ABSTRACT

In this research paper, we present a review of literature on the impression of situational dimensions on purchase outcomes. We have specially used Belk's taxonomy to analyse the effect of physical environment, social surroundings, temporal variables, shopping task and stores visited by consumers and purchase outcomes.

Keywords— Taxonomy, Consumer, Purchase

I. INTRODUCTION

Although branding, product promotion and locational aspects may be helpful in building brand cognizance and purchase inclination, but these aspects may not result in purchase. Consumer buying pronouncements are often taken at the time of purchase and are perhaps profoundly affected by what takes place at the point of purchase. In fact, there are a number of factors that attribute to the purchase decision, entailing characteristics of the consumer, attributes of brand and situational variables. By recognising such issues, vendors may develop their retail designs and layout, handle their merchandise, atmospherics and take hiring decisions substantially. These concerns provide a fundamental foundation for crafting competitive gain in contemporary vibrant and turbulent markets. The influence of various situational aspects on buyer inclination has been extensively and thoroughly scrutinized in the earlier researches.

Innumerable researches have been directed to analyse the bearing of specific kind of situational influences, such as goods, service, amenities, ease of purchase, advertising and atmospherics. Belk's taxonomy (1975) of situational aspects is a valuable instrument in evaluating effect of dimensions related to situation on purchase inclination as the taxonomy entails factors that are managed by stores. Belk’s taxonomy includes aspects like physical and social surroundings, task definition, temporal perspective and antecedent states. Some previous studies have been organised to examine the taxonomy in a shopping centre. Temporal dimension and friendship came out to be significant elements in buyer manifestations of Hispanic clients in US stores (Nicholls, Roslow and Dubish, 1997). Furthermore, variances observed in shopping outlines with seasonal changes for different nations (Zhuang, Tsang, Zou, Li and Nicholls, 2006; Roslow, Li and Nicholls, 2000). More researches need to be carried out to aid retailers mend store designs, take management ingenuities and augment retail conclusions.

The paper presents a review of literature on the impression of situational dimensions on purchase outcomes. We have specially used Belk’s taxonomy (1975) to analyse the effect of physical environment, social surroundings, temporal variables, shopping task and stores visited by consumers and purchase outcomes. Buyers do not respond to marketing stimuli like advertisements and products in isolation, rather, the buyers respond to marketing influences and the situation simultaneously. To have a total understanding of buyer behaviour, we must take into consideration, the consumer, the marketing stimuli like advertisement and product and the situation in which the response is happening.

Situational influence incorporate factors specific to time and place that do not trail from awareness about attributes of buyer and stimulus and have an influence on present buyer behaviour. Let us now try to understand the impact of various dimensions of Belk’s framework on purchase outcomes.

II. PHYSICAL SURROUNDINGS

Physical surrounding is the utmost obvious characteristic attribute of situation. This entails site, style, noises, light, jingles, shade, aroma, climate, merchandising and some display items adjoining the stimulus object (Belk, 1975). Studies here explore bearing of retail shop atmospherics and density on purchase outcomes. From the purchaser’s perspective, retail store atmosphere defines buyer’s sensitivity towards excellence of store environment. However, some researches (Nicholls, Roslow and Dubish, 1997) could not discover any direct association amid store atmosphere and purchase outcomes, although suggests
that outlet’s atmosphere does impact purchase behaviour and posits that creating pleasing store atmosphere induces shoppers to spend more time in the store and also manifest unintentional purchases, on the other hand creating non pleasing store atmosphere result into evading behaviour by the shoppers (Tai and Fung, 1997; Donovan, Rossiter, Marcooolyn and Nesdale, 1994; Donovan and Rossiter, 1982).

Store density is another important component of the overall store environment. Perceived density determines number of shoppers in a space in the store. As such density is a precursor to seeming retail flocking and purchase consequences (Eroglu, Machleit and Barr, 2005). High perceived crowding results into negative emotions being generated in shoppers, which impacted satisfaction and patronage of store negatively (Machleit, Donovan, Rossiter, Marcooolyn and Nesdale, 1994; Donovan and Rossiter, 1982).

