



**THE INFLUENCE OF STORE ATMOSPHERICS ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION
AT SELECTED GROCERY RETAIL OUTLETS IN CAPE TOWN**

by

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A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Signature

Date: 10 November 2019

ABSTRACT

This study is informed by the research conducted on the influence of store atmospherics on customer satisfaction. The shopping experience generally has evolved to become more engaging and entertaining for customers. As such, this is a phenomenon that is now, arguably, a fundamental or core function in retail operations. Intensifying retail rivalry has led to the emergence of certain innovations in the sector. These innovations are aimed at creating a pleasant shopping experience for shoppers, and ultimately increasing the retailers' turnover. Store atmospheric cues like colour, music, lighting and cleanliness constitute the major focus in intensifying customer satisfaction levels at stores. Design and social factors also play a significant role in ensuring that retailers maintain an appealing ambience in their stores.

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of atmospheric store elements on customer satisfaction.

A quantitative research study was carried out in Cape Town. Data was collected from four stores belonging to two retail chains, through a structured questionnaire that was distributed to the outlets' customers. A sample of 388 responses was achieved. The information collected was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 software. Informed consent was obtained from respondents who were assured of their right to privacy, confidentiality and anonymity.

In relation to the research hypotheses, the study discovered a positive correlation between feelings and mood, customers' time spent in an outlet, customers' intention to revisit the outlet and other related independent variables. The fourth hypothesis, concerning the image of store, also had a positive correlation with the other variables. This means that the objectives of the study were achieved.

Furthermore, respondents were afforded the opportunity to qualitatively air their views outside of the formal structured questionnaire. One of the key qualitative findings was that the respondents raised concerns about poor service from the staff in stores.

Keywords: Store Atmospherics, Customer Satisfaction, Light, Colour, Cleanliness, Music.

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my mother, Caroline Nobantu Mtshotwana and to the memory of my late grandmother, Nonceba Cencilia Ndengane. These women have been instrumental in my upbringing, they brought me up with love and kindness. They taught me discipline, strength, wisdom and most of all, humility. They will always remain closest in my heart, and my grandmother would have been proud of this milestone.

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GLOSSARY

Terms/Acronyms/Abbreviations	Definition/Explanation
CPUT	Cape Peninsula University of Technology
H1	Hypothesis One
H2	Hypothesis Two
H3	Hypothesis Three
H4	Hypothesis Four
JSE	Johannesburg Stocks Exchange
POP	Point Of Purchase
POS	Point Of Sale
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
W&RSETA	Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority

TERMS AND CONCEPTS CITED

Aisle Spacing	Planners use this technique to arrange the store to suit its product range and for convenience. This pertains to how retailers manage space with regard to how they want their range to look and what stock density is desired.
Born Frees or Mandela Generation	This generation was born after 1994 and form the majority of participants in the study. They were born in the dawn of democracy, hence also referred to as the “Mandela Generation”. This generation is highly confident, moves with the times and embraces technology.
Category Management	This concept is more concerned with segmenting products into distinct groups. Products are grouped based on how they relate to one another, and these groups are referred to as categories. Category management is aimed at efficiency for the convenience of shoppers.
Eye Level Merchandising	The shoppers’ first line of sight when browsing for merchandise is at their eye level, hence the emphasis on eye-level merchandising. This kind of merchandising affords shoppers the convenience of saving time while providing easy accessibility. In most cases, products merchandised at eye-level are known as value items.
Gondola End	Gondola ends are located at both ends of the aisle. Good use of them is regarded as a highly effective merchandising technique. Retailers use it to complement the range that is on the actual aisle, sometimes completely different. At times retailers sell these ends to suppliers to merchandise their product range for a specific period of time.

MR Model	The model, named after its inventors (Mehrabian and Russell), was designed for environmental psychology. The main objective was to study the behaviour of consumers in retail settings.
Planogram	This is concerned with the presentation of merchandise on shelves. Planogramming is about the creative and systematic manner in which merchandise is displayed on shelves. An effective planogram involves a number of features ranging from colour to item size, product brand and model.
Point of Sale	This is the platform that retailers and suppliers use to exhibit and promote their products. The intention is to attract shoppers and keep them fascinated with the retailer specials.
Store Ambience	This concept is concerned with the environment of the store, how it is designed and laid out. Atmospheric cues like colour, lighting, music and cleanliness comprise the foundation of store ambience.
Store Atmospheric Cues	Atmospheric cues are store indicators and signals which constitute the environment of the store. This relates to aspects of sight, touch and feeling, which in combination which in combination make a statement about the store. It includes design and social factors and other ambient factors like scent, flooring, service pillars etc.

Chapter One

Research Overview

1.1 Introduction

This study investigates the influence of store atmospherics on customer satisfaction at retail grocery outlets in Cape Town. The study aims to determine whether store atmospherics influence customer satisfaction, and if so, how and to what extent.

Store atmospherics incorporate the elements of the physical nature of the retail outlet, elements designed to create a certain appearance for the outlet. The design and look of the outlet are created to attract and delight customers.

Chen and Hsieh (2011) ask whether the shopping experience is envisioned as something pleasurable or just a chore to be carried out as part of one's normal day-to-day routine. A shift in the direction of the former means that retailers should move with the times and understand the importance of the store environment and how customers respond to design and atmospheric initiatives.

The perception that customers have of the appearance and presence of the store influences their satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Sabrina, 2014). Thus, when the atmosphere of the store is positive and inviting, customers are tempted to enter and may as a result be willing to extend their time spent in the store and bestow their patronage. When the store is well arranged and appealing, and customers are content, there is a greater possibility of impulse buying (Chen and Hsieh, 2011).

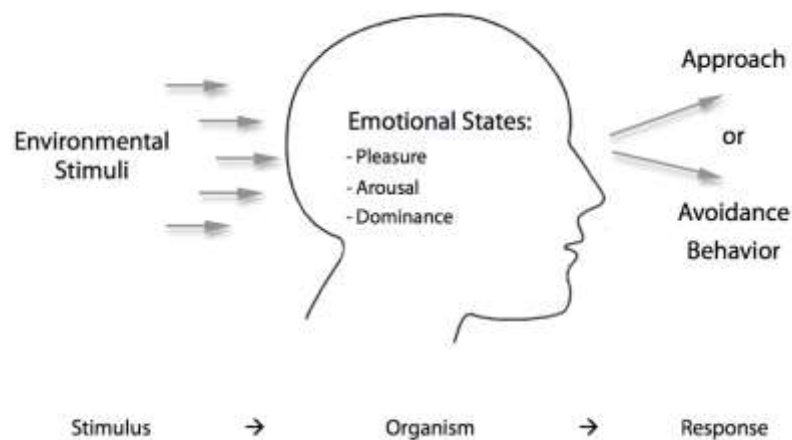
The contents of this chapter includes some background to the research topic, a statement of the research problem, objectives and hypotheses, a summary of the methodology, an indication of the study's contribution to knowledge, any limitations and delimitations pertaining to it, ethical issues that were addressed, and an outline of the structure of the remaining chapters.

1.2 Background of the study

Van Rompay, Krooshoop, Verhoeven and Pruyn (2012) argue that in the past customers focused their attention on product functions, features and attributes. Nowadays, customers are more informed and seek additional beneficial fundamentals prior to finalising their purchases. One of those fundamentals is a pleasant store atmosphere, which is in high demand among customers (Foster & McLelland, 2015).

According to Mouri, Bindroo and Ganesh (2015) many shoppers report that that regardless of the variety offered in a store, some outlets are just more attractive than others. They argue that some outlets encourage a feeling of comfort while others are simply annoying. In a positive shopping environment shoppers tend to buy more items and spend more money, with the opposite applying in a negative shopping environment. Therefore, the interaction among store atmosphere, customers' mood and buying behaviour are very important.

To address this interaction, Mehrabian and Russell (1974) created a broad theoretical model, ideally designed for environmental psychology. The model clarifies the effects of store atmosphere stimuli on customer behaviour, and is known as the Stimulus-Organism-Response model (also the MR model, named after the inventors). According to De Farias, Aguiar and Melo (2014) the model was verified and modified to work in a retail setting and has been used to study the behaviour of consumers in the store environment. The model explicates how people respond to stimuli in the environment by isolating three steps, Stimulus, Organism and Response (S-O-R) as shown in the figure below. Due to the absence of a competing conceptual framework, this model has been widely used ever since to explain the concept of atmospheric effects on people's emotions and behaviour.



Source: Donovan & Rossiter, 1982

Figure 1.1: Stimulus Organism-Response Model

The figure above illustrates the power the store environment has on the state of a customer's emotions, a state that can lead to an approach (buy) or avoidance (reject) response. Pleasure, according to the figure above, conceptualises the state of one's emotions in a situation. Arousal pertains to stimulation or lack thereof when one is consuming a service or in a service area. Approach behaviour describes one's willingness or desire to support, explore and interact. Avoidance behaviour is the opposite of the above, indicating that the customer is unhappy, bored or dissatisfied. The overall emotional condition can be characterised in terms of the convergence of these dual key magnitudes, pleasure together with arousal, and to some extent a third dominance (Donovan & Rossiter 1982).

1.3 Statement of the Research Problem

Store atmospheric research studies have established that the environment of the store has become the primary focus for retailers. In today's fast-moving consumer goods scenario, retailers are working tirelessly to differentiate their stores to lure and attract customers. However, most research studies have focused their attention on a single dimension of store atmosphere and neglected various combinations of inducements (Zeynep & Nilgun, 2011).

Ertekin, Bayraktaroglu and Gurkaynak (2014) agree with this notion stating that a majority of previous studies have examined single dimension of store atmosphere. Moreover, there is a deficiency of comprehensive studies, which includes multiple dimensions of the physical atmospheres in consumption settings. There is also a shortage of studies addressing how shopping motives may affect the assessment of atmospheric cues.

Moreover, Mafini and Dhurup (2015) points out a need for the research community to furnish an updated study on factors pertaining to store image in the context of customer satisfaction and loyalty, explicitly designed to the South African context. Ateba, Maredza, Ohei, Deka, and Schutte (2015) further complements this notion, citing that, as a result of the global financial crisis, many businesses in South Africa have found it difficult to adapt to the changing needs of their customers. As such, some businesses lose customers due to dissatisfaction and declining expectations since customers will always seek maximum satisfaction for their money.

1.4 Purpose, Objectives and Hypotheses of the study

1.4.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the influence of atmospheric store elements and how these elements relate to customer satisfaction.

1.4.2 Research Objectives

According to Davis, Yue and Davis (2017) there is a certain expectation when customers enter a store, regardless of the store format. Apart from the store layout and presentation, customers expect quick and proficient service that will lead to a satisfying shopping experience. The objectives of this study are:

- To find out whether store atmospherics do influence a customer's mood and feelings.
- To explore whether a customer's time spent in an outlet is influenced by store atmospheric.
- To discover whether store atmospherics have the ability to impact on a consumer's intent to revisit the store.

1.4.3 Research Hypotheses

Hypotheses are assumptions, presumptions or beliefs about a particular phenomenon or reality. Most writers use hypotheses to assess and associate the connection between two variables in a study (Kumar, 2011). Thus, the hypotheses below were formulated to test whether a connection exists among the two central variables in the study, store atmospherics and customer satisfaction.

H1: Store atmospherics can have a positive influence on a customer's mood and feelings.

H2: Store atmospherics can influence the time a customer spends in an outlet.

H3: Store atmospherics can positively influence a customer's intention to revisit the outlet.

1.5 Summary of Methodology

This section describes the research methodology applied in this study, including the research strategy, sampling method, data collection, data analysis, validity and reliability.

1.5.1 Research Strategy

The study adopted a quantitative research approach and made use of numerical and statistical techniques to achieve authentic outcomes (Cooper & Schindler, 2006).

The objective of the quantitative approach is to instigate and corroborate associations and relationships, so as to develop empirically sound generalisations as a complement to theory (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001).

1.5.2 Sampling Method

The research study used systematic random sampling to select a total of 100 interviewees from 4 retail outlets (2 of Retailer P and 2 of Retailer R). Random numbers were chosen for the starting point, and thereafter intervals of 10 were applied. Thus 3 possible respondents were dismissed before the interviews began, and thereafter an attempt was made to interview every 10th customer leaving the store. This form of sampling becomes convenient in the absence of a sampling frame (Cameron, Baldock, Sharma, Chamnanpood & Khounsy, 1997).

A systematic tactic was used to approach customers who had just bought groceries as they were walking out of the store. These customers were approached, whether individually or in a group. Customers with a recent shopping experience in a store are clearly in a good position to share their experiences in this case, by completing a questionnaire.

1.5.2 Data Collection

Due to the quantitative nature of this study, data was collected by administering survey questionnaires to the respondents.

As Hair, Babin, Money and Samouel (2003) point out, researchers use questionnaires as a means of collecting data because they work efficiently with a large number of respondents.

1.5.4 Data Analysis

The data that was collected was cleaned and sorted through coding, editing and checking for any errors. Thereafter, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, Version 25) was used for data analysis and for descriptive analysis, creating various tables and figures.

1.5.5 Reliability and Validity of Research

1.5.5.1 Reliability of Research

A pilot study was conducted and CPUT methodology experts, including a statistician and two research supervisors were consulted. The aim was to ensure that the study produces reliable data. Furthermore, Cronbach's alpha was used to test the research's statistical reliability.

Other measures to ensure reliability were used to circumvent bias on the part of the respondents. A letter of consent detailing the respondents' rights was administered to all participants. In the letter, respondents were assured of their anonymity during the process of answering questions. It was further guaranteed that their responses would be handled in complete privacy and that their answers would be used for academic purposes only.

1.5.5.2 Validity of Research

As mentioned earlier, number coding was used on the data so as to prevent any mistakes when it was transferred into SPSS 25. Furthermore, the questionnaire was designed in a user-friendly manner to avoid any errors of interpretation.

1.6 Significance of the study

To discover the relationship between store atmospherics and customer satisfaction, the researcher consulted the existing literature. Although considerable research has been done on the effect of atmospherics on customer mood, pleasure, perceptions and behaviour, there does not appear to be anything specifically pairing store atmospherics and customer satisfaction, especially not in South Africa. Heung and Gu (2012) point out some elements of customary combinations within the context of store atmospherics, which comprise of the ambient, design and social factors that are, one way or another, correlated to the study. However, their research design is laid out differently from the current study. Having distinguished the gap in comprehending the behaviour of the customers, the study seeks to

recommend the effects these atmospheric factors have on customer satisfaction. It is therefore hoped that the study will contribute to both international and South African knowledge in this regard.

The study should also provide information to retailers on the importance of atmospherics and what they can do using various design features to improve the satisfaction of customers in their stores. This is especially important for smaller and medium-sized retailers, who may not have the marketing expertise of the large retail chains.

1.7 Limitations and Delimitations

1.7.1 Limitations

Simon and Goes (2011) views limitations as any possible boundaries and shortcomings encountered during the course of the study, which are beyond the researcher's control.

The researcher made use of a survey questionnaire that contained questions with predetermined answers. Thus issues unknown to, or unanticipated by, the researcher were not identified. The study could not be generalised to other retail outlets or to other cities because of its being limited to selected outlets in Cape Town. This study focused on brick and mortar grocery outlets, excluding e-commerce and apparel stores. The questionnaires used mostly closed-ended questions, which necessarily deprived respondents of the opportunity to give highly individualised answers to the questions.

In the case of a respondent's refusal to participate, a common problem in mall intercepts, the solution was to approach the next customer, and once a successful response was obtained, revert to approaching every 10th customer, as per the sampling plan.

1.7.2 Delimitations

Delimitations are viewed as elements that define boundaries in the research study, where conscious decisions regarding exclusion or inclusion are taken. These decisions are made during the developments in the study (Simon & Goes, 2011).

The study was restricted to "Retailer P" and "Retailer R" in Cape Town. The data gathered pertained only to two of their outlets, and should not be associated with or extrapolated to other stores within the retail sector.

1.8 Ethical Considerations

Kumar (2005) explains that institutions of higher learning are specific and sensitive regarding ethical concerns in the research context. As a result, many institutions have established regulations to govern research practice. At CPUT, no data may be collected until ethical clearance has been obtained from the CPUT Ethics Committee.

In order to uphold and respect the university's policies and procedures, high standards of morality and professional conduct were expected of the researcher during the project. This helped to secure the confidence of all the stakeholders' that their participation would be treated with the high integrity and diligence it deserves. Thus the following were considered during the process:

1.8.1 Confidentiality/Anonymity

It is imperative to address the issues of confidentiality and anonymity prior the collection of data. It is the responsibility of the researcher to inform the respondents of their rights before participating in the study, in the form correspondence (Whelan, 2007).

For the reason of anonymity, the grocery retailers were referred to as "Retailer P" and "Retailer R". In the correspondence, respondents were assured of anonymity and that their feedback would be used for academic purposes only handled with complete discretion.

1.8.2 Plagiarism

Clough (2000) regards plagiarism as an act of dishonesty in the conduct of research. In this context, dishonesty is construed as using someone else's ideas, efforts or creations as your own, without acknowledging them. In an academic context, Devlin (2005) describes plagiarism as theft to intellectual property.

Therefore, it is important, as Ashworth, Bannister and Thorne (1997) advise that students should commit themselves by signing a declaration distancing themselves from such academic offences. All sources consulted must be acknowledged in the prescribed manner.

1.8.3 Informed Consent

As mentioned above, it is important that respondents be informed about the nature of the study before they agree to participate. In the letter, respondents were advised that they could choose whether or not to participate. To gain the respondents' confidence and put them at ease, the Store Managers endorsed the contents of the letter.

1.8.4 Deception

Deception defeats the purpose of building a credible study and, therefore evidences a lack of integrity (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Lying to or deceiving respondents or falsifying data in order to achieve acceptable results is clearly not acceptable. The researcher has assiduously avoided deception in the conduct of this research.

1.9. Organisation of the Proposed Study

1.9.1 Chapter One

This chapter contains an overview of the research, the background of the study was described and certain fundamental reasons for pursuing the study were furnished. Thereafter, a problem statement and research hypotheses and objectives were formulated. A brief of the research methodology was provided.

1.9.2 Chapter Two

This chapter presents a literature review, focussing on the dynamics between store atmospherics and customer satisfaction. The chapter sheds light on store atmospheric factors and how they correlate with customer satisfaction. After discussing the various components of store atmospherics and customer satisfaction, a conceptual framework is developed.

1.9.3 Chapter Three

The research methodology of the study is described in detail. There is discussion of the research philosophy, research approach, research strategy, research design, data collection methods and data analysis.

