

# **Vm Displays -An Essential Shift Or Unsuccessful Attempt, Quandary Encountered By Reliance Retail Store Pune Post Pandemic.**

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## **Abstract:**

*The Indian retail business is increasing its canvas with a rise post pandemic. Retailing has been with us since the beginning of time. Throughout the course, retailing methods and techniques have been modified in order to meet the demands of the market. Post pandemic the store actions geared towards the Patrons, has been varying and developing. Initially the prime focus was on merchandising solitary, but now along with other visual merchandising factors (windows, clusters, signage's) merchandising has become more purposeful, specialized, and certified. Focusing on visual merchandising and its results and patrons' expenditure post pandemic has determined to this study. The ultimate of any economic actions, is retail and thus it plays a vital role in the global economy post pandemic.*

*Post pandemic patrons' insight towards visual merchandising displays are examine and considered in this study. The primary research question that was formed in this study, was to avail the conclusion on visual merchandising displays on patrons' insight post pandemic. Qualitative data was collected by means of focus groups and exploratory research was done. Thematic analysis was used to examine the expansion. Summing –up from this research it showcases that, the insight of visual merchandising displays is subconscious/ unintentional in building up awareness and desire to screen the merchandise and to decorate the store.*

**Index Terms-** Retail, Visual Merchandising displays, patrons' insight, Post Pandemic, marketing spur, reliance trends Pune.

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

Post pandemic Visual Merchandising provides 'degree of satisfaction' to patrons by creating an environment within the retail store that suggest the patrons to check-out and procure the commodities from the communication by retailer/ store to its patrons about the merchandise and its safety norms while shopping it presents/ recommends. Moreover, the quality and experience the Visual Merchandising makes the patrons to experience the product. The modern retail post pandemic has transformed the way of offering products and services to the patrons.

Do visual merchandising displays used in the stores add any meaning or impact to the patron's experience and value to retailers post pandemic? (Levi & Weitz, 2009) As retailers want their stores to attract patrons, by giving them fulfilling shopping experience along with feel of safety, assorted merchandise displays, assisting them to find the merchandise, motivate them to make planned – unplanned purchases, correct placement of signs, etc which in the end gives them a satisfying shopping experience. The question comes up, if the shopping experience in the store does not have these factors than does the retailers have any importance to spend time and money on these display/ show. Therefore, in a retail store it is important that visual merchandising displays are created to win over a patron approach and to make purchase. The current worldwide economic depression and sufferings, it has become more and more important that retailers decide how their visual merchandising displays are perceived by patrons. In this way, it will be able to discover how patrons are considering these products, and how they comprehend it.

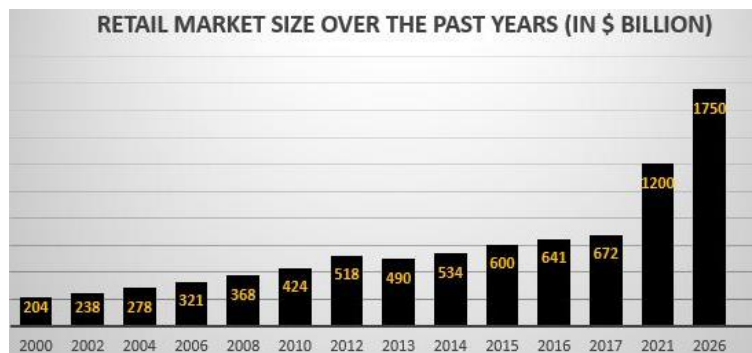
This study progress from a patron's feedback /approach to visual merchandising urge, to systematically think about this area of the retail industry and could advantage retailers, as patrons share the insight of visual merchandising displays and the results can prudently be useful to the retailer's world-wide with a few adaptations to meet local circumstances and actions/ traditions.

## II. INDIAN INDUSTRY RETAIL REPORT

One of the pillar in India is Retailing of its economy and accounts for about 10% of its GDP and is estimated to be US\$ 600 billion and one of the top 5 retail markets in the world by economic value.

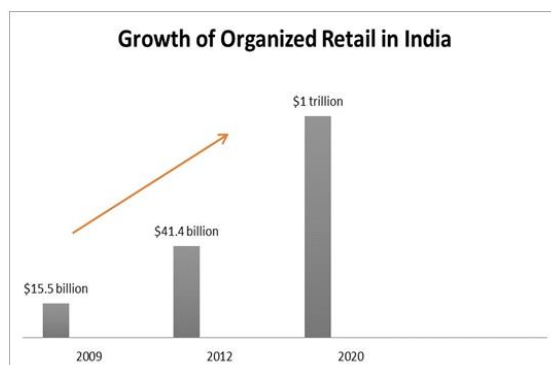
India is one of the fastest growing retail markets in the world, with 1.2 billion people and it is the world's 5<sup>th</sup> largest global destination in the retail space and ranked 63 in World Bank's Doing Business 2020.

