

The Impact of Online Visual Merchandising Strategies on Online Purchase Intention with Special Reference to the Supermarkets in Sri Lanka

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This study examines the impact of Online Visual Merchandising strategies and their specific elements such as, website registration, website navigation, web graphics, product demonstration, and web advertising on Online Purchase Intention in Sri Lankan supermarkets, With the increasing relevance of e-commerce, particularly post-COVID-19, the research aims to fill the gaps in local literature, focusing on the busy lifestyle of employed individuals in Sri Lanka, primarily from the western province. A quantitative research approach was followed, in which a structured survey was used on 399 employed respondents in Sri Lanka and Majority represented by Western province. In analyzing the data, the relationship between Online Visual Merchandising Strategies and Online Purchase Intention was evaluated by statistical techniques such as correlation and regression analyses. The underlying research adopted a positivism paradigm and followed a deductive methodology to ensure that data collection and interpretation are accurate. Different demographic variables were targeted to make the findings representative using sampling methods. Reliability and validity tests were conducted to ensure the integrity of data. These findings show that Online Purchase Intention is influenced significantly by all the elements of Online Visual Merchandising Strategies. The greatest significant impact on consumers are the issues of ease in website navigation and demonstration of product selection. In a nutshell, good visual looks of an interface will go hand in hand with a user-friendly approach and act as important enhancers in influencing customers, improving purchase behavior. More interactive

functions lead to improved levels of users, such as 360-degree view or virtual fitting room, which increases customer engagement. These features support and complement the sensory deficiencies in online shopping, hence giving a near-in-store experience. Statistical results further showed that the integration of trust-building mechanisms, like secure payment gateways and transparent product reviews, was very important for enhancing consumer confidence.

Geographically, the study is limited to the Sri Lankan context, most responses from the Western Province, while the focus is on employed population. Hence, the representation is limited. Other external factors that may indirectly influence the consumer's behavior have not been taken into consideration in this study, like economic instability or cultural influences. The need for further research in diverse demographic groups and with longitudinal designs exists to examine the evolutionary nature of consumer behavior. The comparative studies with other South Asian markets may yield more useful insights. The Theoretical contribution of this study enhances the existing literature on consumer behavior and digital marketing by integrating insights specific to Sri Lanka. It underlines the relevance of the Technology Acceptance Model in understanding online purchasing behavior but also suggests refinement toward aspects of cultural and emotional variables.

The managerial implications are that strategies should focus on ways in which supermarkets invest in interactivity, targeted advertising, and the appeal to enhance visuals on digital platforms. These will be able to motivate customer engagement, build brand loyalty, and strengthen market competitiveness. It encourages retailers to devise robust analytics that would keep them updated about customer feedback and thus allow dynamic adaptation of strategies. Tangible impacts are investments in augmented reality, AI-driven personalization-producing shoppers' engaging experiences for tech-savvy customers and educating grocery employees on how to operate digital interfaces.

By doing so, it will increase the potential online customers and thus support economic growth. It is where policymakers should emphasize the need for communities when there is a lack of services regarding digital literacy. This would be a very good opportunity to further investigate how sensory immersion and emotional involvement in online retail work. The study confirms that the general results are held by studying Online Visual Merchandising Strategies applications in industries such as electronics or

fashion. Advanced econometric models can include complex relationships among the components of visual merchandising and consumer behavior.

Keywords: *Online Visual Merchandising, Online Purchasing Intention, Website Registration, Website Navigation, Web Graphics, Product Demonstration, Web Advertising, Sri Lankan Supermarkets, Digital Consumer Behavior, Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)*