1.9.4 Chapter Four

Chapter Four presents the data analysis and discussion of the results. The chapter focused on processing the raw data, and drawing conclusions from it. Results are presented in the form of graphs, pie charts and tables. To verify the alignment of the research with its purpose, this chapter revisits the research hypotheses and research objectives. The chapter also highlights some qualitative findings obtained from respondents.

1.9.5 Chapter Five

A summary and discussion of the key findings from Chapter Four are provided. To reflect on whether the research objectives have been met or not, hypotheses and objectives are revisited and conclusions are drawn. Recommendations are made and directions for future research are suggested.

1.10 Chapter Summary

Chapter One introduces the background to the thesis topic and provides the underlying principle for investigating customer satisfaction at selected retail stores. The objectives of the research have been identified. The chapter also furnishes a summary of the research methodology, of the limitations and delimitations of the study and of its significance.

Some salient ethical considerations were described and a brief description of the remaining chapters was provided.

In the following chapter, literature relating to store atmospherics and customer satisfaction in the retail sector, and to any possible influences and correlations between these two variables, will be reviewed and discussed.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Customers today appear to have high expectations of their shopping experiences, where they wish to engage their senses in a pleasurable way. Customers want to enjoy what they buy and where they buy it, being especially concerned with how they feel after consuming their products of choice. It is therefore the responsibility of the retailer to ensure that customers experience pleasant feelings during their shopping experiences (Chen & Hsieh, 2011). Bagdare (2015) in fact argue that the main objective of store atmosphere is to craft a setting that stimulates and inspires customers' feelings, increasing the likelihood of more customer visits and revisits to the store concerned.

In essence, retailers can ensure customer satisfaction by emotionally and rationally engaging customers through their products they offer. Therefore, retailers ought to develop innovative strategies to meet and ultimately exceed customers' expectations through value creation. In order to do this, the retailer's value proposition should be consistent with customers' actual product experience during shopping. It can thus be argued that emotionally engaging store atmospherics coupled with retailer value proposition can result in customer satisfaction, having a positive impact on business performance and profits (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010).

This chapter seeks to furnish readers with a thorough and detailed examination of the currently existing literature on the issue at hand. Readers will be exposed to the underlying forces of store atmospherics and how they can affect customer satisfaction.

The chapter also elaborates on the complexity of retailer shopper atmospherics and other variables that influence customer satisfaction and loyalty. The overall intention is to determine gaps in the existing body of knowledge on store atmospherics and customer satisfaction.

This chapter is comprised of the following sections:

- The Definition of Store Atmospherics
- The Importance of Store Atmospherics
- Store Atmospherics Factors
- Customer Satisfaction

The Effects of Store Atmosphere

Proposed Conceptual Framework

The proposed conceptual framework is informed by the literature discussed in the current chapter. It will guide and inform the research methodology selected to address the research problem on the study.

2.2 Definition of Store Atmospheric

Store atmosphere incorporates a certain outlook and ambiance produced by the physical features of a retail store in order to attract customers. This “servicescape” is referred to as atmospheric the overall atmospheric setting of a retail outlet in which various stimulants are involved. These stimulants may be store decoration, product forms, packaging, the arrangement of products in the store, colours, lighting, air ventilation, scents and music, among others. The appearance, attitude and demeanour of employees, coupled with how they interact with customers may also affect store atmosphere (Sezgin & Küçükköylü, 2014).

2.3 The Importance of Store Atmospheric

Mathur and Goswami (2014) observe that historically shoppers have paid attention to product tasks, features and store features. However, it appears that customers now focus on store features beyond the physical environment during the purchasing experience. Therefore, a pleasant and appealing store atmosphere is a vital mechanism in order to enhance customer experience in a retail store. Pleasant customer experience in retail outlets prompts and encourages repeat purchases. A pleasant shopping experience is particularly important when customers are shopping for pleasure. In this regard it is important to note what triggers customers to enter an outlet and spend time there. These observations are important in order to understand the factors that affect and influence shopper in-store experience (Levy & Weitz, 2009).

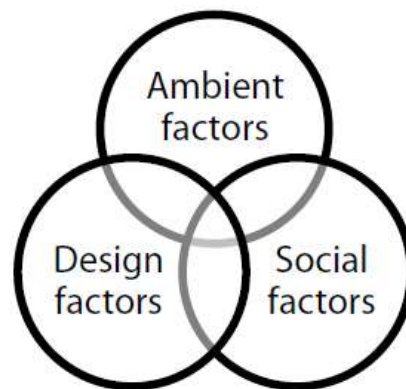
Previous studies have suggested that retailers should be more aggressive on revolutionising and creating an exciting store environment, given that customers are susceptible to being enticed by the physical ambience of the store (Power, 2014). De Farias, et al., (2014) concur with this notion, noting that the customer’s response to the store is evoked by the physical presence and outlook of the outlet.

Arslan and Baycu (2006) argue that store atmosphere is a concept in which factors such as the following are eminent and influence buying behaviour;

- Enjoying shopping,
- Time spent on glancing over the products,
- Desire to talk to sales personnel,
- Tendency to spend more than planned,
- Probability of re-visiting that store.

2.4 Store Atmospheric Factors

It appears that consumers' behaviour with regard to the purchasing of goods or services has changed significantly over time. Historically, due to limited buying power, customers simply shopped to get specific goods. There were no additional shopping extras to create excitement among shoppers, and enhance the basic experience. According to Ullakonoja (2011) shoppers today feel that shopping should be more than just a routine basic experience. To these customers, shopping should be pleasurable and entertaining, time out to de-stress from normal household cares. Figure 2.1 demonstrates some factors involved in making the store atmosphere conducive to this desire.



Source: Baker, 1986

Figure 2.1: Store Atmospheric Factors

2.4.1 Ambient Factors

Nell (2013) is of the view that there has, been a lack of regard in the past for the atmosphere of the store on the part of outlet managers. Retailers are apparently not fully informed of the repercussions associated with neglect of this factor and its potential impact on consumer behaviour. Hence Abimnwi and Njuguna (2015) emphasises the significance of store ambience in addition to the merchandise that the store carries. Traffic volumes in the store are highly dependent on whether retailers are cognisant of the importance of store atmosphere. Retail organisations should be aware that a well-executed environment in their stores will retain their existing customers and invite new ones. This is how smart retailers compete in the market and envisage future trends to stay abreast of their competitors. Summers and Hebert (2001) claim that store ambience is the critical component when devising store plans and strategies. A store's ambience should express the store's values, position and vision. When these store ambience attributes are effectively implemented, a great sense of customer arousal will begin to emerge. This will have a positive impact on shopping behaviour and change customers' shopping patterns.

2.4.1.1 Colour

Colour has a sensuous relationship with products; hence it is imperative to have colour in mind when arranging your merchandise. Arranging the merchandise according to colour makes shopping easy and convenient for customers. Moreover, store colours should be a representation of the store's values and position. Colour in a store should not be permanent, but rather based on new developments, be changed when the need arises (Tornetta, Fox & Blackbird, 2014).

Shi (2013) shares the view that colour has the power to influence behaviour in a store, shaping a particular mood for customers. Therefore, within the marketing context, colour is believed to be one of the important selling tools in the store environment. Colour can be used to attract customers and deliver the store's message.

Likewise Nezhad and Kavehnezhad (2013) agree that one of the elements that can influence buying decisions in a retail setting is colour. They assert that the presentation of colour, or a colour blocking strategy, also arouses an emotional response from shoppers. Figure 2.2 illustrates perceived meanings of colours and their possible use by retailers in store merchandising.



Source: Klarity Marketing, 2016

Figure 2.2: Business Colour Illustrations

From the business perspective, colour is used to signal a variety of messages and feelings, as Cerrato (2012) explains:

Red – the colour red represents warmth, friendliness and optimistic receptiveness. The colour is perceived to be emotionally present and it attracts attention. While red is a demonstration of effects like vigour, love, and pleasure, it also encompasses undesirable effects like danger and blood.

Orange – just as it looks, this colour characterises sunshine, and from the context of sunshine, orange evokes hope and courage. From a business viewpoint, the colour similarly depicts adventure, fun, and all things positive.

Yellow – similar to orange, yellow too has elements of brightness, radiance and light. These elements represent the beginning of a new dawn, optimism, clarity and warmth. Yellow sparkles brightly like sunlight and is perceived to be inviting and embodying positive energies. From the business viewpoint, retailers frequently use this colour to grab shoppers' attention and impart a sense of welcoming.

Green – many organisations use this colour to express mother-nature and freshness. The colour is often used to notify shoppers about healthy living and good nutrition.

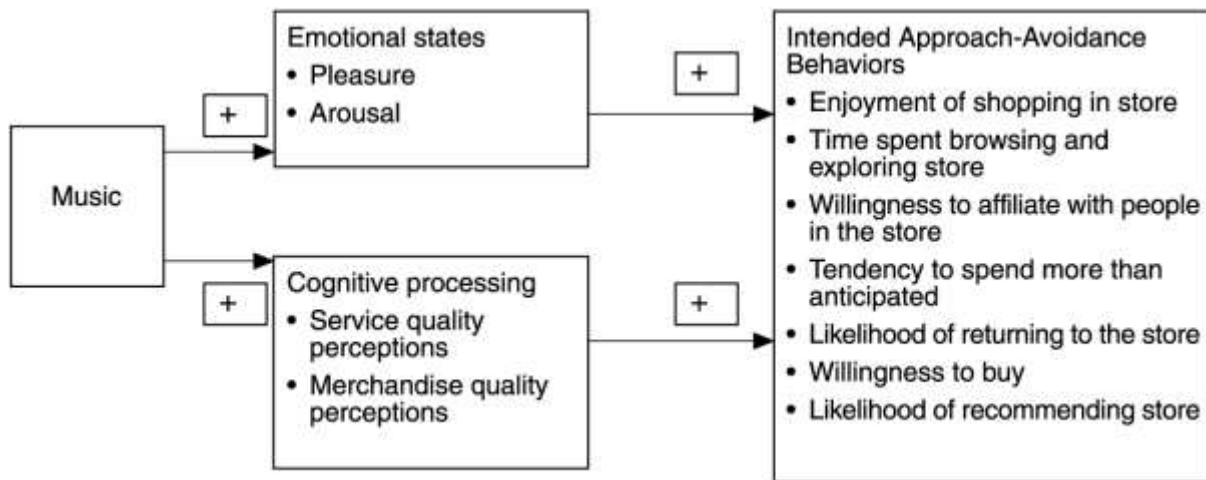
Blue – the colour blue, is intended to connote reliability and freshness. The colour is often used by logistics companies to affirm their reliability in respect of the freshness of the merchandise upon arrival. Most retail businesses use this colour to promote cold products, especially cold beverages like cold beer.

Purple – this colour represents kindness, humanity and sacrifice. Many charitable organisations use this colour for this reason. However, in a business context, the colour has a different meaning, signifying wealth and luxury. Retail organisations therefore use this colour on high quality and premium products.

Tornetta, et al. (2014) advise that although studies of the disciplines of colour suggest these associations, they are not cast in stone.

2.4.1.2 Music

Lindberg (2009) notes that background music in retail stores has, over the years, become a widely used marketing strategy that seizes the attention of the shopper, whether negatively or positively. The background music strategy evolved in the early 1930's and has seen retailers, worldwide, adopting this exciting and entertaining approach to inspire shoppers to spend more time in stores. Retail organisations have also used this approach as a means of creating loyalty, and even to change and influence shoppers' patterns of behaviour while shopping (Graves, 2010). Figure 2.3 illustrate the effect music has on customers and how they receive it, leading to behavioural responses.



Source: Sweeney and Wyber, 2002

Figure 2.3: Model of music’s effect on approach-avoidance behaviour

Since shoppers have little or no control over the background music played in stores, it is advisable that retailers should at least play relevant, soothing or joyful music. This should coax shoppers to engage in more shopping and give the store their patronage. The relevance of the music played is critical and requires retailers to have a good understanding and knowledge of their shoppers (Biswas, Lund & Szocs, 2018).

On the other hand, Andersson, Kristensson, Wastlund and Gustafsson (2012) argue that some shoppers prefer a noiseless environment while shopping and are irritated by any form of sound in the store. In spite of this, they do recognise that shoppers tend to spend more time in a musical environment.

2.4.1.3 Lighting

Lighting is a critical component of the environment in a store. Appropriate lighting in the store induces a positive mood towards shoppers. A perfect store ambience depends on a suitable store lighting system, regardless of the type or format of the store (Pegler, 2010). Binggeli (2010) supplements this view noting that lighting should complement the colour combinations used in the store. In this way shoppers are enabled to comprehend the concept or the statement which the store seeks to make. This is a task that cannot be taken for granted and needs professionals who understand the purpose of proper lighting in an outlet. Hence, Bell and Ternus (2012) recommend that these lighting specialists should work together with the merchandise and floor planners to carry out one common vision. As a result, their combination will produce desired outcomes with regard to space management

and how it is perceived by shoppers. Among the various views on store lighting are the following:

Biswas, Szocs, Chacko and Wansink (2017) argue that some clothing retailers use this opportunity to apply different lighting tactics, in the name of competitive advantage, innovation and to capture the essence of the shopper.

Ariffin, Bibon, and Abdullah (2017) share similar views, alluding to the fact that adequate lighting in an outlet creates a particular standard about the store. It enforces a message about its values, philosophy and vision. Good lighting should enable people to quickly understand these aspirations at a glance. Furthermore, proper lighting should allow shoppers to realise the store's merchandise and floor plan.

Most importantly, shoppers should be able to have a clear view while they shop. There should be clear visibility while they are browsing in the store, from all corridors and corners, including isle spaces (Levy, Weitz & Beitelspacher, 2012).

2.4.1.4 Cleanliness

Akinyele (2010) maintains that cleanliness is the ultimate store component, possessing the ability to make or break your envisioned ambience. A store can have great colour combinations, relevant and appealing music and good lighting, but all this will be meaningless if the store is not clean. This is one aspect retailers cannot compromise on, because it can overthrow everything a store has worked hard to plan, implement and oversee. In sum, if a retailer wants to see their store vision realised, they should maintain a clean environment. Shoppers will spend more time in a clean environment, with a greater likelihood of revisiting the store again (Gajanayake, Gajanayake & Surangi, 2011).

Banat & Wandebori (2012) agree, adding that shoppers do not only perceive the image of the store in its physical appearance, but also in their sense of how the store is carrying itself in realising its promise to the people. The image is thus inferred from values of the store, its mission and guiding philosophy. That shopper image can change negatively if the store does not maintain a clean environment.

Irrespective of the store format or whether a customer is a frequent visitor or not, a store should always be appealing and inviting with regard to cleanliness. A store might be a tiny and low budget arrangement, but that is not a justification for a dirty, disorderly and clustered environment (Yun & Good, 2007).

2.4.2 Design Factors

Levy and Weitz (2009) assert that upon entering a store, customers should find it easy to navigate around to find the items they want. The layout of the entire shop should ideally be designed with customers in mind. The design must reflect the store's mission and merchandise it carries hence it can be quite a challenge for designers and planners (Katelijn, 2008). Levy, Weitz and Beitelspacher (2012) suggest some key store design goals:

The first goal is to ensure that the retailer's plans are realised.

A pleasing shopping experience which leads to customer loyalty

To ensure every customer visit guarantees increased sales volume

To maintain and minimise costs

Lastly, to ensure that the design accords with relevant legal specifications

2.4.2.1 Effective Floor Displays and Floor Advertisements

The design of the store has an importance greater than just attempting to communicate the image of the retailer, but to underpin the store's advertising plans and inspires unplanned shopping (Parveen & Sharma, 2017). Furthermore, when planning floor displays and advertisements it is pivotal to devise strategies to manage and control traffic volumes in the store.

Niazi, Haider, Hayat, Awais, and Hassan (2015) indicate that as far as effective floor merchandising is concerned, the manner in which the floor is laid out is critical. What this comes down to is the fact that for the business to produce higher revenues per square metre, management of the floor space should be properly planned and executed strategically. The easy navigation of the shop, so that shoppers can access every corner and all sides of the store depends on the effectiveness of the floor display. Hence it is ideal for retailers to position racks and other movable shelves in prime areas. Depending on the nature and the design of the building floor displays can also be executed outside of the store if the space allows, luring customers to enter the store. Plan (2004) outlines the critical components in ensuring the adequate merchandising of floor displays.

A) Well-planned sales floor

There is nothing more appealing than a neat, well-organised sales floor with a fresh aroma. When merchandise is packed creatively but systematically, you are making a statement about your business and how far you are willing to go to create a perfect and an attractive environment for your customers. Shoppers find it easy and enjoyable to shop in an environment of that nature and are keen to revisit in the future.

B) Adequate aisle space

As suggested earlier, shoppers find peace and enjoyment in browsing and walking freely in the store, so adequate management of aisle space becomes imperative. Category planners and floor planners need to find common ground to make certain that this objective is achieved. The last thing shoppers want while shopping is to be cramped in an overcrowded environment due to poor space management. This could lead to a reduced foot count in the store and a declined in sales.

C) Inviting displays

Displays in the store are often mounted during a particular promotional cycle, and there are sometimes deadlines that must be met. As a result, this process is, at times, executed under immense pressure from head office. Displays must nevertheless be implemented according to the specifications of the planners and embody the image and values of the company. Displays must be neat and tidy and not left half-done, thereby causing obstruction and inconvenience.

D) Attractive signs and décor

Developers and planners must design and prepare signage and décor in accordance with the identity of the store. Customers should be able to navigate their way throughout the store in a form of signs. Décor, on the other hand, has a fundamental role in beautifying and augmenting the outlook of the store. This is important to stimulate a buying mood in customers.

E) A continuing, overall inviting shopping atmosphere

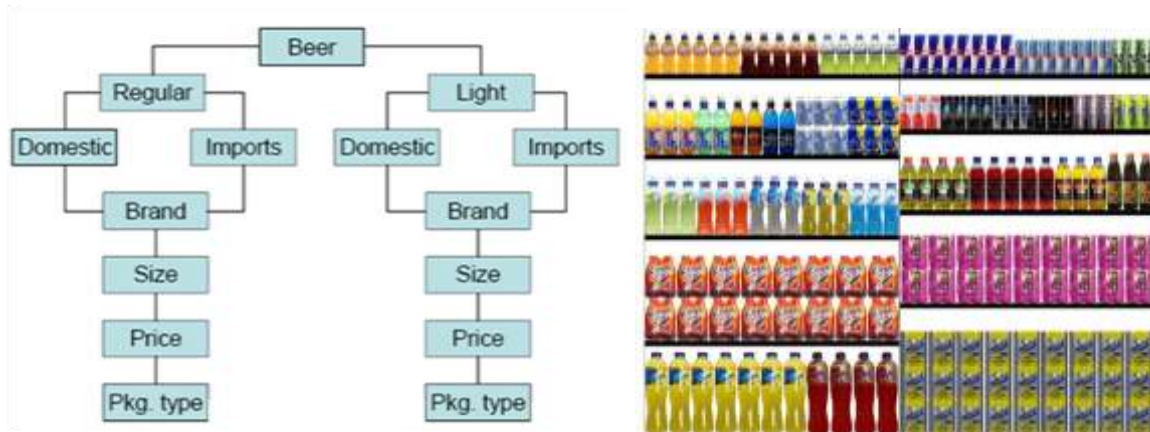
In the business of retailing, there should be constant innovation in and revitalisation of strategies as competition aggressively intensifies. Customers are enticed by changes and new developments, that prevent the atmosphere from becoming stagnant. Retailers should at revisit their current strategies and immerse themselves in the new trends.