In FDI Confidence Index, India ranked 16 - after US, Canada, Germany, United Kingdom, China, Japan, France, Australia, Switzerland, and Italy.



As shown in the Figure 1.1 retail market size post pandemic -in \$Billion

India comprises only 8% of organized retail and remaining 92% is left unorganized currently, which may grow faster than traditional retail and is expected to gain a higher share in the growing pie of the retail market in India, estimating share of organized retail by 20% by 2020. The organized retail market is projected to increase to 13% by 2020, with the unorganized market reducing to 87% and thus Organized retail has the potential to reach approx. USD 140-160 bn.



As shown in the Figure 1.2 – growth of organized retail in India

The retailers post pandemic, bounce back to entice patrons to enter their store – and this is possible only by having the most exciting and visually appealing retail environment. The aim is to create an atmosphere where patrons can shop in a pleasant and visually appealing environment along with safety measures. In order to accomplish such visually appealing retail environment, retailers make use of visual merchandising displays.

## III. VISUAL MERCHANDISING DISPLAYS -POST PANDEMIC

Visual Merchandising display is the “skill of presentation” which puts the merchandise in focus, it attracts and educates the patron and converts into selling process. It creates aspiration to the patrons, which excites their curiosity and influences their buying behaviour. Well-organized visual merchandising aids in better sales of merchandise that will sell themselves. The basic objective of drawing patrons in order to sell merchandise, Retailers practise through visual merchandising and therefore it is apprehensive with both the factors -the product and the brand which are visually communicated to the patrons and whether this communication works out “aptly” (Wanninayake & Randiwela, 2007).

Garvey (2010) Visual merchandising includes complete characteristics of visual impact of the store and its merchandise. Visual merchandising has contributed from accumulating on table and live models displays in windows. Innovations, upgradation in technology and creative flair has contributed in merchandise display. Visual Merchandising displays make shopping easy for patrons by artistically presenting merchandise. Bhalla and Anuraag (2010).

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The functions of visual merchandising Schimp (1990) (Cited in Gajanayake, & Surangi, 2011)

- To build awareness about merchandise and give related information to patrons
- To update patrons about the benefits / payback of merchandise and its availability
- To persuade patrons to procure merchandise or brand
- To make the most of the space, and at same time building the buying experience for patrons
- To emphasise the promotions run by retailers
- To support the patrons in finding, assessing, and choosing merchandise.

Visual merchandising display methods are often referred as the “silent salesperson” by providing the patrons with information through visual medium and by suggestive selling (Bhalla&Anuraag, 2010) and visual merchandising displays make use of creative techniques in order to save the time of sales and the shopper’s by making shopping easier and faster.

#### IV. Visual Merchandising as a Silent tool

VM AS SILENT SELLER?	WHAT TO DO?	HOW TO DO?
Imagination of the customer	Color Stories	Training
Tell story	Rotation of Merchandise	Team Effort
Influence Buying Pattern	Maintain Optimum Capacity	Correct communication
Create Fantasy	Create exciting corners	Focus on mock shop compliance
Enhance Shopping Experience	Additional stock in the stock Room	Before & after sales tracking

How can you use Visual Merchandising as a selling tool?

- Window
- Colour stories and merchandising
- Cross merchandising and accessorizing
- Communication signages and props

Through windows



Figure2.1 Windows are the face of the store so needs to showcase with lot of thought in mannequin composition, story, styling and lighting -reliance trends Pune stores

**Through colour stories**



**Figure 2.2 Maximum use of 2-4 colour to present clear colour story -reliance trends Pune stores**

**Through cross merchandising accessorizing.**



**Figure 2.3 Use of accessories on slat wall/ mannequins to promote multiple sales- reliance trends Pune stores**

**Through communication sign & prop**



**Figure2.4 Product information signs & talkers, Offer signages, Campaign communication props -reliance trends pune stores**



The communication signages and communication props can attract the attention of the patrons and shares information as well.



Figure 2.5 Seasonal display prop, Category signages, EOSS signages- reliance trends pune stores

Visual merchandising as a selling tool it is important to plan the Visual merchandising elements in the strategic location



Figure 2.6 Visual merchandising elements in the strategic location- reliance trends Pune.

