

Impulse Buying Intention

Table 6 shows that the Bartlett test of sphericity was significant ($X2 = 793.812$, $p< 0.01$). The KMO measures of the sampling adequacy were way beyond the acceptable level of 0.50, which was 0.839 representing adequate inter-correlation. (Igbaria et al., 1995) stated that those variables with item loading of more than 0.50 and cross loading less than 0.35 were found to have a different relationship with the factor. Evaluation of the ani-image of the correlation matrix also surpassed the acceptable level of 0.50. A single factor with an eigenvalue higher than one was extracted, and 85.082% of the variance was explained.

TABLE 6
FACTOR LOADING FOR IMPULSE BUYING INTENTION

Measures	Loading
When I go shopping, I buy things I had not intended to purchase	.888
It is fun to buy spontaneously	.938
When I see something that interests me, I buy it without considering the consequences	.960
I am a person who makes lots of unplanned Purchases	.903
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of the sampling adequacy	.839
Percentage of variance explained	85.082

Reliability Analysis

Reliability analysis was applied to check the internal consistency of the scales through Cronbach's alpha. It was observed that all the given constructs exceeded Cronbach's alpha values criteria, i.e., 0.70. Table 7 shows that all the Cronbach's alpha values of all the variables range between 0.911 to 0.947, which is above the threshold value of 0.70, which implies that the survey instrument used for the study is reliable to measure all the constructs consistently and free from random error. Rotation was not required for this case since only a single factor was extracted. This single factor was used for further analysis. Analysis showed that impulse buying intention included four items. All the items had a factor loading of more than 0.50, where none of the items was dropped from the analysis.

TABLE 7
RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

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Variable	No. of item	Cronbach's $\dot{\alpha}$
LIGHT	4	0.947
LAYOUT	3	0.913
WINDOW DISPLAY	3	0.911
IMPULSE BUYING INTENTION	4	0.940

Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation was applied to check the correlation of the constructs among the four variables (i.e., light, layout, window display and impulse buying intention). The average score of all the items was calculated, and that score was used for correlation analysis and multiple regression. The correlation is said to be strong if the value is r=0.50 to 1.0 or r=0.50 to -1, suggesting a highly reliable. Table 8 described that the inter-correlations between light, layout and window display with the impulse buying intention were significant at 0.01 level and were positively correlated, ranging from 0.554 to 0.999. window display showed the strongest correlation with impulse buying intention (i.e., r = 0.999, p < 0.01), followed by light (r = 0.833, p < 0.01) and layout (r = 0.647, p< 0.01). Thus, there is no multicollinearity issue identified in this study. Additionally, the means for all the constructs vary from 5.060 to 6.060 on a seven-point Likert scale of 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree.

TABLE 8
CORRELATION ANALYSIS

	Window display	Layout	Light	Impulse buying intention	Mean	Std. deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Window display	1				5.1570	.78084	-2.359	8.790
Layout	0.615**	1			5.0600	1.09615	-1.211	2.047
Light	0.812**	0.554**	1		6.0602	.86839	-2.479	10.537
Impulse buying intention	0.999**	0.647**	0.833**	1	5.5633	.82872	-2.394	9.240

Impact Of Visual Merchandising Elements (Light, Layout And Window Display) On Impulse Buying Intention

Multiple regressions were carried out with impulse buying intention as the dependent variable, and light, layout and window display was the independent variable. The regression result is shown in the adjusted R2 of 1 indicated that the independent variable strongly affects the dependent variable. This shows that the model is appropriate and fits the accumulated data. The collinearity statistics revealing the variance inflation factor (VIF) values below 10 and tolerance values above 0.10 confirmed no multicollinearity concerns among the independent variables. Therefore, the model fits the accumulated data.

A closer evaluation of the multiple regressions standardised beta coefficients disclosed that all the posited hypotheses were supported at p < 0.05. It was proposed that H1 shows light positively impacts impulse buying intention in sports products. Table 9 showed that the findings

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were significant (β1=0.056, *t*-value=17831518.285, *p*<0.05). Hence, H1 was supported, and light positively impacts impulse buying intention for sports products. H2 recommends that layout positively impacts impulse buying intention in sports products. The findings were also significant (β1=0.049, *t*-value=20723561.515, *p*<0.05), indicating H2 was maintained. Finally, H3 hypothesised that layout impacts impulse buying intention in sports products. The findings were significant (β1=0.049, *t*-value=20723561.515, *p*<0.05), as the p-value was <0.05, implying the data supported H3. Based upon these findings, the highest beta coefficient was for window display, followed by light and layout. This shows that if the sports product retailers focus on these key elements of visual merchandising (light, layout and window display), it can positively impact consumers' impulse buying intention, supporting H1-H3.

TABLE 9
EFFECTS OF LIGHT, LAYOUT AND WINDOW DISPLAY ON IMPULSE BUYING INTENTION.