Shrivastava, Saini and Pinto (2014) emphasise that another element to be considered when merchandising on the sales floor is floor advertisement, a point of purchase technique. Floor adverts are stickers about product/s glued on the floor next to where the actual or related products are shelved. This attracts customers to the display and entices them to buy. Most companies use this advertising technique when they are launching new products.

Advertisements play a critical role in influencing customer decision making with regard to products and services. Depending on the degree of advertising stimuli, marketers have the power to influence customer perception, particularly in the context of multiple advertising tools and tactics. (Shrivastava, et al., 2014).

2.4.2.3 Product Display

Asuquo and Igbongidi (2015) emphasise that retail organisations should be cognisant of the importance of the product displays in stores. If it is well executed, product display can correctly convey the message that the retailers attempting to get across prompting shoppers to align the store uniqueness and mission with the presentation of products on the shelf and ultimately winning their confidence. It is important for retailers to note that customers are lured by an appealing and inviting merchandise display. For differentiation purposes, large retailers should initiate a standard merchandising approach for all their stores, informed by a carefully designed their planogram. When a planogram is developed, it should represent a number of features ranging from colour through item size, product brand and model (Saha, 2019). Figure 2.4 is a depiction of what a typical planogram should look like.



Source: Planogram 101, 2016

Figure 2.4: Ideal Product Display

2.4.2.4 Space Management

Pillai, Iqbal, Umer, Maqbool and Sunil (2011) claim that space management is an integral part of constructing a sound ambience for the store and should, therefore be handled with great care. Retailers use space to develop their philosophies via a standardised approach for the entire chain. Every space, every square metre counts when planning the layout of the store corners, walls, corridors etc. Hence some well-established retail organisations outsource this function to achieve the desired results. Among the pertinent questions that planners ask and strive to address when planning space are:

How do we want our ranges to look?

What stock density is desired?

Pillai *et al.*, (2011) confirm that retailers need to be very calculating and strategic when sorting and allocating space, being mindful of potential areas for high traffic volumes and higher revenues.

Zhang and Rajaram (2017) cautions that planners must be observant not to allocate excessive space, as this might have a negative effect and be detrimental to sales. Certain units in the area might become useless as a result of allocating too much space. At the same time, restricted and confined space might have a similar effect on sales. Planners need, at all times, to be strategic in their approach.

Mowrey, Parikh and Gue (2019) points out similar issues of convenience in space management. A well-executed layout must be free from congestion so that shoppers can move freely around with their trolleys in the store. They must be able to view merchandise from a distance, as a result of proper space planning. After space planning, the outlook of the sales floor should make a statement and influence behavioural patterns. It should ignite a sense of social atmosphere and encourage patronage from the shoppers (Flamand, Ghoniem, & Maddah, 2016).

Shelf allocation is also an aspect of space management, being the point where customers get to choose and select products (Murray, Talukdar & Gosavi, 2010). Merchandise should be strategically placed on shelves to effectively manage space. Planners should equip themselves with product knowledge, brands and sizes. In this they are able to consider issues of shelf height and width (horizontal and vertical), making merchandise planning easy. For effective shelf spacing and merchandising, shelves must be adjusted to at least 32 centimetres in height, with 10 centimetres at the bottom, as shown in Figure 2.5 (Vigaray, 2006).



Source: Vigaray, 2006

Figure 2.5: Shelf Spacing

2.4.3 Social Factors

In this section, the focus shifts to people (customers and staff) and how retailers can communicate with them, to ensure that there is effective communication throughout customer's time spent in the store. Retailers should devise strategies that will grab customers' attention while they are in the store. One such way is to utilise point of sale (POS) material to advertise their merchandise (always in a manner that narrates the company's corporate identity). Social factors, importantly, include the role of staff in ensuring effective communication in the store. With the power of knowledge that members of staff possess, customers should never be "lost" in the store. Retail organisations should implement ways in which they can effectively use their staff to convey and uphold the standards and the mission of the company (Chen & Hsieh, 2011).

2.4.3.1 Point Of Sale & Point Of Purchase

According to Blessa, (2010) many retail firms use this approach to lure customers into the store and keep them fascinated while inside the store. Point of sale (POS) (also known as point of purchase or POP) opens up an opportunity for both retailers and suppliers to exhibit their existing merchandise and introduce new products. Some retail businesses have adopted the new technology of the virtual point of sale that lasts longer than physical point of sale. With virtual point of sale, information can easily be updated electronically, instead of, say, printing a new batch of leaflets for the physical point of sale (Hassouneh & Brengman, 2015).

The POS display is another advertising technique for retailers and suppliers to promote their brands. This advertising technique plays a critical part when launching new products in the market. Although it remains a temporary advertising strategy, it creates a quick reaction among customers at the point of sale about a specific product. Posters, buntings, banners, wobblers, danglers, pamphlets, shelf talkers and strips form part of the POS material (Niazi, et al., 2015).

Similarly, Raab, Goddard, and Unger (2016) claims that point-of-sale display initiatives involve far more than just the integration of visual aids. It also serves as décor and stimulates the mood in the store. However, as mentioned above, these point of sale displays should be created and carried out in accordance with the corporate identity of the organisation. They must be precise, clear and easy to read and comprehend.

On the other hand, Horstmann (2017) argue that customers should not be overwhelmed by a mass of information while shopping. To some customers, shopping is already a daunting exercise and information overload is not ideal for them. POS activity should therefore be the final act of information interchange between product and shopper prior to purchase. It can actually reduce the confusion caused by the mass of information to which the consumer has been exposed. Furthermore, point-of-sale activity helps to create a full and rich shopping experience for shoppers. Point of sale displays also showcase promotional items on discount, which is what customers are always on the lookout for. It is one of the mechanisms that retailers use to drive more sales (Niazi, et al., 2015).

Path to Purchase Institute (2019) and Flashcard Machine (2019) describes some of the point of sale merchandising display techniques used by retailers to encourage and entice shoppers to buy more.

a) Temporary Shipper

This display is created by the manufacturer and put in place, for a short period of time. Temporary shippers are mostly positioned in a “hot spot” area for the duration of promotion. The display is typically made of cardboard and bears the supplier’s brand name, logo and other relevant information.

b) Semi-Permanent

Similar to the Temporary Shipper, this display is a strong fixture made of wood, metal, or plastic and also carries a supplier’s logo or brand name. The display is also ideal for the “hot spot” area in the sales floor. Such a display, by agreement with the manager, remains longer on the sales floor but is not permanent.

c) Counter-top/Impulse Sales Merchandising

Fun toys, games, novelty torches and inexpensive imports fall into this category and are effective when bumped onto the top tray next to the checkout. There is also a reminder-impulse purchase when a customer is prompted to recall a need for something at home. For instance, a customer suddenly remembers she needs batteries when she sees a display of these at the checkout.

d) End-Cap/Gondola End

The End-cap/Gondola end is a merchandising feature displayed at both ends of the aisle, and is considered a powerful merchandising tool for selling products. When a customer reaches the end of the aisle their attention is refocused on the gondola end. Products at the gondola end are fewer than in a normal aisle and are therefore physically more visible to customers. Large volumes of stock can be sold from gondola ends provided the right merchandise is placed there.

e) Pallet Bulk Display

This is a display neatly placed on top of a wooden or plastic pallet, mostly in promotional or high traffic areas. A hot spot display of this kind can focus attention on seasonal and special theme promotions. It is advisable to use only fast selling products for this kind of display, not “dog” products. It is critical not to place this display in areas- where it will obstruct or cause congestion to trolleys.

f) Case Stack/Dump Bins

This consists of a box with items for sale that has been cut open by the retailer, or of a dump bin with a large number of products. A display of this nature needs to be carefully placed in high traffic areas in the store, while not blocking or obstructing the aisles. The dump bin could be the outlet’s own fixture or special bins made of cardboard or plastic provided by the supplier to launch new products or promote seasonal and existing products.

g) Kiosk/Checkout Merchandising

Kiosk/Checkout merchandising is one of the major sources of impulse buying and hence considered an important overall merchandising activity. While customers are queuing at the tills or kiosk to pay for their items, their attention can be refocused on products displayed right next them on the checkout stands. Planograms must be adhered to ensure uniformity.

h) Power Wing (Side Stacks)

Power rings are fixtures fitted on the sides of the gondola ends. The principle is the same as that for the gondola ends in that the space it occupies is ideal for attracting the customer's attention to selected products.

i) Cooler

This display is a feature of checkout merchandising and is also considered a source of impulse buying. These are mini or bar refrigerators placed next to the checkout and are predominantly prearranged by suppliers, bearing their company names and logos. They require constant refrigeration. They are set to lure customers in that they encourage impulse buying.

j) Clip Strip/J Hooks

A clip strip is a plastic or metal strip from which the products hang or to which they adhere, placed vertically on the shelf or display. A J-hook is a metal hook moulded in a "J" shape, which also hangs products on shelves or display. This is one of the ways in which cross-merchandising is achieved, the principle here being that they must be products that complement the fixed merchandise and be low in price. An example of this would be gloves on J Hooks together with dishwashing liquids. These are placed on the shelve-edge at eye level in the aisle. These displays are usually placed at every second drop, but care must be taken to ensure that they don't distract attention from the products behind them.

2.4.3.2 Store Signage

Store signage is a form of artwork designed to direct shoppers to different destinations within the store, such as the baby room, parcel counter, cigarette counter, and enquiries/info centre, etc. (Gray, 2018). Once handwritten, most of it is today computer generated. As always signage should be in line with the organisation's branding and positioning. Store

signage includes shelf tags, sometimes in a form of a sticker or a hook placed in the planogram. These contain information about a particular merchandise category and the aisle it belongs to (CLeMeNt, Aastrup & Forsberg, 2015).

In the past store signage was just a basic instrument to communicate essential store information to customers. Now retailers are utilising cutting-edge technologies to take the use of store signage to a new level, using it to gain competitive advantage, enhance the image of the store and ultimately improving their satisfaction levels. (Niazi, et al., 2015).

Pillai et al. (2011) emphasise that retailers should pay great attention to detail when designing the store's signage. Retail organisations need to understand that customers use store signage as a manual to familiarise themselves with the store. The signage should therefore not only indicate the merchandise the retailer carries, but be sufficiently attractive to boost the sales of slow-moving goods (Huddleston, Behe, Minahan, & Fernandez, 2015).

2.4.3.3 In-Store Display

According to Phillips, Parsons, Wilkinson, and Ballantine (2015) retailers should devise tactics to encourage shoppers to engage in unintentional shopping. This can be done through store displays, a fundamental strategy to entice shoppers inside the store, increase revenue and drive slow-moving merchandise. The store display is a platform where suppliers and retailers get an opportunity to discuss the sort of promotional item to be on display and the duration of the display (Karbasivar & Yarahmadi, 2011).

The concept of store display also includes how merchandise is presented on the shelves (Asuquo & Igbongidi, 2015). The presentation of merchandise is critical in making the lives of shoppers easy, in the sense that it should not be an effort to understand and select the products they want. This means that the presentation of merchandise should not only create excitement and fascinate shoppers, but should also direct shoppers to the ideal merchandise. Issues of colour, size, brands and relevance should be taken into account when planning how to present the merchandise.

Retailers should never neglect the importance of the merchandise display, which is the point where shoppers form perceptions and draw conclusions about the retailer. Retailers should think strategically and place the merchandise in a manner that will be convenient for shoppers and stimulate sales. Asuquo and Igbongidi, (2015) recommend that in the process retailers should also consider issues of product positioning, with regard to which items should be placed at eye level. Normally, eye-level positioning is reserved for profitable

brands and items with the high rate of turnover. When browsing in the aisle, shoppers generally focus their attention at eye level. Due to its convenience, eye level positioning has the ability to encourage unplanned sales and create brand awareness (Krishna, 2017). This principle is illustrated in Figure 2.6, below.



Source: Akimgal.pw, 2019; Smartdraw, 2017

Figure 2.6: Eye Level Illustration

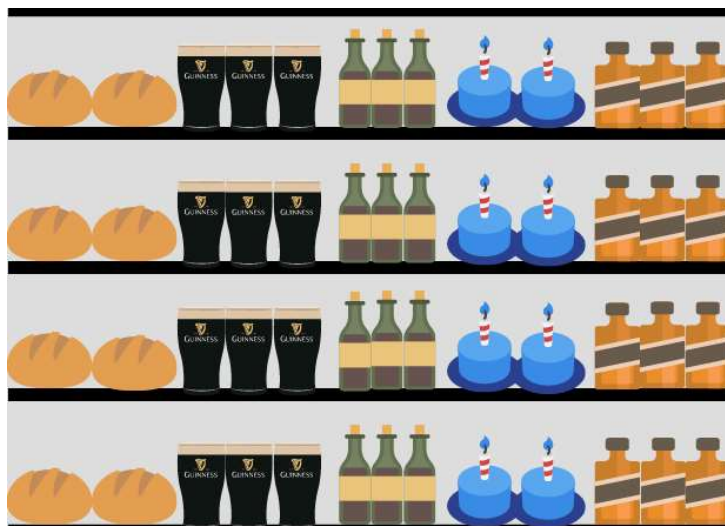
Understanding your market in terms of their product preferences is crucial for effective merchandise presentation. Retail planners should invest their energies and resources in becoming acquainted with their customers' buying behaviours. It is important to know and understand what their target audience's preferences are for effective planogramming and determining which products to prioritise for eye-level merchandising. Study conducted on shoppers' eye-movements revealed that one-third of the products on the shelf are ignored by shoppers (Zhao & Zheng, 2017).

a) Vertical and Horizontal Merchandise Displays

An aspect of the science of how the human eyes operate, according to Feigenbaum (2008), was developed so as to understand the human behaviour while shopping. It is understood that human viewing is strongly centred, which means that customers tend to lose focus on the sides (left and right). This suggests that customers are not reluctant to view up and down from their current view, which is why vertical viewing is the pre-eminent viewing approach when one is deciding on merchandising strategy. A business with this awareness of movement in store, would know the importance of merchandising according to the eye's natural movement (Vitrina, 2017).

➤ Vertical Merchandise Display

According to Valenzuela and Raghubir (2015), vertical merchandising is the most effective tool for displaying multiple products. This type of merchandising allows an equal opportunity for suppliers to display their products, including those that are not well established. In turn, customers are spoilt for choice as they enjoy the convenience of not moving left or right searching for products. In the end, this merchandising strategy not only enhances the product presentation on the shelves, but also improves customer satisfaction (Dardankryeziu, 2013). Figure 2.7, below, demonstrates how vertical merchandising should be displayed.



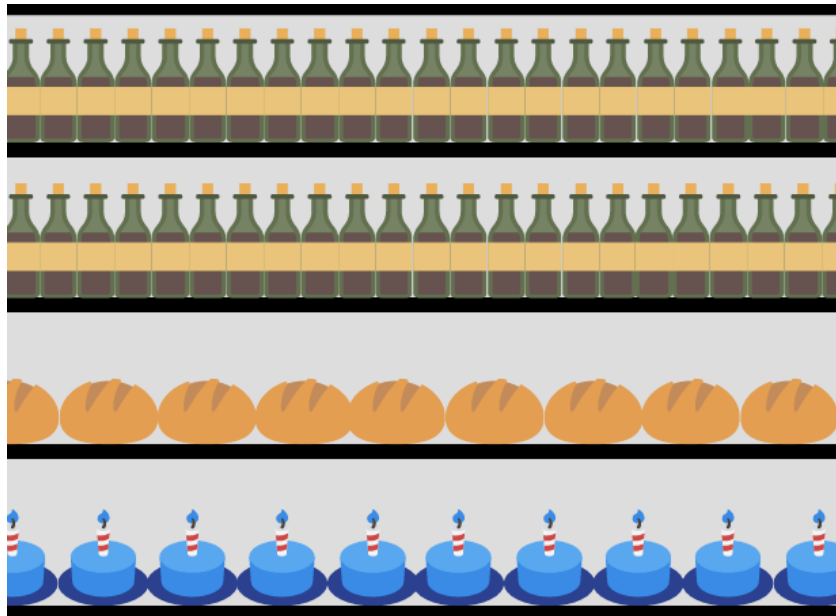
Source: Shelf Wobblers, 2019

Figure 2.7: Vertical Merchandise Display

➤ **Horizontal Merchandise Display**

Horizontal display is another merchandising strategy used by many retailers, although it is not as popular as vertical merchandising. While shopping, customers want convenience in every way possible and moving from side to side in the aisle looking for an item is not one of them. This kind of merchandising places merchandise at the horizontal level, where customers are forced to move up and down the aisle. Apart from its cons, horizontal merchandising also has some pros that are beneficial to customers. Customers are able to reach items at close proximity within their sight and are able to view merchandise for extended stretches compared to vertical merchandising. Suppliers are also able to utilise enough space to display their merchandise (Nordfält, Grewal, Roggeveen, & Hill, 2014).

As much as this display technique allows for viewing within the line of sight, some customers feel inconvenienced by that experience. As such, customers are denied the opportunity to view all brands in one vertical line (Ebster & Garaus, 2011). Figure 2.8, below, provides an example of horizontal merchandise display.



Source: Shelf Wobblers, 2019

Figure 2.8: Horizontal Merchandise Display

b) Importance of End Displays

According to Glanz, Bader and Iyer (2012), the end display technique is mostly used to promote certain products in the store and does not necessarily have to complement the merchandise displayed in the aisle. Hence, end-of-aisle displays are sometimes used for out-of-season merchandise and products due to expire. From a business perspective, these are temporary displays that retailers use as a strategy to negotiate deals with suppliers. This means that gondola end displays have the ability to strengthen supplier relations and improve customer service in the store. Due to its position, the gondola end display can easily attract attention and results in faster and larger sales than normal display in the aisles (Parker & Koschmann, 2018).