III. SOCIAL SURROUNDINGS

Social surroundings are other people in the particular situation. The shopper’s action are frequently affected by fellow shoppers around him. Other people present, their features, their obvious roles, and interpersonal interfaces significantly impact shopper’s behaviour in the store (Belk, 1975). Research suggests that this association is very intricate (Zhuang, Tsang, Zou, Li and Nicholls, 2006; Kollat and Willet, 1968). Situation and setting defines the connection between companions and purchasing outcomes. Recommendations expressed by accomplices and lineages strengthen buying judgment that in turn results in additional purchases. Numerous researches have backed this rapport. Hence retail should strive to attract couples, companions, friends or group shopping (Underhill, 1999). Shoppers accompanying to stores with other people are likely to purchase and spend extra in comparison to solitary shoppers (Nicholls, Roslow and Dublish, 1997). There is noteworthy relationship between number and kind of shoppers, duration of shopping and the quantity bought (Granbois, 1968). Here, children also play significant role in purchasing and children’s role is similar to that of companions.

IV. TEMPORAL VARIABLES

Belk defines temporal perspective as the timing of purchase and it may include the time of the day, week of the month, month or season of the year when the shoppers purchase something. This aspect is imperative to understand sales positions and modify purchase outcomes. Time paucity might slash intended as well as unintended purchases. Time taken to travel to stores also affects shopping outcomes. Various studies indicate a positive correlation amid travel time and purchase behaviour. The shoppers who are distant or far away from the store would buy and spend more than the shoppers who are nearby to outlet (Nicholls, Roslow and Dublish, 1997). The duration of time in the store also determines the quantity of purchase. The shopper would buy more, if he spends long time in the store (Underhill, 1999). The shopper who is strolling all through the outlet, and contemplating lots of products, means he is seeing, feeling & analysing merchandise, and as such requires long time for this exercise. Nicholls, Roslow and Dublish (1997) proposed that shoppers who spend an hour or more in the store bought many items and spend more than those shoppers spending less time the store. Nicholls, Roslow and Dublish (1997) sought to observe the relationship between timing of day and shopping & purchasing outcomes. Future studies can be conducted to find the correlation between travelling time, timing of the day, duration of time in the store, money spent, quantity and quality of products bought and purchase outcomes.

V. SHOPPING TASK

Shopping task entails the intent, motivation or requirement to choose, shopping, or get the required information for both general and specific purchase. The task manifests roles of buyer and user as foreseen by the shopper (Belk, 1975), and also includes the planning, intentions & motivations and the kind of purchase trips. A trip happens while a consumer is aware of an unfulfilled need, and justifies the travel time to get required merchandise (Westbrook and Black, 1985). Shopping trip can be a major shopping trip and a fill-in shopping trip. Major shopping trip is organised less frequently, and shoppers spend long time in the outlet, buy huge quantity of merchandise to realise both short and long duration needs. Here, shoppers spend major chunk of budget. In contrast, a fill-in-shopping trip is organised very recurrently. It is organised to refill perishables which are often consumed, like bread, salt, sugar etc. This requires less effort and time, small amount of merchandise purchased, less spending per trip, and includes a miniscule portion of the budget (Walters and Maqbul, 2003). Buyers generally shop with a prepared list of products to buy and as such manifests the level of pre-shopping planning. Shopping plans represent the purchasing decisions contemplated before going to the outlet. It requires a conscious spending of time, effort & money (Cobb and Hoyer, 1986). Here, consumers use predefined lists and carts and buy more merchandise and spend extra. Large scale buying is as such positively associated with purchase outcomes.

VI. STORES VISITED

There is a negative correlation amid number of store visited by shopper and purchase behaviour (Zhuang, Tsang, Zou, Li and Nicholls, 2006). If the
shopper visits a large number of stores then it is very less likely that a purchase is made. As is the case with window shoppers as they like to look for merchandise rather than buying. The emphasis of window shoppers on browsing makes them visit more stores and this has negative bearing on the purchase. Purchase frequency is likewise linked to loyalty. If the number of stores visited by the shopper is less then, he also manifests a sense of loyalty towards the store. Enis and Paul (1970) postulate that the highly loyal shoppers apportioned large expenditure to the first store visited in comparison to the less loyal consumers.