Model	Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
				Tolerance	VIF
WINDOW DISPLAY	0.923*	276118928.491	0.000	0.301	3.320
LAYOUT	0.049*	20723561.515	0.000	0.613	1.631
LIGHT	0.056*	17831518.285	0.000	0.335	2.981
Adjusted R^2	1.00				

*p<0.05; VIF = Variance inflation factor.

DISCUSSION

This study analyses the impact of visual merchandising elements on impulse buying intention in the sports product category. The elements of visual merchandising used for this study were light, layout and window display. The analysis through multiple regressions confirmed that light, layout and window display influences consumer impulse buying intention in a sports product. More specifically, findings showed that the relationship between light and impulse buying behaviour, as hypothesized in H1, is positive and significant, which supports the findings of prior research (Mohan et al., 2013; Saad & Metawie, 2015). The lighting of the stores influences consumers who purchase sports products. A good lighting strategy assists in creating an ideal environment, as in a sports product store. A store with proper lighting may attract consumers to experience the store environment and create a desire to purchase impulsively. A properly designed lighting system can bring a new dimension to an interior, which guides the customer's eye to key sales points, develop an environment of excitement, generate positive affect, or make essential approach locations safe and visible (Mohan et al., 2013). Visual merchandising elements include light has a favourable effect on stimulation, and all of these can impact purchase impulsively (Gudonaviciene and Alijosiene, 2015).

Further analysis showed that impulse buying intention is influenced by the layout factor, which H2 sustains. The results are in tandem with previous research findings. An ideal layout provides the ability to assist in accessibility to information and help the consumers in decision-making. End caps and peg boards influence consumer impulse buying intention.

Lastly, the findings of multiple regression analysis for H3 also had a significant impact. Results validated those consumers are influenced by impulse buying intention through window displays for sports products. The findings are consistent with who showed that visual merchandising elements, i.e., window display, influences impulse buying intention. Stores should put more emphasis on creating an attractive and eye-catching window display. An ideal window display should provide information regarding the products displayed.

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Managerial Implication

The sports product retailers need to understand that the consumers for their products are generally young, and to influence them, they need to have good visual merchandising in their store so that the customers get influenced by the visual merchandising elements and are compelled to buy impulsively even if they had not planned before visiting the shop. This product category is increasing day by day since customers are not only influenced by one sport, with the introduction of different sports leagues and individuals supporting different teams of different sports (Law et al., 2012). The importance of light, layout and window display plays a vital role in visual merchandising. Retailers need to develop a *"suitable"* (i.e., soft lighting) environment. They need to ensure proper lighting throughout the store to prevent consumers from checking out the merchandise. Sports product retailers must avoid messy shelves and narrow and uneven aisles that might influence consumers' understanding of crowding, which may lead to negative affect. An inadequate layout in a sports store triggers an adverse effect on consumer behaviour. Retailers must keep updating the window display from time to time with the latest product and fashion trends in the market.

Limitations And Future Research Direction

The sample for this study may not be representative enough to capture all market segments since most of the respondents were involved in sports casually. Future studies need to focus on professional players to give a complete overview of consumer behaviour in a sports product. Moreover, our results may also have been influenced by the respondent's actual need for the product when they were answering the questionnaire, which was not considered in this study (Harmancioglu et al., 2009; Koku & Savas, 2016). Future studies may consider exploring gender as a moderating variable to see how gender plays a role when making an impulse purchase for sports products. The role of money availability is also crucial since the result shows most of the respondents were young, and they spent a minimum of INR 1000 only in a year on sports products. Future researchers can also study the shopping behaviour towards the online and offline purchase of sports products.

CONCLUSION

This study was conducted to understand the impact of visual merchandising elements (light, layout, and window display) impact impulse buying intention in sports products based on the S-R model. One of the study's objectives was to understand how visual merchandising helps influence consumer impulse buying intention. The analysis showed that all elements (light, layout, and window display) influence consumer impulse buying intention. The above findings are in line with the results of the previous study, in their study showed the positive impact of visual merchandising elements such as colour and lighting positively related to purchase intention. In summary, visual merchandising elements positively influence consumers' purchase intention.

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APPENDIX

Appendix I **SCALE ITEMS**
Light (Summers & Hebert, 2001)
The store is well lit
The store is correctly lit (neither too bright nor dull)
Lighting in the store is pleasant
Good lighting will enhance sports product buying decision
Layout (Soomro et al., 2017)
A good store layout makes it easy for consumers to find desired sports products.
The aile should be designed in a way that avoids in-store traffic jams.
Consumers often intend to buy unplanned products if the store has proper product shelving.
Window Display (Soomro et al., 2017)
Window display explains the image of the store.
Good window display influences consumer to visit the store.
Window display is good source for retailers to advertise promotional campaign.
Impulse buying
When I go shopping, I buy things I had not intended to purchase.
It is fun to buy spontaneously.
When I see something that really interests me, I buy it without considering the consequences.
I am a person who makes lots of unplanned Purchases.

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