2.4.3.4 Employee Behaviour

Turkay and Sengul (2014) posit that retail organisations need to accept and understand that their employees and how they behave towards customers will determine how the store is perceived. Employee behaviour is construed to be a number of actions and behaviours done by employees to the company they work for, whether good or bad (Alhelalat, Ma'moun, & Twaissi, 2017).

As the saying goes "first impressions last", therefore retailers should never take for granted how their customers are treated in the store. The memory of a bad experience will last for a very long time and is not reversible, which means that it is critical for retailers to know who they hire to work for them. Employees have the ability to make or break your business and if they are not well screened and inducted, they could cause severe but avoidable damage which could have been avoided. Employees present the face of the company, its philosophies and principles, which makes it imperative to get the right people for your company (Juwaheer, 2014). According to Medeiros and Salay (2013), customers do not differentiate employees from the company they represent. That is why the company's promise of service quality is entirely dependent on its employees.

A study by Lemmink and Mattsson (1998) discovered that employee behaviour towards customers has a significant role in driving customer satisfaction. The study, focused particularly on service areas such as hotels, retail outlets and restaurants, found that personal acts of kindness and warmth by employees yielded positive outcomes in relation to satisfaction and loyalty. These acts consist largely of being interactive with customers, by just smiling, showing courtesy, making eye contact and thanking the customer. These

expressions of warmth and kindness go hand-in-hand with an optimistic body language. It is the retailer's responsibility to encourage their staff and instil these qualities so as to ensure a sustainable future for the company (Ganesh, 2016). However, a study conducted by Karl, Peluchette and McIntyre Hall (2016) revealed that some customers are less fascinated with staff uniform and are more concerned with the actual service itself. These customers feel that, as a minimum standard, staff should look presentable and neat in the place of work.

Bin (2015) argues that companies should be constantly motivating and encouraging their staff, particularly in the retail sector. The company cannot afford an unhappy employee because their mood will manifest in their work performance. Happy employees are willing to go the extra mile for the company and are highly unlikely to do anything to sabotage the company. Furthermore, employers should always be aware that employees are the custodians of the company. A shared mind-set will improve the relationship between the employer and the employee, and this will positively influence service levels (Sharma & Sharma, 2017).

2.5 Customer Satisfaction

In the past, customer satisfaction was regarded as a function of strategic management. However, strategic management was not hands-on enough to understand and anticipate customer needs and realise customer satisfaction (Vilares & Coelho, 2003). This approach has changed through devolution of the responsibility for customer satisfaction, and Jeske, Chimusoro and Karodia (2015) note that many retailers have witnessed a significant growth in customer satisfaction. Businesses exist to close the demand gap in the market and it is impossible to achieve that without satisfying customers.

Arokiasamy (2013) notes that satisfying the customer assumes various forms, from the merchandise the business has, through store layout, employee behaviour, store philosophy and principles. For a business that offers products and services to customers who have to be physically present, issues of this nature cannot be ignored. It would be remiss of the retail store to neglect issues of service quality as they are part and parcel of achieving customer satisfaction (Yoshida & James, 2010).

2.5.1 What Is Customer Satisfaction?

Hill, Brierley and MacDougall (2017) explains that satisfaction, in general, has to do with contentment with the services offered and how they were delivered. Generally, customers are only content when their expectations are exceeded. Retail organisations use certain instruments to measure customer satisfaction, such as recurrent buying, patronage tendencies and time spent in the shop (Bong, 2016).

Mohammed, Guillet and Law (2014) warns that customer dissatisfaction is a great threat to any business, and businesses should be sensitive to it and address it immediately.

2.5.2 The Importance of Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction has become an integral part of a retailing strategy of ensuring sustainability in the market. This has become critical in the retail banking terrain as it is the key to sustaining long term relationships with customers (Belas, Cipovova & Demjan, 2014). Customer satisfaction is one of the pivotal components in shaping the retailer's position and success. Customers will promote the retailer through word-of-mouth when their service expectations have been met. After all, both parties stand to benefit, as the retailer will be stronger and competitive in the market (Hamzah, Ishak, & Nor, 2015).

Lately, retailers of all types and formats have come to recognise the importance of customer satisfaction and how it affects their bottom line. Retaining existing customers is less expensive than seeking new ones. Hence, retailers cannot be naïve to the fact that a relationship between customer satisfaction, customer retention and profitability does exist and this relationship should not be overlooked (Hill, & Alexander, 2017). Kim, Vogt and Knutson, (2015) agree that, for a number of years, customer satisfaction has been viewed as the most critical factor in devising loyalty strategies in the retail.

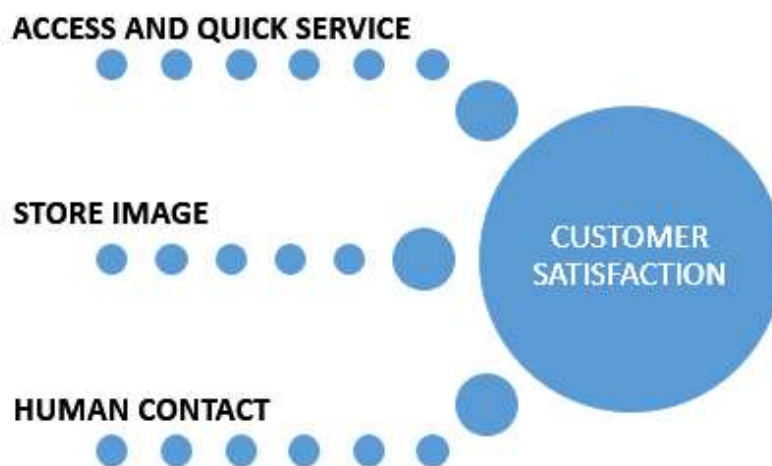
2.5.3 Customer Engagement

The derivation of the concept of customer engagement emanated from the philosophy of marketing relationships and interactive service experiences (Brodie, Hollebeek, Juric, & Ilic, 2011). A study by Sashi (2012) confirms this point, highlighting that customer satisfaction is enhanced through the expansion of customer engagement. In the process, customers and retailers are involved in adding value to the objectives of the organisation.

So, King, Sparks and Wang (2014) further adds that customer engagement has the ability to improve the retailers' growth strategy and this approach has proven to advance retailer's brands, which subsequently leads to customer loyalty. Many retail organisations are adapting to this innovative ideal of customer engagement, which seeks to create sound relationship between retailers and customers. In this way, customers can have an influence on new product development and retailer service tactics (Verleye, 2015).

2.5.4 Key Drivers of Customer Satisfaction

There are three factors that drive and influence customer satisfaction in the store, as Lebed (2015) outlines them. These are outlined in Figure 2.9



Source: Author's Own

Figure 2.9: Driving Factors to Customer Satisfaction

2.5.4.1 Access and Quick Service

A study by Paul and Srivastav (2016) has revealed that ease of access and speed of support has the potential to reduce a significant number of queries by customers and has a positive influence on the company's overall customer satisfaction. In this way, the retailer is able to focus the customer's attention on other business pertinent matters. This is a good strategy for a company that wants to build a good reputation and sound relationship with customers (Goodman, 2019).

2.5.4.2 Store Image

According to Beristain and Zorrilla (2011) store image relates to the lasting memory a customer creates in relation to the type of brands the retailer carries. Brands generate perceptions about the retailer that will later form the perceived image about that store.

The ambient, design and social elements of the store are the factors that influence the perceived image in the customers' mind. Based on that, the customer will then assume the quality of merchandise the retailer carries (Kumar & Kim, 2014). As such, numerous retail image studies have recognised that customers differ with regard to which outlets they align with (Hunneman, Verhoef, & Sloot, 2017).

2.5.4.3 Human Contact

Lebed (2015) maintains that customers are very sensitive to human contact, in particular when it comes to complaints or a questions. Customers do not compromise when it comes to a friendly and warm service while shopping. Hence, Mazzei and Ravazzani (2015) warns that employee behaviour has become a great concern in all organisations. Organisations are cognisant that employees can have a detrimental effect on business' success if not promptly addressed. Therefore, it is important for retailers to hire the right people who will carry out and uphold the vision of the company. In that way, satisfaction levels will increase and customers will remain loyal to the business (Russell & Brannan, 2016).

2.5.5 How to Improve Customer Satisfaction?

Luo, Li and Mei (2017) emphasizes that, for retail organisations to remain competitive, their customer satisfaction strategies should be improved and revisited to know and align with customer expectations. Hence, Kendrick (2015) provides a list of approaches which retailers can use to improve their customer satisfaction levels:

- Develop Customer Service Communities
- Treat Customers Like You Would Want to Be Treated
- Encourage Agents to Take Ownership of Problems
- Make Employee Satisfaction a Priority
- Turn Customer Survey Data into Action
- Offer Proactive Customer Service
- Demonstrate Product Knowledge
- Benchmark Customer Satisfaction

Furthermore, Wang and Kim (2017) are of the view that the emergence of social media has been, neglected or retailers are slow in embracing the power of social media. According to the results of their study, social media has the ability to improve customer satisfaction and retailers need to acquaint themselves with, and adopt, this platform.

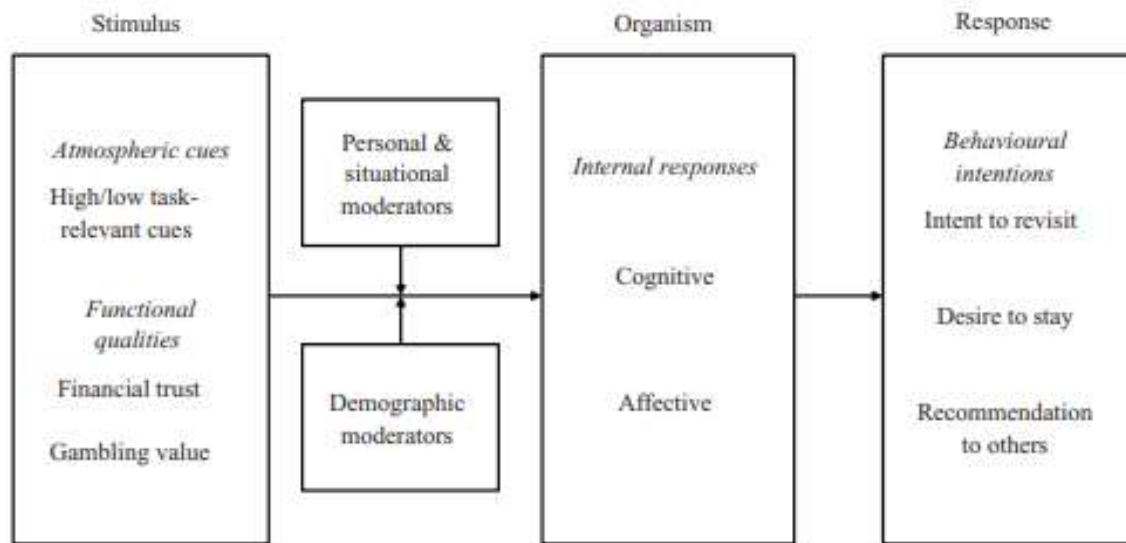
2.5.6 Customer Satisfaction and Expectations

In a shopping environment, customers have certain expectations of the retailer's products and services (Jeske et al., 2015). Customer expectations are based on personal experience and retailers are in a position to influence that experience. It is the retailer's responsibility to ensure that they meet customers' expectations and make shoppers' experience worthwhile (Lin & Lekhawipat, 2016). In essence, customer satisfaction depends on the customer's assessment about the retailer's nature and character in relation to their expectations (Cengiz, 2010).

2.6 The Influence of the S-O-R Model on Customer Satisfaction

As mentioned earlier, the Stimulus-Organism-Response model (also known as SOR Model) emerged in 1974 as created by Mehrabian and Russell (1974). The study of consumer behaviour in retail spaces came about as a result of this invention. This model was ideally designed for the retail terrain and has, proven to work in those spaces (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). In this section, the S-O-R Model, as shown in Figure 2.13, is examined. It includes:

- Stimulus - authentic consumer experiences which are triggered by the store environment
- Organism - based on the environment, organism deals with how customers internalise and perceive that experience
- Response – this deals with the actual response which is responsible the buying behaviours and patterns



Source: Abarbanel, 2013

Figure 2.10: Conceptual model of consumer responses to store atmospherics

2.6.1 Stimulus

Hope (2014) explains that customers expect retailers to organise their shops' routines to their lifestyles, rather than to their normal routines of operating hours. Sometimes customers are stimulated by knowing that they are able to buy the merchandise they need, anytime they need it, anywhere possible and conveniently. Hence, the behaviour of customers is critical in retailing and retail marketers need to be aligned with their consumers' behaviour and must keep abreast of new developments in the industry. This is to ensure that their customers are always stimulated in the store (Dooley, Jones and Iverson, 2012)

Therefore, it is important for retailers to make use of physical environmental cues that will induce and stimulate the emotions of customers and ultimately influence their buying behaviour (Krishna, 2012). When customers are shopping in a certain retail environment emotions are stimulated. Therefore, retailers are obligated to afford their customers a pleasant shopping environment to ignite and stimulate their emotions (Aboiron & Aubin, 2016).

2.6.2 Organism

Kim and Lennon (2013) states that the psychological processing of the indicators that include customer value perceptions of the environment, quality and apparent risk, are influenced by the affective and cognitive state of the organism. Factors such as image of the

store, available and accessible parking, the merchandise that the store carries, convenience and store location are significant to customer perceptions of store quality (Nikhashemi, Tarofder, Gaur & Haque, 2016). A study by Ariningsih, Nainggolan, Sandy, & Widyasti (2016) has shown that certain environmental features in the store have the ability to assist retailers to effectively influence customer buying behaviour. Tuškej, Golobn and Podnar (2013) concur with the latter notion, alluding to the fact that customers' perception of the quality of the store has the ability to influence their buying intentions.

2.6.3 Response

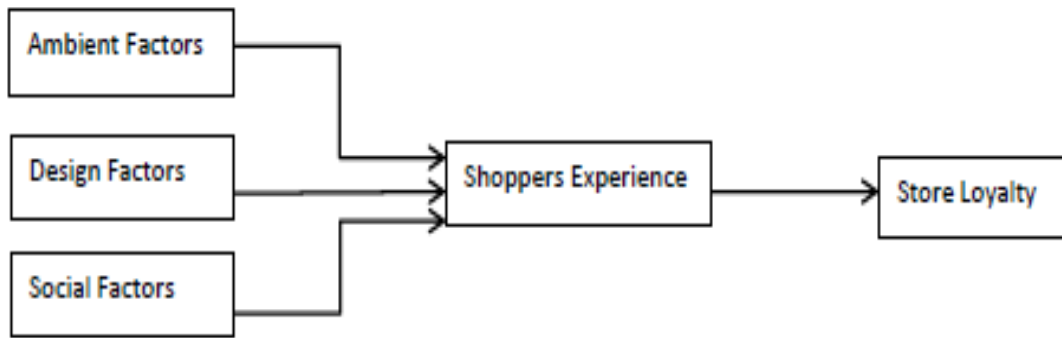
The response relates to the customer's behaviour after the experience - the response could be approach or avoidance behaviour. In essence, the behavioural intentions of the customers are influenced by stimuli and organism (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974).

Hence, Harun, Rashid, Chia, Kassim, Wahid and Tahajuddin (2018) suggest that the customer's attitude concerning the layout and look of the store is significant to their patronage intentions. Likewise, customers are likely to linger more in a welcoming and attractive environment (Babin, Darden & Griffin, 2004). Furthermore, a study by Klein, Falk, Esch and Gloukhovtsev (2016) has revealed that the creative initiatives with which retailers design their stores has a substantial influence in stimulating word of mouth.

In the market, retailers trade with similar or the same merchandise as their counterparts. Hence, any state of dissatisfaction will activate emotional reactions. As a result of those reactions, customers will develop an attitude or perception about that particular retailer (Ishar & Roslin, 2016).

2.7 Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty

Belás and Gabčová (2016) assert that customer loyalty is observed when a customer continuously revisits and bestows patronage on a particular outlet. Elements of the store's services might have induced a customer to be loyal to it. When customers are pleased with the service they will communicate the experience to other potential shoppers through word of mouth. However, customer loyalty does not exist in isolation, in the sense that customers will only be loyal when they are satisfied with the retailer's service. This means that retailers should intensify their efforts to deliver service to ensure that customers remain loyal to them (Adesina & Chinonso, 2015). Figure 2.10, below, outlines the phenomenon of store loyalty and how it relates to shopper experience.



Source: Muhammad, Musa & Ali, 2014

Figure 2.11: Store Loyalty - Conceptual Framework

Customer loyalty is not a guarantee and retail organisations cannot forecast the levels of loyalty in their stores. Nevertheless, it can be achieved through effective management of customers' levels of satisfaction. As Figure 2.10 suggests, these satisfaction levels depend on the store's atmospheric factors that comprise ambient, design and social factors. A shopper's loyalty is the direct result of their experience in the store (Foster & McLelland, 2015).

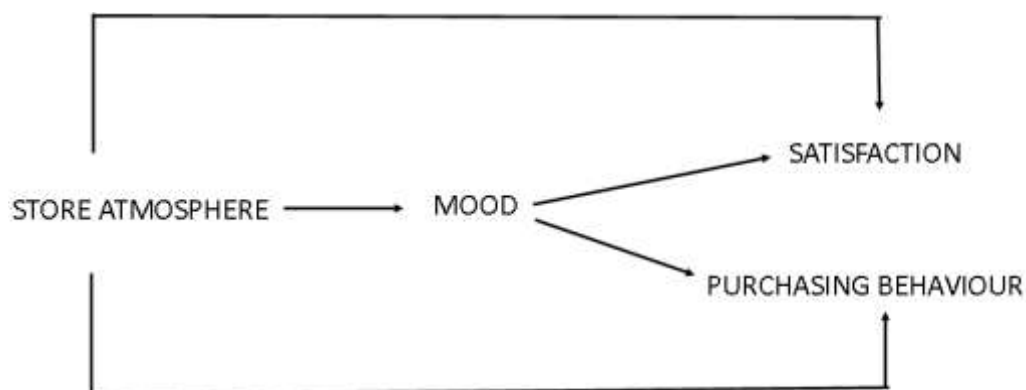
2.8 Relationship between Store Atmospherics and Customer Satisfaction

As mentioned earlier, Van Rompay, Krooshoop, Verhoeven and Pruyn (2012) claim that store features are not enough to convince customers about the worth of the products and services offered. In the past, customers visited an outlet just to get their needed items and leave, but now customers want to be fascinated, surprised and entertained when they are in the store. Customers might go to a shop for a specific purpose but they do have extra money to spend once the item has been selected.