### Summary of Studies Reviewed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Situational Dimension Studied</th>
<th>Influence of Situational Dimension on Purchase Outcomes</th>
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<tr>
<td>(Belk, 1975)</td>
<td>Physical Surroundings</td>
<td>Store atmosphere is buyer’s sensitivity towards excellence of store environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Nicholls, Roslow and Dublish, 1997)</td>
<td>Physical Surroundings</td>
<td>No direct association amid outlet’s atmosphere and purchasing outcomes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donovan, Rossiter, Marcoolyn and Nesdale, 1994; Donovan and Rossiter, 1982; Tai and Fung, 1997</td>
<td>Physical Surroundings</td>
<td>Pleasing store atmosphere induces shoppers towards store, they spend more time in the store and also manifest unintentional purchases, while shoppers avoid nasty store atmosphere</td>
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<td>Eroglu, Machleit and Barr, 2005</td>
<td>Physical Surroundings</td>
<td>Perceived density is a particular measure of the people in a place in the store and is precursor to retail congregation and purchase behaviour</td>
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<tr>
<td>Machleit, Eroglu and Powell, 2000; Eroglu, Machleit and Barr, 2005</td>
<td>Physical Surroundings</td>
<td>High level of perceived crowding was observed to result into negative emotions being generated in shoppers, which impacted satisfaction and patronage of store negatively</td>
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<tr>
<td>Underhill, 1999</td>
<td>Physical Surroundings</td>
<td>As a result of the “butt-brush” effect, the retail shopper would not be able to move through the crowded area and deter the search for specific and planned object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belk, 1975</td>
<td>Social Surroundings</td>
<td>Fellow shoppers, accomplices present in the vicinity of the shopper impact shopper’s behaviour in the store</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zhuang, Tsang, Zou, Li and Nicholls, 2006; Kollat and Willet, 1968</td>
<td>Social Surroundings</td>
<td>Shopping in the store increases purchasing outcomes, however there are studies that suggest that this relationship is more complex</td>
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<tr>
<td>Underhill, 1999</td>
<td>Social Surroundings</td>
<td>Retail should strive to attract couples, companions, friends or group shopping</td>
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<td>Nicholls, Roslow and Dublish, 1997</td>
<td>Social Surroundings</td>
<td>Shoppers who accompany with other people to stores tend to purchase and spend more in comparison to solitary shoppers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Granbois (1968)</td>
<td>Social Surroundings</td>
<td>A noteworthy relationship between the size (no.) and group of shoppers, time spent in shopping and the quantity of objects bought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicholls, Roslow and Dublish, 1997</td>
<td>Temporal Variables</td>
<td>Positive association is seen</td>
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</table>
between the travel time taken by shoppers to reach the store and purchasing outcome. The shoppers who are distant or far away from the store would buy and spend more than the shoppers who are nearby to the store (Underhill, 1999).

Temporal Variables

Nicholls, Roslow and Dubish (1997)

Slow shoppers buy large merchandise and spend extra than quick shoppers.

Nicholls, Roslow and Dubish (1997)

Observed the relationship between timing of day and shopping & purchasing outcomes.

(Belk, 1975)

The task manifests various buyer and user roles foreseen by the shopper.

(Westbrook and Black, 1985)

A shopping trip happens while a consumer is aware of an unsatisfied need, and justifies the travel time to the outlet to get desired merchandise.

(Walters and Maqbul, 2003)

The fill-in shopping trip is organised to refill perishables and entails less time and effort, fewer merchandise bought, less spending.

(Cobb and Hoyer, 1986)

Shopping plans represent the purchasing decisions contemplated before going in the retail store and entail a large spending of time, effort and money.

Zhuang, Tsang, Zou, Li and Nicholls (2006)

Stores Visited

There is a negative correlation amid number of store visited by shopper and purchase behaviour.

Enis and Paul (1970)

Stores Visited

The highly loyal shoppers apportioned large expenditure to the first store visited in comparison to the less loyal consumers.

VII. CONCLUSION

Buyers do not respond to marketing stimuli like advertisements and products in isolation, rather, the buyers respond to marketing influences and the situation simultaneously. To have a total understanding of buyer behaviour, we must take into consideration, the consumer, the marketing stimuli like advertisement and product and the situation in which the response is happening. Situational influence incorporate factors specific to time and place that do not trail from awareness about attributes of buyer and stimulus and have an influence on present buyer behaviour.

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role of shopping values”, Journal of Business Research, (58), 8, 1146-1153.