Visual merchandising displays is used in immense way in retail outlets to achieve different functions such as to support sales, to support the retail strategies, to communicate with patrons and to assist in communicating the fashion retailers' Brand Image (Levi & Weitz, 2009 and Bell & Turnus, 2008).

Post pandemic it is the aim of the retailer to use visual merchandising displays to attract patrons in the store by means of window displays and then by means of visual merchandising displays to generate or increase sales. Retailers understands that the way in which they use visual merchandising displays has the power to generate images about the products in the mind of the patrons – images that will affect future investment and insight of the product and brand. Visual merchandising displays are now a significant tool for retailers in order to attract and entice consumers into their stories.

## V. PATRON'S INSIGHT- POST PANDEMIC

Post Pandemic entering a retail store, patrons act in a different way to the sensations and stimuli around them; they either notice to it or forget about it. Each message produced by a retailer is done with a specific purpose in mind. However, patrons turn out to make their own conclusion by adapting the communication that is created by certain sensations or stimulus (The Journal of Applied Business Research – November/December 2012, 28) to fit in with their own sole experiences, desires, and discriminations. Post Pandemic a patron's decision to visit/revisit a retail store can be influenced by the visual merchandising displays.

A process of assessment in which the outside world is approved through a filter and only the most significant or pleasing things make it through the filter and impact the patrons (Blythe, 2008) – by the visual merchandising displays, if its positive they can decide to revisit the store; however, if they have a negative insight, they might not return to the store again. As a result, the retail environment that is created by utilising visual

merchandising displays can guide patrons' conclusions about the merchandise, the service and the patron's satisfaction of the store.

Post Pandemic the patron's insight of a store's environment depend on the patrons shopping goals. When consumers are shopping for something that they think as an unsatisfactory mission, they prefer to be in a peaceful and relaxing environment; however, if patrons are shopping for satisfaction they prefer being in an exciting environment. It can therefore be secondary that patron's insight may have an impact on the way they behave towards a store and its merchandise. Post Pandemic retailers must establish how their visual merchandising displays are professed by the patrons. It is important to classify what patrons are seeing, observing, and understanding. By establishing how visual merchandising displays are apparent by the patrons, it could benefit retailers to line up the internal focus of their visual merchandising displays with the patrons' outlook.

## **VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Qualitative research was employed in this study, as it determines the proper outcome and new insight about the presented data (Zikmund & Babin, 2010) post pandemic, the facts and explanations were required from the patrons. Insofar as visual merchandising displays involve patrons' insight were considered by exploratory research and to observe their insight. Due to the exploratory nature of the study, non-probability, purposive sampling was utilized.

In non-probability sampling the samples were grouped in a process that does not give individuals in the populace an equal chance of being selected. Subjects in a non-probability sample are usually selected on their accessibility.

In purposive sampling, the researcher samples, with a purpose in mind (Zikmund & Babin, 2010). The crucial factor for the purposive sampling for this research study are as follows:

- Folks who buy clothing at Reliance Trends in Pune post pandemic.
- Folks who dwell in Pune city, Maharashtra, India.
- Folks who are literate and understand principal language together with English/Hindi.
- Folks who is gadget/ tech savvy.
- Folks who are agreeable and partake in the learning.

Data collection was conducted by means of crystallisation. With the questionnaire that asks partakers to a specific study were used to collect data from 30 partakers (15 partakers in each focus group). In this way, two forms of data were compared with one another to avail the data from each partaker.

The Focus Groups were supported on the use of optical stimulus objects. Snaps were taken of an apparel retail store in Pune (Reliance trends) and were presented to the partaker on WhatsApp groups (experienced & in experienced) and questions were derived from the research plan. The following questions were used for the focus groups (the same questions were also shared with the inexperienced group).

1. What does one give thought to reliance trends visual merchandising displays post pandemic?
2. Post pandemic after you visit reliance trends, what does one notice about the visual Merchandising displays?

Thematic analysis was used to examine the data as this research was contextual in nature. It is an exercise in qualitative research which involves searching through qualitative data to identify any repeated prototypes (Tesch, 1990).

## **VII. RESULTS**

The results of the questions asked in the focus groups are examined in terms of 2 main themes and their essential categories as outlined by Tesch's model (thematic analysis).

### **Theme 1**

Partaker professed visual merchandising displays as a tool that makes "buying" perspective that adds to the experience with reliance trends Pune and visual merchandising displays boosted their buying experience in concealed ways by enhancing the look and feel and creating a relaxed atmosphere to shop. It was also compliance that the displays add to the image of a store, along with quality of the product sold and the quality of the store. They also stated that visual merchandising displays are seen as a promotional tool, for example: to communicate product quality and info, to draw attention, stores need to be well designed and if not, it only creates irritation recommended by the partakers.