Erdil (2015) observe that although retailers have little power or control over the perceptions of the customers, they have the ability to influence perceptions to maintain a consistently of good quality of service at all times. Through thorough market research and understanding consumer needs, retailers will always have what the consumer wants and needs. If retailers work tirelessly to uphold their standards and aims, levels of customer satisfaction can be increased (Sabrina, 2014).

2.8.1 Store Atmospherics and Feelings/Mood

Das (2016) observes that there is nothing more attractive than a store that stocks multiple kinds of merchandise. When customers are spoilt for choice, they tend to experience feelings of pleasure and a sense of positivity. When those products are merchandised in a creative and systematic manner, customers' mood and feelings are also likely to improve. For that reason, retailers should understand the importance of maintaining a friendly and inviting environment in the store. Customers can easily be stimulated to change their purchasing behaviour, with regard to unplanned purchases and more time spent in an outlet (Latha & Karthikeyan, 2014). Figure 2.11 demonstrates how effective store atmospherics influence customer sentiments, leading to satisfaction. The level of customer satisfaction determines the customer's purchasing behaviour.



Source: Spies et al, 1997

Figure 2.12: Relationship chain between atmosphere and mood.

Martelo Landroquez, Barroso Castro and Cepeda-Carrión (2013) also place emphasis on the importance of customer perceptions about the store. These perceptions are derived from, or at least influenced by, store atmospheric factors. As the popular saying goes “people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel” (Angelou & Wirtz, 2013).

As suggested earlier, the fundamental reason for creating a pleasant atmosphere in a store is to encourage shoppers to experience pleasant and positive sentiments while in the store. To further inspire in them a sense of worth, along these lines customers will not be reluctant

to spend more money and time at the store. Therefore, investing the company resources in creating a pleasurable shopping environment is a useful instrument to drive sales. Retailers can easily forfeit this opportunity if they do not invest their energies in maintaining an attractive environment in their stores (Zenker & Rütter, 2014).

The literature thus suggests that store atmospherics can influence the consumer's feelings and mood. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Store atmospherics can have a positive influence on a customer's mood and feelings.

2.8.2 Store Atmospherics and Time Spent in Outlet

Attri and Jain (2018) posit that customers will not waste their time on an appalling environment that is dirty, untidy or otherwise not presentable. Customers must be desperate or have severely limited options to even enter such an environment. They will in any case want to go in and out of the store as quickly as they can. In the process, due to hasty buying, customers might make wrong product choices, whereas in a pleasant environment that is more comfortable for a customer to wander around in, they are likely to make the correct product choices (Kumar & Ghodeswar, 2015).

There is common cause in the literature that customers willingly spend more time in a store if their perceptions of it are favourable. However, the extent to which customers' immediate impressions of a store are lasting and cannot be changed has been exaggerated. Retailers should keep striving to enhance these impressions and make routine checks to assess the relevance of the store to customers (Berman & Evans, 2010).

According to Banat and Wandebori (2012) the design elements of the store also influence the time spent in an outlet. When planners decide on the design of the store, they should be cognisant of such effects. When customers are loyal, time is not an issue for them, but it always helps for the store design to be alluring and inviting.

The literature thus suggests that store atmospherics can influence the length of time that a consumer spends in the store. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Store atmospherics can influence the time a customer spends in an outlet.

2.8.3 Store Atmospheric and Intentions to Revisit

Chen and Hsieh (2011) affirm that customer's patronage and revisit intentions depend on retailers' hospitality. Retailers, therefore, need to show that they are ready to welcome people to the vicinity and do business. You can only welcome people in an inviting and pleasant environment. In essence, this means that retailers' readiness should be expressed in how the store is designed. A customer should be fascinated from the outside of the building through to the inside. The design elements of the store must keep the customer captivated. Customers will then demonstrate approach behaviour, showing their support for the store (Anderson, 2007).

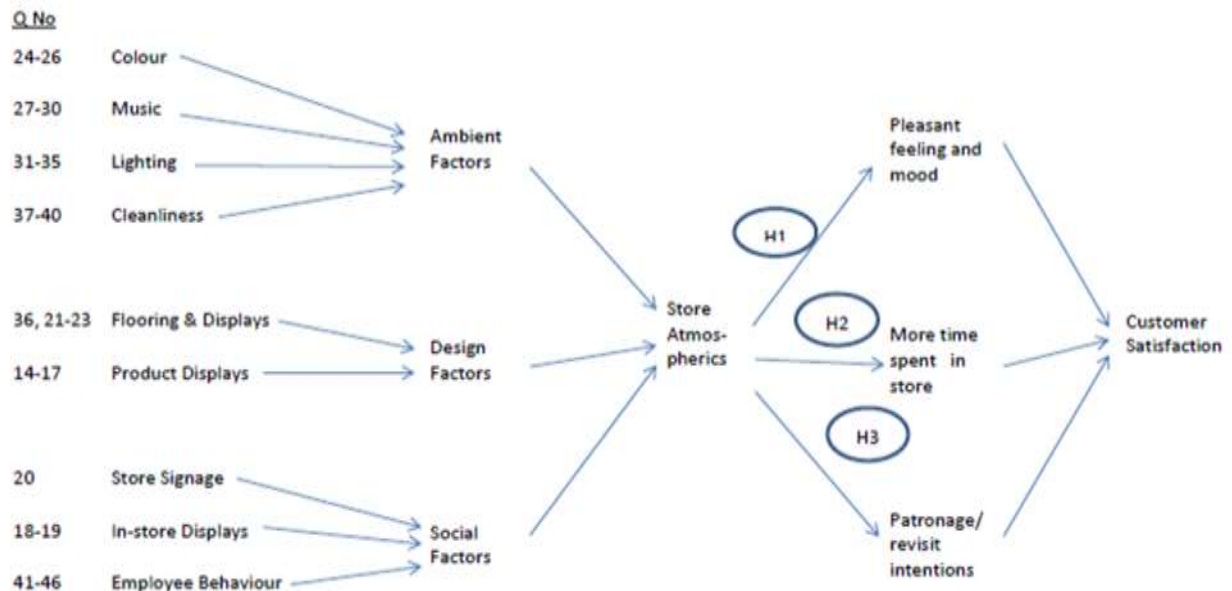
Chang, Cho, Turner, Gupta & Watchravesringkan (2015) agrees with the latter observation, noting that the store's design is responsible for a number of factors including the mood it creates. If a pleasant mood is aroused in customers, they will revisit the store, again and again. Retailers who understand the importance of sustainability will implement strategic decisions to ensure they retain existing customers and attract new ones. This includes strategies to attract customers to revisit the store (Velasco Vizcaíno, 2018).

The literature thus suggests that store atmospheric can influence the consumer's intention to revisit an outlet. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Store atmospheric can positively influence a customer's intention to revisit the outlet.

2.9 Proposed Conceptual Framework

Figure 2.12 depicts a conceptual framework that summarises the dynamics of store atmospherics and how they relate to customer satisfaction, based on the preceding discussion.



Source: Author's own

Figure 2.13: Store Atmospherics & Customer Satisfaction Framework

The foundation of this study rests upon the conceptual framework illustrated above. The several variables are structured as follows:

Store Atmospherics

Ambient Factors – Colour, Music, Lighting, Cleanliness

Design Factors – Flooring & Displays, Product Displays, Space Management

Social Factors – POS & POP, Store Signage, In-store Displays, Employee Behaviour

Customer Satisfaction – customer's buyer behaviour

Feelings/Mood

Time Spent in Store

Intention to Revisit Store

In this proposed conceptual framework, the researcher developed three hypotheses to test the association of these variables, which are:

H1: Store atmospherics can have a positive influence on a customer's mood and feelings.

H2: Store atmospherics can influence the time a customer spends in an outlet.

H3: Store atmospherics can positively influence a customer's intention to revisit the outlet.

2.10 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, in-depth information was furnished, relating to aspects of store atmospherics and how they relate to one another. Certain concepts were delineated and arguments presented to explain and support them. The concepts included the variables in the study which were reviewed in such a way as to demonstrate their complexity and possible correlations among them.

Based on the literature, three hypotheses were developed and presented. A conceptual framework based on the literature and the hypotheses was devised, with the intention of highlighting the logic of the associations among the variables.

The next chapter describes the research approach and methodology, from data collection methods to data analysis, to indicate the pathway the study followed to achieve the desired results.

Chapter Three

Research Design and Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Research methodology is a systematic way to solve a problem. It is a science of studying how research is to be carried out. Essentially, the procedures by which researchers go about their work of describing, explaining and predicting phenomena are called research methodology. It is also defined as the study of methods by which knowledge is gained. Its aim is to give the work plan of research.

Rajaskar et al., 2013:5

This chapter offers a detailed discussion of the research design and methodology employed in the study. The chapter ushers readers through the philosophy of the study and its approach to the topic chosen. In addition, issues relating to the mechanisms used to collect and analyse data are addressed and a discussion on validity and reliability is provided. The chapter explains the research methods employed and provides justification for why these methods were deployed.

3.1.1 Background

Research is conducted either to generate fresh ideas to add to current knowledge or to develop new knowledge in a systematic way. Research design and research methodology are two dimensions necessary to the conduct of an effective research study (Dennis, Joseph & Valacacich, 2001). They guide the direction of the research (Babbie, 2010) indicating how the data is to be collected and interpreted.

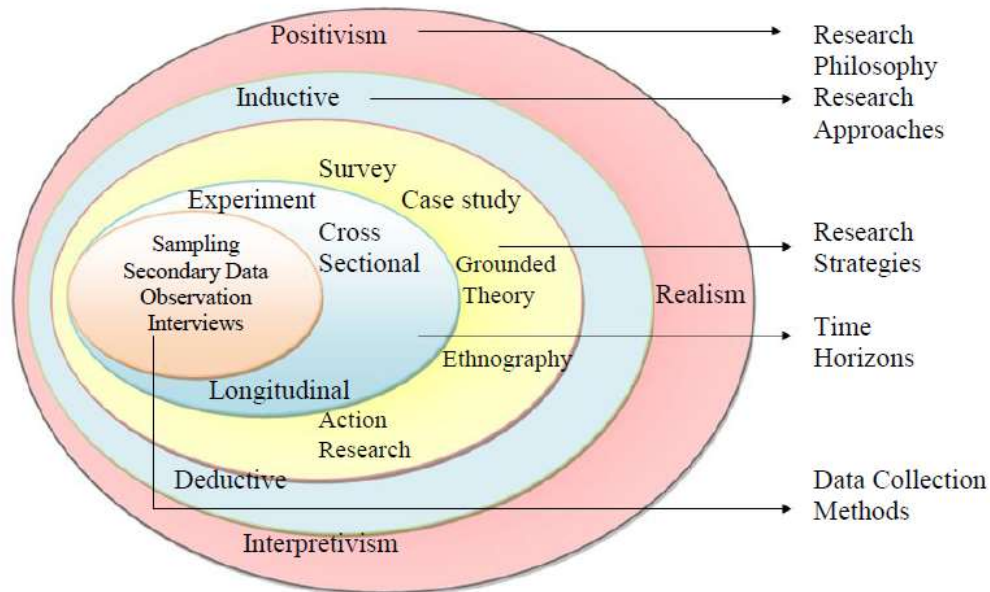
3.1.2 Research Objectives Revisited

As set out in Chapter One, the objectives of this research were:

- To find out whether store atmospherics do influence a customer's mood and feelings.
- To explore whether a customer's time spent in an outlet is influenced by store atmospheric.
- To discover whether store atmospherics have the ability to impact on a consumer's intent to revisit the store.

3.1.3 Research Frame

Beri (2008) characterises the research frame, also known as the research design, as consisting of the processes, plans, techniques or methods involved in a research study. A research design can also be viewed as the plan developed for conducting a study, which includes control over issues that may affect the validity of the findings. In essence, the research design seeks to address the research question and test the research hypotheses (Polit, Beck & Hungler, 2000).



Source: Saunders et al., 2003

Figure 3.1: The Research Process Onion

The research frame for this study will encompass some aspects of the “research onion” as illustrated in Figure 3.1. Like an onion, the research process comprises layers of research possibility, extending to every aspect of the design and activity. These aspects are structured as follows:

- The first layer of the research onion consists of the research philosophy (also known as research paradigm); it encompasses positivism, realism and interpretivism.
- The second layer of the onion represents research approaches that include deductive or inductive approaches.
- Thereafter comes the research strategy, which contains the experiment, survey, case study, grounded research, and ethnography or action research.
- The subsequent layer is the time horizon is of the onion, whether cross-sectional or longitudinal research.
- The last layer of the onion comprises the data collection methods, which in the social sciences include sampling, observations, interviews and questionnaires.

3.2 Research Philosophy

Mason (2014) makes the point that there are numerous views and concepts which people believe and accept as true; to adjudicate among them is the foundation of philosophy. To achieve the objectives of a research study, judgement is the starting point, in that the study has to proceed in a particular direction or embrace one concept rather than another. This can be achieved through a proper understanding of the research problem. The research problem indicates the direction that the research should take with regard to the research philosophy (Norman & Kabwe, 2015). Such a philosophy involves choices or assumptions on the levels of ontology, epistemology, and axiology (Mkansi & Acheampong, 2012).

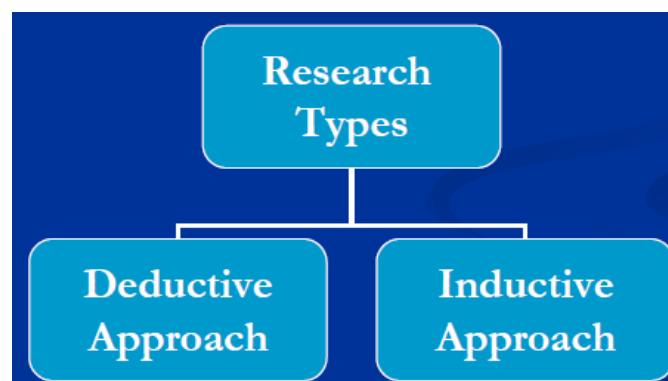
3.2.1 Ontological and Epistemological Assumptions

Ontology is concerned with assumptions and beliefs about the nature of reality. Is reality objective or ultimately subjective? The philosophies that underlie these contrasting perspectives are objectivism and constructivism (Long, White, Friedman & Brazeal, 2000).

The next question is: How do we know anything about the world? According to Bryman and Bell (2007), epistemology can be defined as the study of knowledge. Knowledge can, to cite extremes, be regarded as objective and theoretically accessible to all, or subjective, relying on individual experience (Long et al., 2000). The core of the question in this context is: what constitutes suitable knowledge in a particular field of study (Johnson & Duberly, 2000)? Should the social world be studied according to the same principles, procedures and ethos as the natural sciences (Bryman & Bell, 2007)? This study leans in the latter, objectivist direction. If we perceive the world as consisting of universally available truths or realities, then these truths can be discovered through conducting an 'objective' research (Mason, 2014).

3.2.2 Research Approach

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2003) suggest that the research approach pertains to the robustness of your theory in the design of the study. As such, the research approach is there to underpin the direction of the study, at the same time indicating what theory might appropriately be used to structure the process. At the foundational level, these approaches can be either inductive or deductive (Bryman & Bell, 2007).



Source: Burney, 2008

Figure 3.2: Research Approaches

Saunders et al. (2003) postulate that the choice of research approaches enables researchers to:

Make precise choices on which research design to adopt

Pay attention to what works and eliminate what is not beneficial to the study

Adapt the research design to cater for constraints, for example, insufficient understanding of the topic to form a hypothesis.

3.2.2.1 Inductive Approach

Collis and Hussey (2013) suggest that the inductive approach involves making educated conjectures or inferences based on existing knowledge about a particular occurrence. Such inferences are based on likelihood, as nature suggests. Thus, an inductive approach is often concerned with what people do in their daily lives. The inductive approach is mostly implemented through observation in an effort to rationalise the research hypothesis (Monette, Sullivan & Dejong, 2011).

Soiferman (2010) confirms that researchers mostly use this approach because it helps the researcher to understand the variables in an environment and diminishes doubt through envisaging occurrences. The approach moves from specific explanations to wider generalisations and theories. Hence it is, casually, called a "bottom up" approach (Burney, 2008).

3.2.2.2 Deductive Approach

Zalaghi and Khazaei (2016) explains that deductive reasoning is a process of making reasonable or rational deductions from evidence on hand. It is possibly the intellectual process and a foremost element of intelligence. Therefore, tests of intelligence comprise problems in deductive reasoning. Accurate deductions embody the very core of reasonableness.

Deductive reasoning proceeds from recognised theory or established generalisation. This is done to check whether the theory is applicable to specific occurrences. Contrary to the inductive approach, the deductive approach works from the "top-down", from a theory to hypotheses, then to data that could contradict theory (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

The objective, in quantitative research, is normally to examine theories deductively, accumulating evidence to support or refute a hypothesis. In a qualitative study, on the other hand, information is gathered from individuals to enable the inductive creation of generalisation or theory (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). Due to the probabilistic nature of this study, the research approach is essentially deductive.

3.3 Research Strategy

Ultimately, a research study should provide solutions or answers to the questions posed. This can only be achieved through applying accurate mechanisms as planned in the research strategy. The research should entail clear and precise objectives as a result of the research questions asked (Saunders et al., 2003).

Research strategies are characterised as exploratory, descriptive and causal. This research study is not a casual study, hence the emphasis are on descriptive and exploratory research. A descriptive study is very expressive and formal in nature, meaning that certain procedures need to be observed when conducting the study. For example, when addressing the research problem, sources of data provision must be clarified (Saunders et al., 2003).

Researchers thus use the descriptive approach to gauge and measure relations between variables and test hypotheses (Bhat, 2019). An exploratory study, in this context, is more concerned with understanding the behaviour of consumers and how that aligns with the research objectives (Cooper & Schindler, 2006). The current study therefore has elements of both descriptive and exploratory research.

3.3.1 Quantitative Research

Williams (2007) notes that it was discovered as far back as 1250 A.D, that research was influenced by the quantification of data during the investigation. From that time on, the quantitative method was used by investigators and authors in the West as a means of finding out about the world. The approach is characterised by the use of numbers and statistics.

Creswell (2003) notes that the quantitative research methodology is based upon a positivist, or objectivist, philosophy, creating knowledge by observing, counting and analysing. A quantitative study seeks to establish generalisations that will relate and narrate a relevant

theory (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). The above arguments provide an intellectual rationale for this study's use of statistical and numerical measurement in a quantitative research approach to its field of enquiry.

3.3.1.1 Pro and Cons of Quantitative Methodology

Qualitative and quantitative approaches follow different guiding philosophies to collect data and produce consistent and reliable outcomes. Each approach has pros and cons that researchers must consider in the context of their particular area of enquiry (Rahman, 2017). The Table below indicates some of the pros and cons of using quantitative research methods:

Table 3.1: Pros and cons of the quantitative research method

<u>Pros</u>	<u>Cons</u>
Numeric estimates	Gaps in information – this relates to matters that are excluded from the questionnaire and not discussed in the secondary data. As such, they are also excluded from the analysis.
Opportunity for relatively straightforward data analysis	A labour-intensive data collection process
Data can be verifiable	Limited participation by affected persons in the content of the questions or direction of the information collection process.
Data which is comparable between different communities within different locations	
Structured questionnaires are good for a large number of respondents	Cannot probe by asking more questions as a result of the limitations of a structured questionnaires.

Source: Brief, 2012

3.3.2 Time Horizon

Kothari (2004) observes that a research study can be conducted in a short period of time, in which case it is “once-off”. A once-off piece of research is known as a cross sectional study, and the instruments proposed for the research should be consonant with the period and length of the study. In essence, (a sample of) the population of interest can be investigated during a specific period of time. On the other hand, studies conducted over a series of periods or time frames are known as longitudinal research. Longitudinal studies are mostly used to monitor and measure ongoing occurrences and changes in the market. These occurrences could be, for example, seasonal suggesting the use of a longitudinal approach.

This study is cross-sectional, with the population being engaged and studied once off, within a specific time frame. The study was conducted and data collected from January 2018 to July 2018.

3.3.3 Data Collection Methods

Researchers are advised to be systematic and strategic in their approach when collecting data, particularly when their means of collecting data is solely through intercepting and interviewing people. The manner in which data is collected is pivotal as it might have an impact on the responses received (Chaleunvong, 2009). Table 3.2 illustrates various data collection methods:

Table 3.2: Data Collection Techniques and Tools

Data collection techniques	Data collection tool
Using available information	Checklist; data compilation forms
Observing	Eyes and other senses, pen/paper, watch, scales, Microscope
Interviewing	Interview guide, checklist, questionnaire, tape recorder
Administering written questionnaires	Questionnaire

Source: Chaleunvong, 2009

Nell (2013) recommends that the researcher decide on which type of data collection is most closely aligned with his/her study's objectives. She also distinguishes between secondary data and primary data.

Kumar (2011) confirms there are two major approaches to assembling information about a situation, person, problem or phenomenon. In most cases, when a research study is undertaken, some of information required is currently obtainable (i.e. secondary information) and need only be extracted. But when such information is not available, especially new and 'rough' information, then primary research is used to collect data.

3.3.3.1 Primary Data

Udekwe (2016) observes that primary data collection is the process of deploying mechanisms to collect data from respondents, also known as participants. Respondents have a significant role in ensuring that the data is available and usable. Cooper and Emory (1995) distinguish three types of primary data collection:

Personal interviewing.

Telephone interviewing.

Self-administered questionnaires/surveys.

3.3.3.2 Secondary Data

According to Wiid and Diggines (2009) secondary data is generally considered to be the starting point in determining the kind of research to be carried out. Primary data can only be considered by the researcher when the accessibility of information through secondary data is limited or exhausted.

Tustin, Ligthelm, Martins and Van Wyk (2005) describe that secondary data as the kind that already in the academic marketplace. To gather the relevant information, the researcher must follow the secondary research process and obtain data from sources like journal articles, books, periodicals, and magazines.

Due to the fact that no suitable secondary data could be found to answer the research question, in this study, primary data was sought through the administration of questionnaires.

3.4 Sampling Methodology

Degu and Yigzaw (2006) characterise sampling as an approach to selecting the study objects from an established population. In quantitative research, generally speaking, the ideal selected sample will be representative of the entire population.

In the sampling process, the study is expected to uphold high ethical standards and ensure that the image of any people or companies involved is protected. For this reason, the retail outlets are referred to as “Retailer P” and “Retailer R”.

Retailer P is considered Africa’s supreme grocery and general merchandise retailer. This mega retailer has distribution plants in almost every corner of South Africa to ensure that demand is met. One of their pillars is quality and they strive to maintain it through high performance standards.

Retailer R is also a grocery retailer that has branches across South Africa and abroad. The company is listed on the JSE and co-owned by nearly 5000 shareholders. The company seeks to be recognised by its high quality service and affordable pricing. As they claim to be a leading food retailer in the country, the organisation is seeking to expand its offering to maintain its existing clients and attract new ones.

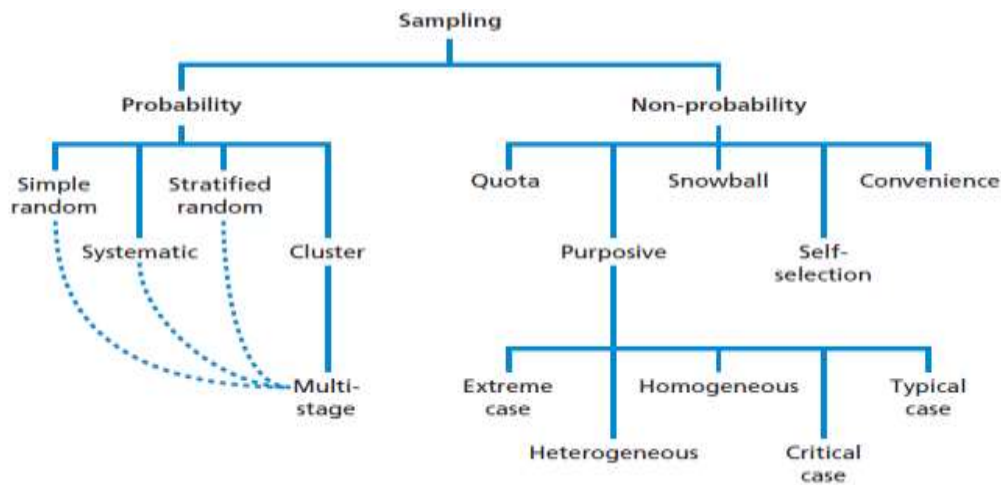
The outlets were chosen on the basis of the target population of the study. These outlets are available right across Cape Town and are representative of the demographics of the target population. The selected branches were convenient and close to the target respondents, however the intention was to acquire diverse responses that are not biased.

3.4.1 Probability and Non-probability

In quantitative research, researchers seek to select a sample that is not biased and is a true representation of the population from which it is selected. In a qualitative study, on the other hand, a number of concerns may impact the selection of a sample, such as ease gaining access to the potential respondents; the researcher’s judgement that the person has broad knowledge about an occurrence, an event or a situation of interest to the researcher, etc. (Kumar, 2011).

As Neelankavil (2007) reminds us, that sampling involves using a subsection of the total population to represent the entire population. Methods of sampling are generally categorised as ‘Probability’ and ‘Non-probability’ (Acharya, Prakash, Saxena & Nigam, 2013). Figure 3.3

illustrates the various methods of sampling in a research study, providing clear differentiation among them.



Source: Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009

Figure 3.3: Sampling Techniques

3.4.1.1 Probability Sampling

Probability sampling is mainly associated with survey-based research strategies that require the researcher to make inferences from the sample in relation to a population. The rationale to generalise from the sample to the population so as to be able to answer the research question(s) or to meet the objectives (Saunders et al., 2009).

Brick (2015) notes that probability sampling is rich in history and carries a solid theoretical structure proven to be effective in empirical studies. As a result, probability sampling has, over the years, become the foremost paradigm in survey-type research (Brick, 2011).

This type of sampling allows the researcher to take a broad view of the findings from the sample and to generalise to the target population. As demonstrated in Figure 3.4, below, probability sampling includes, but is not limited to:

- Simple Random Sampling
- Systematic Random Sampling
- Stratified Random Sampling
- Cluster Sampling

Acharya et al. (2013) emphasise that in order to achieve effective outcomes in the research study, it is critical for the researcher to choose a comprehensive and scientific sampling methodology. Preferably, probability sampling methods are ideal to ensure the

representativeness of the sample. Furthermore, probability sampling is also perfect for generalising the results to the target population. For these reasons, this study will make use of probability sampling.

Saunders et al. (2009) suggests that there are four stages in the process of probability sampling, and they are:

- Based on the research questions and objectives, devise an appropriate sampling frame
- Identify an ideal size for the sample
- Thereafter, decide on the best relevant method of sampling
- Importantly, ensure that the sample chosen is representative of the population

3.4.1.2 Non-probability Sampling

Baker, Brick, Bates, Battaglia, Couper, Dever, Gile and Tourangeau (2013) argue that survey investigators commonly carry out studies that utilise different approaches of data collection and interpretation. They further maintain that over the past six decades researchers have relied on predominantly on probability sampling. However, lately, uncertainties around exposure and declining response rates or lack thereof, together with growing costs, have been a source of major concern as to whether this sampling method is still relevant.

As far as non-probability sampling is concerned, Acharya et al. (2013) concede that this method has been criticised due to its self-selection bias, and its deficiency in estimating with precision. As indicated in Figure 3.3, above, non-probability sampling includes, but is not limited to the following:

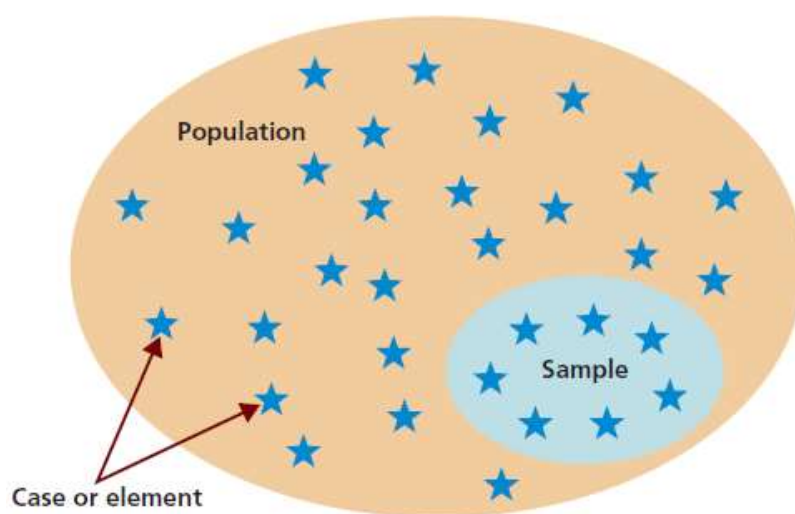
- Convenience/Purposive Sampling
- Quota Sampling
- Snow Ball Sampling
- Self-Selection Sampling

Some view non-probability surveys as a creative approach to address mounting pressures for economical, faster data collection in particular as nonresponse to probability surveys is a growing phenomenon. Many questions have been raised and intense debate continues regarding whether non-probability surveys are just a quick fix and not a real solution (Dever

& Valliant, 2014). The branches chosen were Khayelitsha, Gugulethu and Cape Town as part of the convenience sampling strategy. As earlier mentioned, these outlets were convenient for both the respondents and the researcher.

3.4.2 Population of Interest

The issues of place, time, and other applicable measures must be emphasised in the process of identifying and deciding on the population, and there should be a clear and accurate justification for the nature and size of a population sample (Degu & Yigzaw, 2006).



Source: Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009

Figure 3.4: Population, Sample and Individual Cases

As portrayed in Table 3.3, the demographic profiling in the study included gender, marital status, and age categories as well as monthly income. This demographic profile is representative of the target population. The profile illustrates the characteristics of the typical day-to-day customers that visit Retailer P and Retailer R.

These outlets are similar in that they target all income groups. With regard to age, it is more sensible to intercept customers who are 18 and over. This customer segment has more buying power and can more easily understand the questionnaire than children and teenagers. Table 3.3, below, details the demographic profiling in the study.

Table 3.3: Demographic Profile

<u>Gender</u>	<u>Marital Status</u>	<u>Age Category</u>	<u>Monthly Income</u>
Male	Single	18 - 29 years	No Income
Female	Married	30 - 39 years	Below R3 000
	Divorced	40 - 49 years	R4 000-R7 000
	Widowed	50 - 59 years	R8 000-R12 000
		60+ years	Above R13 000

Source: Author's Own

3.4.3 Sampling Technique

The first sampling step was to select two retailers whose customers spanned the demographic profile depicted above. The study then used systematic random sampling as the second step, to select a total of 100 interviewees from the four retail outlets (two each from Retailers P and R). In this process, random numbers were chosen for the starting point (3) and for the intervals (10). Thus interviewers counted off three possible respondents before starting to interview – thereafter they attempted to interview every 10th customer leaving the store. In the absence of a sampling frame, this method was appropriate for the purposes of the study (Cameron, Baldock, Sharma, Chamnanpood & Khounsy, 1997).

As respondents were walking out of the store, they were systematically selected to take part in the study. Respondents approached in this way are in a good position to recall their immediate experience, and highly likely to provide correct and accurate information when completing the questionnaire.

Two undergraduate students were hired as field-workers to intercept customers and explain the purpose and content of the questionnaire. They had to ensure that the rights of the respondents were protected at all times. The intention was to make respondents feel at ease when completing the questionnaire, knowing well that their privacy and anonymity were guaranteed. These field workers were taken through a training process about the contents of the questionnaire and what would, subsequently, be expected of them. Furthermore, the issues of moral and ethical conduct while collecting data were emphasized.

3.4.4 Sample Size

In a research study, the sample studied should be large enough to be significantly representative of the target population. This makes examining relationships and associations between variables more meaningful (Kumar, 2011).

One hundred respondents per store were approached, from each of the two retailers, making a sum of 400 respondents. A summary of the sample is given in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4: Sample Size Breakdown

Retailer P – outlet 1 = 100 respondents	Retailer R – outlet 3 = 100 respondents
Retailer P – outlet 2 = 100 respondents	Retailer R – outlet 4 = 100 respondents
Retailer P – total = 200 respondents	Retailer R – total = 200 respondents

Source: Author's Own

A sample of this substantial size underpins the statistical significance of the study and increases its reliability and the credibility of its outcomes. It must be added that, as the research topic suggests, these outlets are representative of the retail terrain in Cape Town (Mbungwana, 2009).

3.5 Research Instrument

A questionnaire was developed and administered. A high response rate and proven effectiveness are among the reasons for using the questionnaires as an instrument for collecting primary data provided of course that the participants are literate (Hair et al., 2003).

3.5.1 Questionnaire Design

A questionnaire should be clearly framed and systematically structured for easy comprehension. When the questionnaire is well structured, it is easier to compile measurement and ultimately accurate results (Bajpai, 2011).

For the purposes of convenience, closed-ended questions were asked, reducing the effort required of respondents. Closed-ended questions are designed to anticipate encoded responses (Hair, Bush & Ortinau, 2006). Questions of this nature are convenient, quick and easy to administer (Daniel & Berinyuy, 2010).

Questions included simple closed-ended, multiple choice as well as Likert scale variations. They were formulated in simple English and no jargon was used, making them quick to read and easy to understand. The questions were arranged in this sequential order:

Section 1: Customer Satisfaction

Section 2: Customer Patronage Intentions

Section 3: Store Atmosphericity

Section 4: Demographic Profile

The origin and derivation of the questionnaire used in this study is presented in detail in **Appendix A**. Questions were developed from the literature, as is illustrated by the listing of the relevant references for each question in Appendix A. The appendix also shows the questions that relate to each variable (colour, music, etc), and the variables that make up each construct (store atmosphericity, etc). The appendix also shows the variables that relate to each hypothesis.

3.5.2 Pilot Test

The aim of pilot testing is to identify any flaws in the data collection instrument and its deployment to ensure that it is understandable and consistently interpreted by all respondents. The pilot test is conducted with a sub-sample, enabling the researcher to replicate the procedures and protocols chosen for data collection and thus to test them prior to administration to the full sample (Cooper & Schindler, 2003).

3.5.3 Administration of Instrument

Twenty questionnaires were piloted with respondents covering the relevant demographic categories of gender, marital status and age category. A number of the participants noted a few problems in the questionnaire that were subsequently rectified. Amongst these were the following:

- Question 2 was not as clearly framed as the rest of the questions in the document.
- Questions 4 and 13 used the same semantic differential scale type, but the formatting of question 13 was not correct and rendered the question confusing.

- The participants took issue with the fact that the “Store Display and Layout” component of the questionnaire (questions 20 to 31) had no answer options, like those for questions 14 to 19.
- Question 25 had no question at all.

The entire questionnaire was thoroughly checked again for any issues relating to grammar, spelling, numbering and formatting. In consultation with a statistician, rectification of these issues aided the researcher to finalise the questionnaire for the actual data collection.

3.6 Data Analysis

Malhotra (2004) notes that for the purposes of statistical analysis, the data collected must be properly converted into a comprehensible form. The process of analysing data must ensure the upholding of standards for quality and reliability. Care with data analysis is very significant for reliability and hypotheses testing (Sekaran, 2003).

The data was processed and thoroughly checked for administrative errors through the use of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS Statistics 24) program. The program was used to conduct descriptive analyses of the data with tables and figures, including univariate and bivariate analyses, and inferential analyses where necessary, for example, in hypothesis testing.

3.7 Reliability and Validity of Research

According to Tlapana (2009) in an ideal situation, an observed score should be flawlessly parallel with or equivalent to the true score. However, in the real world, research is not conducted in a perfect situation and therefore will be liable to error. The researcher should focus on the possibility of errors and take action to mitigate them, in that way increasing the validity and reliability of the findings. (Saunders et al., 2003).

3.7.1 Reliability of Research

The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient model was used as a mechanism to measure and evaluate the reliability of the study. Previously, to ensure the reliability of the survey, a test questionnaire was piloted and the results of this test were provided.

3.7.2 Validity of Research

Yin (2003) notes that validity is assured if the research instrument obtains the data that is being sought. The functionality of validity is determined by whether it measures or comprehends what it is supposed to (Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2005).

Tlapana (2009) cautions that the outcomes of a research study may thus be perceived to be broadly accurate in spite of multiple errors. Researchers nevertheless need to take preventative action to guard against those errors.

In this study, the first step taken in this direction was ensuring that, the questionnaire was compiled in a manner easy to comprehend with jargon-free, simple English and easy-to-grasp multiple choice Likert scale questions. Then the response data was coded through the use of numbers, making it easier to identify and track questions when the need arises. The intention was to limit the incidence of data errors. Moreover, the pilot test questionnaire was examined by authorities on methodology at CPUT, as well as the research supervisor and the statistician before it was administered. A letter of consent was developed for the respondents, which assured them of respect for their rights and were promised anonymity and strict confidentiality for their responses (see below).