Categories emerge from the Theme 1 and are explained below.

1. Visual merchandising displays enhances the patrons buying experience in concealed ways, develops the stores look and feel, forms a hassle-free experience, and adds to the image of the store.
2. Visual merchandising presentations are outlooked as a promotional tool -branding, product, information, and quality. Also, many partakers believed the visual merchandising presentations are the tactics for product endorsement and contribute to the image of the store through the quality and the nature of the product retailed.
3. Signages, mannequins, and merchandise that are showcased seems to influence/ evolve the patron, as elucidate by focus group that the reason of showcasing this merchandise through these elements is to allure the patrons to buy / purchase. The Visual merchandising displays / elements should be well planned/ designed to draw optimistic awareness, if not done it could turn out to be unconstructive and annoying for the patrons.
4. The expertise group- clarifies that in order to have an inspiring experience in a store, the visual merchandising displays should be well designed but should boundary the costing of décor that is used in the display. In addition to it, described that frequent shifting the visual displays change, causes frustration and unconstructive feelings towards the store's ability to satisfy the patrons desires. Rightly designed visual merchandising displays are themes that influence the patron's insight of the store.

## **Theme 2**

Partakers insight of visual merchandising displays diverse from person -to- person with prominence on the concealed nature of visual merchandising displays. Partakers explained that visual merchandising displays are mostly noticed in a concealed way, and it is inclined by individual likings, related characteristics such as ideas, type of store and product or branding, gender to some extent, and sensational and rational characteristics. It showcases that although the visual merchandising displays influence the patrons, but they are not completely dependent on the displays to make their purchasing decisions. In fact, if they are distinctively shopping for a certain thing, they may not even see the displays unless the product they are searching for, is the part of the display. Below are few takings taken from the focus groups to illustrate the participant's views on this objective.

Categories emerge from the Theme 2 and are explained below

1. Individual liking: - When patrons are shopping for something that they think as an unfulfilling mission, they wish to be in a comforting and peaceful atmosphere, however, if patrons are shopping for pleasure they wish being in an exciting atmosphere (Levi & Weitz, 2009). Besides, the focus groups advocate the outlook that the after-purchase happiness is what often pulls patrons back to a store, despite of the visual merchandising displays. If the store pleased their shopping goals previously, they are also more likely to come back, likewise no amount of great quality of visual merchandising displays will draw patrons in if they have already decided that a particular store will not aid in satisfying their shopping purpose.
2. Appropriate characteristics (brand, type of store, branding): - A patron will often notice a particular idea that is being conveyed through a visual merchandising display, and will appreciate the store's special treatment to community and environmental occurrence such as festive displays or seasonal changeovers. The unskilled groups also described that they observed unsuitable ideas in apparel retail stores, in terms of merchandise displayed not available in the store, size issue, colour availability.
3. Sexual category base: - these groups agreed on the razor-sharp diversity between male and female apparel patrons, in that women patrons are more considerate to the comprehensive retail experience that includes visual merchandising displays. Comparatively, men patrons search for directions in a store about where to find what they are looking for. For example, if a man patron is shopping for a formal wear, he searches impartially for visual clues that will direct him in the direction of the formal section, not paying too much attention to the style or way the formals are displayed.
4. Sensual and Analytical characteristic: -The (in expertise group) stated that multi-coloured visual merchandising displays fascinated patron attention and observed that the (in expertise group) were aware of colour displays that were practical for the patron, and not just part of a fashionable display.

## **VIII. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

The insight of the partakers indicated that the visual merchandising displays adds to the image and the atmosphere of the store. Correct point of reference and perfectly designed visual merchandising displays are subject matter that alters the patron's insight of a retail store. In addition, the patrons professed visual merchandising displays as a tool to establish a 'purchasing' environment and as a medium to represent the brand of the store.

In terms of the visual merchandising, displays which are noticed by the patrons are lower than an epiphany, also influenced by individual liking, appropriate characteristic such as stories/themes, type of stores and brand or branding, gender to some extent, quality of the visual merchandising display and sensual and imaginary aspects.

The research study suggests that women patrons are more thoughtful to the complete retail experience which includes visual merchandising displays. In comparison, men patrons search for sign boards in a store about where to find what they are looking for. The focus groups also explained that they notice awkward themes in retail stores, in terms of whether the items displayed are actually available in store, or whether it sends the correct message with the balance of the display.

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