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Institutions of higher learning typically have a formal and legally binding framework for ensuring ethical behaviour in research. In this instance, no data was collected until ethical clearance had been provided by the CPUT ethics committee (see **Appendix B** for the CPUT ethical clearance certificate).

As mentioned earlier high ethical standards were upheld during this research study. The companies concerned were treated with respect in terms of preserving their policies and procedures. This strengthens the credibility of this study, as do the ways in which the following issues were dealt with.

3.8.1 Confidentiality/Anonymity

According to Whelan (2007) privacy is paramount for sound relations with the respondents and their willingness to participate in the study. The consent letter was explicit on the subject of confidentiality. Thus the companies concerned were referred to as “Retailer P” and “Retailer R”. The respondents also remained anonymous and their responses confidential.

3.8.2 Plagiarism

Plagiarism involves using someone’s ideas, creativity, and hard work as your own without acknowledging the original author or writer (Clough, 2000). It is illegal to present the labour of other people as your own, without recognising them. Therefore, plagiarism can be construed as theft of intellectual property (Devlin, 2005).

Students sign a compulsory declaration form upon submitting their work, indicating that they have refrained from any academic misconduct and thereby making themselves vulnerable to for legal action if found to have lied (Ashworth et al., 1997). Such a statement appears at the beginning of this study. Furthermore, **Appendix C** provides a summary certificate of a Turnitin plagiarism analysis, showing a similarity index at a level acceptable at CPUT.

3.8.3 Informed Consent

As mentioned earlier, respondents become more comfortable and optimistic when it comes to completing a document when they have been fully informed about its content and purpose. In the letter accompanying the questionnaire, respondents’ rights were clearly explained, as were the risks involved, and the time it would take to complete. The letter of information and questionnaire are included as (**Appendix D**) and the informed consent form as (**Appendix E**).

3.8.4 Deception

In an academic study of this magnitude, lies and dishonesty should be avoided at all times. Thus, it is confirmed that this study is free of any dishonesty and that no deception was used at any stage in the collection and analysis of the data or the reporting of the results.

3.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter has highlighted the research design and methodology employed in this research study. The objective was to analyse the data and classify any gaps between the prospects and perceptions of the respondents. The study adopted a quantitative approach in which statistical and numerical measures were taken. The epistemological orientation has been identified as objectivist.

Due to the probabilistic nature of the study, a deductive approach was adopted. A questionnaire was developed to collect data in alignment with the research hypotheses. Four grocery retail outlets were approached and participants were systematically selected as a sample. The study findings resulting from the systematically collected data are discussed in detail in the following chapter.

Chapter Four

Data Analysis and Discussion of Results

4.1 Introduction

Data analysis is the next step in the research process after the collection of data (Adat, 2013). It involves editing, summarising and converting raw data into usable information. Raw data is of no value until it is processed and conclusions can be drawn from it. Hence, the objective of this chapter is to outline the results derived from the data. This study investigated the influence of store atmospherics on customer satisfaction. Quantitative data was therefore collected to address the following hypotheses:

- H1: Store atmospherics can have a positive influence on a customer's mood and feelings.
- H2: Store atmospherics can influence the time a customer spends in an outlet.
- H3: Store atmospherics can positively influence a customer's intention to revisit the outlet.

In Chapter three there was discussion of the various strategies, tools and techniques devised to obtain data for this research study. As a result of the quantitative method chosen for the study, the data was collected from responses to questionnaires administered at four retail stores. In this chapter, the results regarding the influence of store atmospherics on customer satisfaction are presented and discussed.

4.1.1 Research Objectives Revisited

- To find out whether store atmospherics do influence a customer's mood and feelings.
- To explore whether a customer's time spent in an outlet is influenced by store atmospheric.
- To discover whether store atmospherics have the ability to impact on a consumer's intent to revisit the store.

A systematic random sampling of respondents completed the questionnaire during the period between 26 February 2018 and 30 April 2018. The questionnaire covered aspects of customer satisfaction, customer patronage intentions, store atmospherics and the demographic profile of the respondents. The chapter is structured as follows:

- Response Rate
- Demographics of Sample
- Inclusive Demographics Categories
- Model Constructs
- Correlations
- Hypothesis Results
- Qualitative Findings
- Chapter Summary

4.2 Response Rate and Demographics of Sample

4.2.1 Response Rate

At its simplest, a response rate refers to the level of feedback, or the percentage of participants agreeing to answer survey questionnaires or participate in interviews. The response rate is necessary to measure the quality of the survey data, for the reason that non-response is often not random (Saldivar, 2012).

The survey questionnaires were administered outside the four participating retail grocery outlets in Cape Town. The ideal number of expected responses was 400. Table 4.1 presents the participant response rates by store.

Table 4.1: Response Rate Results

Selected Store	Planned Sample	Achieved Sample	Response Rate
Retailer P – Outlet 1	100	94	94%
Retailer P – Outlet 2	100	96	96%
Retailer R – Outlet 3	100	100	100%
Retailer R – Outlet 4	100	98	98%
Total Responses	400	388	97%

Source: Author's Own

Table 4.1 shows the total percentage of participants from each outlet. From the sum of 400, a total of 388 usable responses were acquired from participants. It is clear, from the Table, that the ideal percentage of 75% and above for the response rate was achieved (Ray, 2012), and 97% is a more than adequate rate of return.

Table 4.2: Response per Retail Outlet

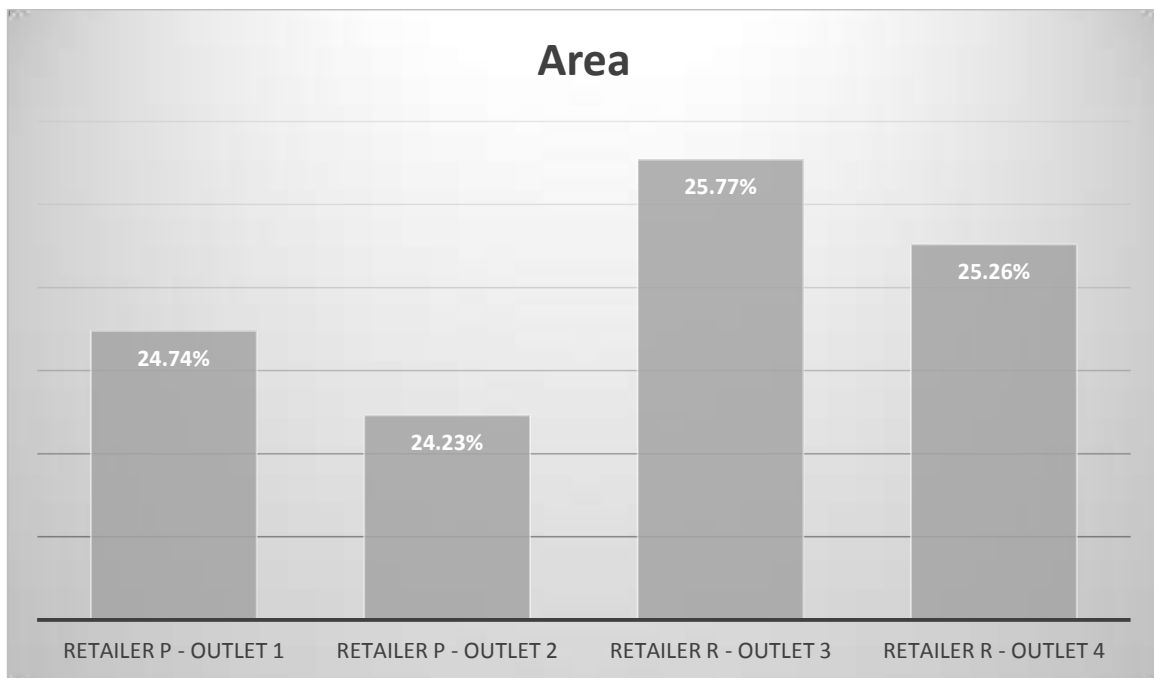


Table 4.2 shows the percentage of respondents from each retail outlet. The following responses per category were received: 24.7% Retailer P - Outlet 1, 24.2% Retailer P - Outlet 2, 25.7% Retailer R - Outlet 3, 25.2% Retailer R - Outlet 4. Respondents from Retailer R – Outlet 3 where the most keen to participate in the study, whereas respondents from Retailer P – Outlet 2 showed the least willingness.

4.2.2 Demographics of Sample

This section on demographics does not present findings. It is merely a description of the research sample. This is to show that the study attracted a reasonable sample, that is, a sample spread across all the demographic categories.

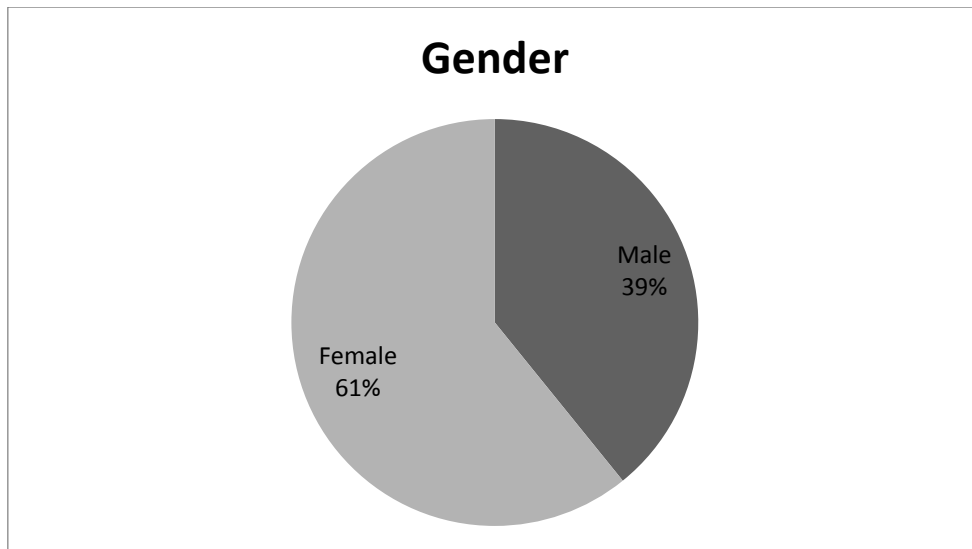


Figure 4.1: Gender

Figure 4.1 shows the number of respondents by gender in the study for, all four outlets. The figure demonstrates that females are the dominant gender among respondents (60.8%), with males comprising 39.2%.

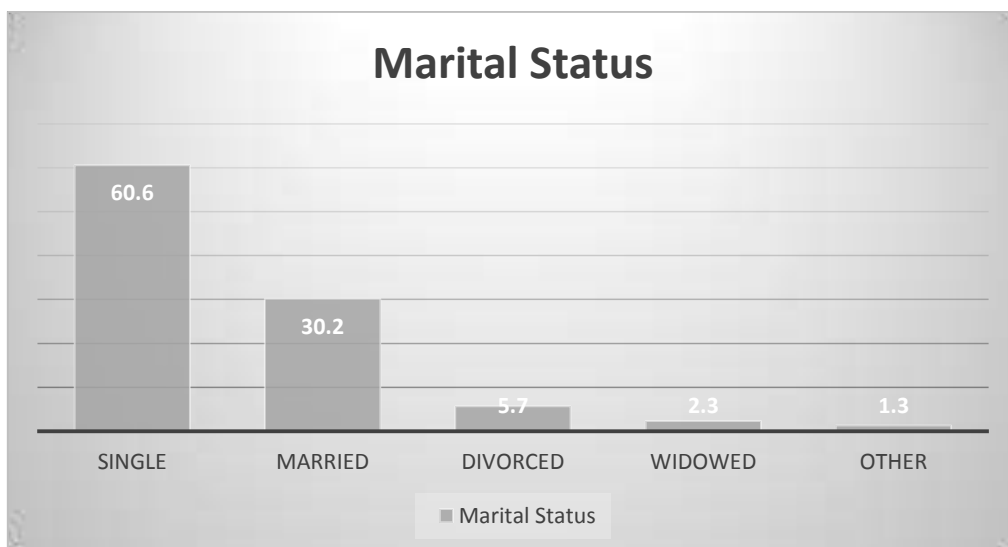


Figure 4.2: Marital Status

As shown in Figure 4.2, the profile of respondents is dominated by single people (just over 60%) followed by the married category (30.2%) category. Those divorced, widowed or other combined represent less than 10% of the respondents. This outcome means that most views and opinions originated mainly from single people with the majority of them being female.

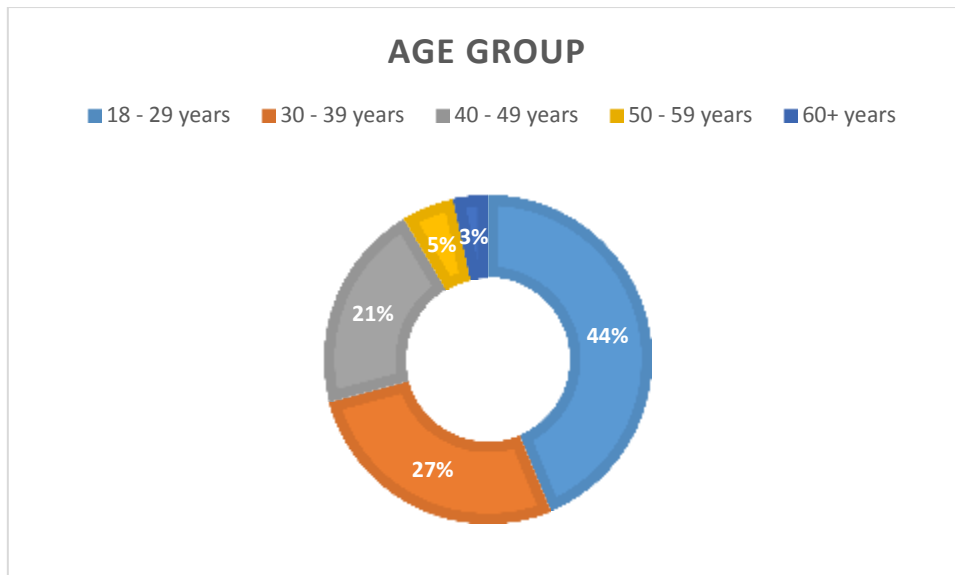


Figure 4.3: Age Group

It is clear from Figure 4.3 that the largest population represented in the age group demographic is between 18 to 29 years old (43.8%), followed 27.1% respondents between 30 and 39. Respondents of 40-49 and 50-59 represent 25.8% of the respondents, while only 3.4% of respondents were 60 or older. Thus, the majority of the respondents were between the ages of 18 to 29 years, and this age group represents “Generation Y” affectionately known as “Born Frees” or the “Mandela Generation”. This age group has been exposed to a media saturated environment and has had no option but to embrace technology. They are highly confident and conscious of marketing hype, but easily get bored (Cohen, Prayag, & Moital, 2014; Mattes, 2011).

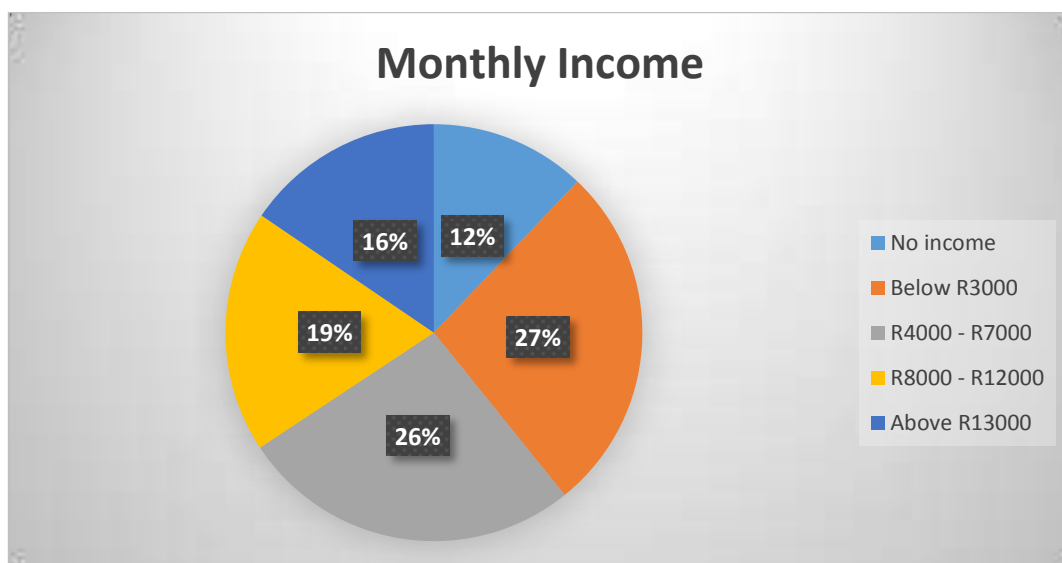


Figure 4.4: Monthly Income

Figure 4.3 shows that the highest number of respondents (105 or 27.1%) earn below R3000, narrowly followed by 103 or 26.5% respondents who earn between R4000 and R7000. Furthermore, 73 or 18.8% of the respondents earn between R8000 and R12000, whereas 60 or 15.5% of them earn above R13000. Thus the majority of the respondents are lower income earners (27% = ≤R3000 and 26% = R4000-R7000). This means that these respondents represent the lower-middle class.

Table 4.3: Inclusive Demographics Categories

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Gender	Male	152	39.2	39.2	39.2
	Female	236	60.8	60.8	100.0
Marital Status	Single	235	60.6	60.6	60.6
	Married	117	30.2	30.2	90.7
	Divorced	22	5.7	5.7	96.4
	Widowed	9	2.3	2.3	98.7
	Other	5	1.3	1.3	100.0
Age Group	18 – 29 years	170	43.8	43.8	43.8
	30 – 39 years	105	27.1	27.1	70.9
	40 – 49 years	80	20.6	20.6	91.5
	50 – 59 years	20	5.2	5.2	96.6
	60+ years	13	3.4	3.4	100.0
Monthly Income	No Income	47	12.1	12.1	12.1
	Below R3000	105	27.1	27.1	39.2
	R4000– 7000	103	26.5	26.5	65.7
	R8000–R12000	73	18.8	18.8	84.5
	Above R13000	60	15.5	15.5	100.0

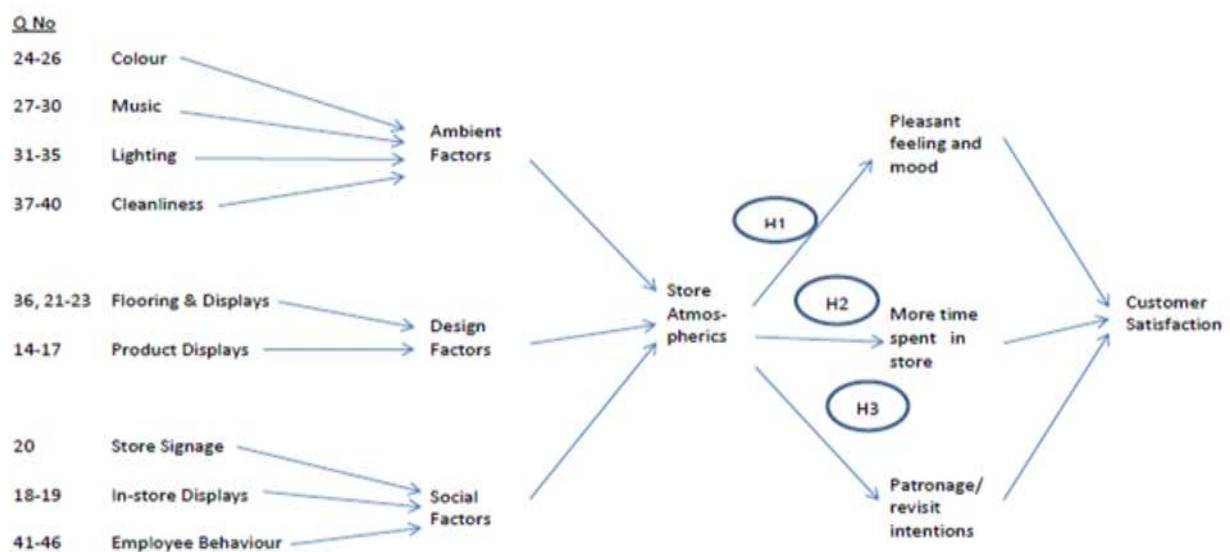
Source: Author's Own

Table 4.3 above shows the overall breakdown of the demographic categories for research participants (by gender, marital status, age and income). The ideal population intended for this study was 400, but due to spoilt questionnaires that figure declined to 388 (97%), an acceptable rate of return. To summarise, the majority of participants were females (236=60.8%). The frequency of males was 152, making up 39.2%. The single (235) and the married (117) respondents dominated the study, with their participation combined being over 90%. Similarly, the age groups 18-29, 30-39, and 40-49 also dominated participation in the study, adding up to over 90%. Furthermore, the majority of the respondents earned between below R3000 and R7000, together amounting to 53.6%.

4.3 Model Constructs

4.3.1 Research Hypotheses Revisited

The three research hypotheses gave rise to a conceptual model, introduced in Chapter 2 and reproduced below as Figure 4.5, for ease of reference.



Source: Author's Own

Figure 4.5: Conceptual Model

4.3.2 Factor Analysis

Baglin (2014) explains factor analysis as a cluster of statistical approaches with the objective of simplifying complex sets of data. Factor analysis is used as a mechanism to discover fundamental associations or correlations amongst the variables in a research study.

According to Simon and Goes (2011), the approach is mostly used to reduce large amounts of variables through merging those variables that are moderately or strongly associated with one another. The intention here is to organise certain sets of questions in the survey in such a way as to group them into abridged sets of questions.

Factor analysis was also used in this study to make comprehensible and interpret a summarised version of the collected sets of data. It enabled assessment of the relationship between the questions and the factors eventuating in a statistically acceptable relationship and a revised conceptual model.

Table 4.4 illustrates the factor loadings obtained and summarises the revised factors, as well as three new factors that were identified.

4.3.2.1 Reliability Testing

According to Twycross and Shields (2007), reliability refers to the uniformity of the research results, their precision, repeatability, and trustworthiness. All these notions are aspects of the credibility of the results.

Gliem and Gliem (2003) recommend using Cronbach's alpha coefficient when working with Likert-type scales. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used in this study for internal consistency reliability testing. Table 4.4 indicates the meaning of numerical values for the coefficient.

Table 4.4: Cronbach's alpha scale

Cronbach's alpha	Internal consistency
$\alpha \geq 0.9$	Excellent
$0.7 \leq \alpha < 0.9$	Good
$0.6 \leq \alpha < 0.7$	Acceptable
$0.5 \leq \alpha < 0.6$	Poor
$\alpha < 0.5$	Unacceptable

Source: Author's Own

Bruin (2006) notes that Cronbach's alpha works as a measurement tool in internal consistency reliability testing by evaluating how closely associated a set of items are in a group. To be precise, Cronbach's alpha is a coefficient of reliability regarded as consistency.

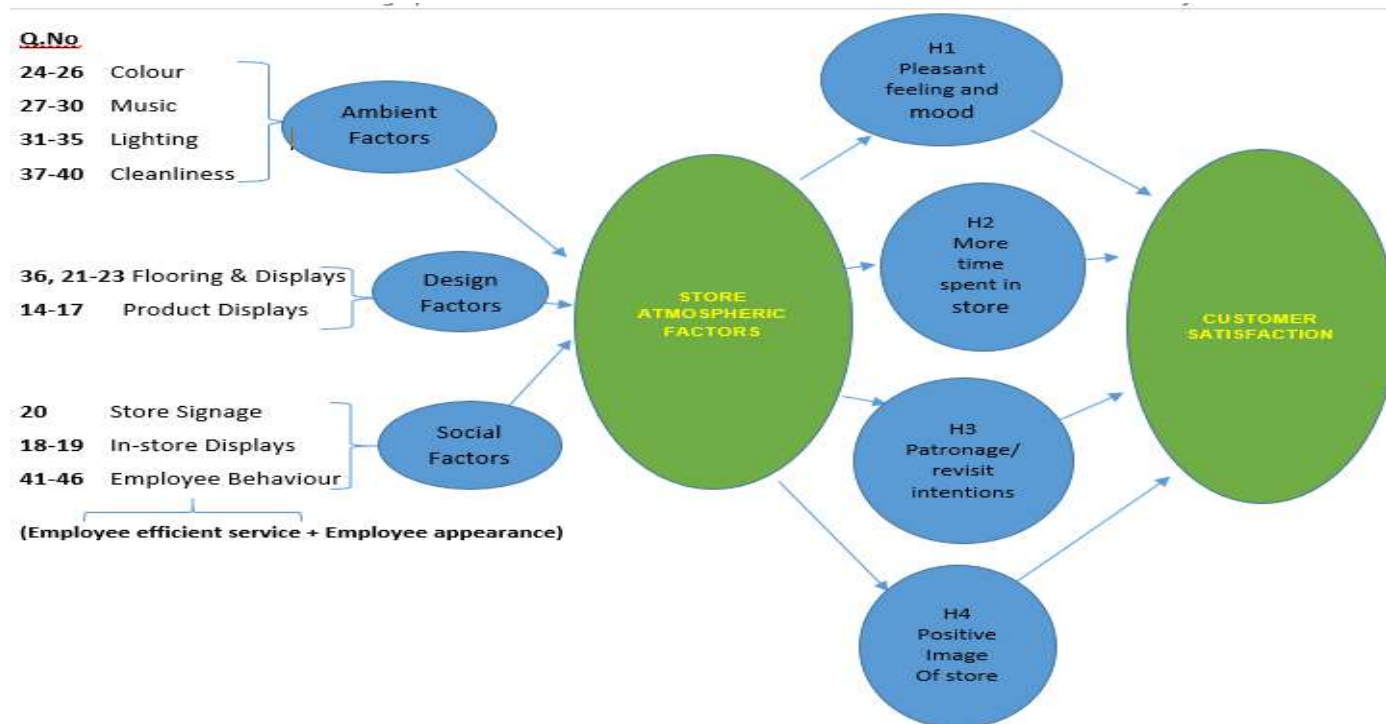
Denscombe (2007) suggests that, although above 0.70 is acceptable and greater than 0.80 is good, coefficients between 0.50 and 0.60 are significant, especially for a newly designed instrument. Therefore, those factors with a coefficient greater than 0.6 were left in the conceptual model.

Following the factor analysis and the resultant restructuring of the factors (deleting those with coefficients of less than 0.6), Cronbach's alpha scores for the new factors are presented in Table 4.5. As explained above, those with a score above 0.6 were accepted for consideration in the revised conceptual model.

Table 4.5: Reliability Test - Constructs Found

Factor	No. of items	Cronbach's alpha: Internal Consistency	Strength of association	Factor Loadings: Unidimensionality
Pleasant feeling and mood: Q6 – Q8	3	0.642	Questionable	0.712 – 0.794
In-store Displays Q18 - Q19	2	0.548	Poor	0.83
Flooring & Displays: Q21-Q23,Q36	4	0.574	Poor	2 factors identified
Floor Adverts: Q22, Q23	2	0.748	Acceptable	0.873 – 0.910
Floor Space and Cleanliness Q21, Q36	2	0.317	Unacceptable	0.711 – 0.826
Colour: Q24, Q26	2	0.544	Poor	0.771 – 0.773
Music: Q27 – Q30	4	0.818	Good	0.786 – 0.834
Lighting: Q32 – Q35	4	0.640	Questionable	0.618 – 0.768
Cleanliness: Q37 – Q40	4	0.661	Questionable	0.6 – 0.824
Employee Efficient Service: Q41, Q42, Q44	3	0.805	Good	0.821 – 0.880
Employee Appearance: Q45, Q46	2	0.749	Acceptable	0.880 - 0.909
New Constructs				
Positive Image: Q5, Q12, Q16, Q25, Q31	5	0.7	Acceptable	0.559 – 0.729
Wellbeing: Q11, Q13, Q14, Q36	4	0.567	Poor	0.425 - 0.777
Space & Signage:Q20, Q21	2	0.395	Unacceptable	0.500, 0.814
Q10, Q15, Q29	3	0.453	Unacceptable	0.397 – 0.848

Based on analysis and revision, a new conceptual model of the factors was developed. Figure 4.5 shows the relationship between the factors (independent variables) and the dependent variables, and indicates a new set of hypotheses developed from the factor and reliability analyses.



Source: Author's Own

Figure 4.6: Revised Conceptual model

4.3.3 Descriptive Statistics of the Constructs

Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005) describe descriptive statistics as the process of arranging, summarising and presenting quantitative data. They serve to recapitulate the numbers from the quantitative survey in a way that indicates proportions (Sommer & Sommer 2002). For Cooper and Schindler (2014), descriptive statistics are a form of clarified categorisation. Table 4.6 summarises the frequencies for each variable in the study

Table 4.6: Summary of findings – Variable Frequencies

<u>Store Atmospheric Factors</u>	<u>Variables and Findings</u>
Ambient Factors	<p>Colour 53.6% of the respondents agreed that the outlet’s colour scheme does create a positive image in their minds.</p>
	<p>Music More than 70% of respondents shared similar views with regard to music, saying that listening to music creates a relaxed atmosphere while they are shopping.</p>
	<p>Lighting 54.1% of the respondents also agreed that the overall light in the store was sufficient.</p>
	<p>Cleanliness Almost 80% (46.6+33.2) of the respondents also shared similar views with regard to cleanliness, namely that cleanliness and tidiness in the store increases my well-being and comfort.</p>
Design Factors	<p>Flooring About 83.7% of the respondents prefer to shop only in a retail outlet that has ample space to move in, with broad aisles and proper layout.</p>
	<p>Product Display Over 60% of respondents agreed that the creative and systematic arrangement of products in the retail outlet helps them select products.</p>
Social Factors	<p>Point-of-Sale 82% of the respondents claimed that the more information they have about the product through display and signage the more likely they will buy it.</p>
	<p>Store Signage 53.1% of the respondents agreed that signage in the form of tags increases awareness and offers them more information about the product (e.g. price, material), attracts their attention and navigates them towards the merchandise.</p>
	<p>Employee Behaviour 58.3% of the respondents agree that employees have sufficient knowledge of their duties and tasks.</p>

Table 4.7, below, describes the data collected for each variable in a statistical format.

Table 4.7: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
F7 Employee Appearance	388	1.0	5.0	1.626	.6595
F4 Lighting	388	1.0	4.8	2.085	.6080
F5 Cleanliness	388	1.0	4.3	2.327	.6825
F3 Music	388	1.0	5.0	2.356	.8501
F8 Positive Image of Store	388	1.0	4.4	2.370	.6823
F2 Floor Adverts	388	1.0	5.0	2.506	.9376
F1 Pleasant Feeling and Mood	388	1.0	5.0	2.512	.8124
F6 Employee Efficient Service	388	1.0	5.0	2.558	.8823
Valid N (listwise)	388				

The descriptive statistics displayed in Table 4.7 are derived from the revised research hypotheses, with (as discussed in Section 4.3) the exclusion of variables that had no effect, like colour as an ambient factor.

4.4 Correlations and Regressions between Dependent and Independent Variables

In quantitative research, correlation is considered to be the extent or degree of the statistical connection between two or more variables (Bolboacă & Jăntschi, 2006). Asuero, Sayago and González (2006) concur, adding that correlation is used as a statistical mechanism to underpin the measurement and analysis of the association between two variables. This association is expressed through the format shown in Table 4.7. It is through this format in **Appendix F**, this indicates the strength of the correlation between variables, and whether it was a positive or negative correlation.

In relation to Table 4.7, the four dependent variables are all significant ($p = \leq 0.005$) to all related independent variables.

4.4.1 Correlation and Regression between Positive Image of Store (DV) and factors (IV)

Table 4.6 demonstrates the correlation of variables with the Positive Image of Store as the dependent variable. The contribution depicted is arranged according to sequence.

Lighting	.207
Music	.195
Employee Efficient Service	.188

Employee Appearance	.183
Floor Adverts	.174
Cleanliness	.056

It is clear that Lighting has the highest correlation to the Positive Image of Store. This is due to the fact that appropriate lighting lights up the positive mood on customers. Furthermore, regardless of the store format or design, proper lighting amplifies the ambience of the store (Pegler, 2010).

Cleanliness is among the least of consumers' considerations, possibly because customers perceive cleanliness as the store's values, mission and guiding philosophy which is top priority and it goes without saying (Banat & Wandebori, 2012).

Table 4.8: Regression Coefficients^a for Dependent Variable: F8 Positive Image of Store

Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.499	.165		9.066	.000
	F2 Floor Adverts	.038	.040	.053	.965	.335
	F3 Music	.061	.043	.076	1.408	.160
	F4 Lighting	.062	.063	.055	.981	.327
	F5 Cleanliness	.083	.061	.083	1.371	.171
	F6 Employee Efficient Service	.032	.045	.042	.712	.477
	F7 Employee Appearance	.138	.056	.134	2.468	.014

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.278 ^a	0.077	0.063	0.6606	0.077	5.302	6	381	0

a. Predictors: (Constant), F7 Employee Appearance, F2 Floor Adverts, F6 Employee Efficient Service, F3 Music, F4 Lighting, F5 Cleanliness

The model shown in Table 4.9 is significant (F-value = 5.302, p-value <0.001).

Although the correlations are significant, the regression model shows that this combination of independent variables only accounts for an r^2 of 0.077, or 7.7% of the variance in the dependent variable F8 Positive Image of Store.

4.4.2 Correlation between Pleasant Feelings and Mood (DV) and factors (IV)

There is a positive correlation between feelings and mood and other variables, as shown below. Hence, each of the independent variables contributes to shaping the feelings and mood of customers. According to the magnitude of their correlation, the level of relationship is shown below:

Employee Efficient Service	.287
Floor Adverts	.274
Music	.262
Lighting	.260
Cleanliness	.250
Employee Appearance	.159

Employee Efficient Service could be a key factor in determining consumers' feelings and mood because the appearance and look of the store is highly dependent on its customer service. But more importantly, as Juwaheer (2014) note, it is the behaviour of employees when providing service to customers that can bring success or failure to the store. As part of rendering an efficient service, employees are duty bound to show positive emotions and be polite at all times. Customers will be more comfortable when they are well treated by the employees, which will be result in positive energy while they are shopping (Lemmink & Mattsson, 1998).

Table 4.9: Regression Coefficients^a for Dependent Variable: F1 Pleasant Feelings and Mood

Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.953	.186		5.123	.000
	F2 Floor Adverts	.153	.045	.177	3.414	.001
	F3 Music	.098	.048	.102	2.016	.045
	F4 Lighting	.062	.071	.046	.870	.385
	F5 Cleanliness	.162	.068	.136	2.365	.019
	F6 Employee Efficient Service	.139	.051	.151	2.710	.007
	F7 Employee Appearance	.052	.063	.042	.829	.408

a. Dependent Variable: F1 Pleasant Feeling and Mood

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change Statistics			
						F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.420 ^a	.176	.164	.7430	.176	13.610	6	381	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), F7 Employee Appearance, F2 Floor Adverts, F6 Employee Efficient Service, F3 Music, F4 Lighting, F5 Cleanliness

The regression model in Table 4.9 shows that this combination of independent variables accounts for a relatively small r^2 of 0.176, or 17.6% of the variance in the dependent variable F1 Pleasant Feeling and Mood. Although to a relatively small degree, feelings and mood are influenced to some extent by the independent variables.

4.4.3 Correlation between Customer’s Time Spent in an Outlet (DV) and factors (IV)

A positive correlation between more time spent in store and other variables does exist. All of the independent variables have a significant positive correlation with more time spent in store by customers. The variables below are positioned in descending order, according to the level of relationship:

- Music .321
- Floor Adverts .314
- Employee Efficient Service .279
- Cleanliness .271
- Lighting .245

Banat and Wandebori (2012) identify three elements that attract shoppers to spend more time in the store and influence their intention to revisit. Shoppers prefer to shop in a cozy ambience, with the availability of Wifi and attractive facility aesthetics, hence the correlation between more time spent in an outlet and intentions to revisit the store. Furthermore, a study conducted by Das (2016) revealed highly significant relationship between time spent in an outlet and customers' feelings and mood.

Table 4.10: Regression Coefficients for Dependent Variable: Time Spent in Store

Parameter	B	Std. Error	95% Wald Confidence Interval		Hypothesis Test		
			Lower	Upper	Wald Chi-Square	df	Sig.
(Intercept)	.159	.0899	-.017	.335	3.119	1	.077
Floor Adverts	.069	.0209	.028	.110	10.792	1	.001
Music	.096	.0227	.052	.141	17.945	1	.000
Lighting	.057	.0333	-.009	.122	2.882	1	.090
Cleanliness	.058	.0325	-.005	.122	3.231	1	.072
Employee Efficient Service	.063	.0241	.016	.111	6.895	1	.009
Employee Appearance	-.015	.0289	-.071	.042	.266	1	.606
(Scale)	.198 ^a	.0139	.173	.227			

Model: (Intercept), Floor Adverts, Music, Lighting, Cleanliness, Employee Efficient Service, Employee Appearance

From the beta values in Table 4.10, it can be seen that none of the independent variables make a particularly large contribution to consumers' desire to spend more time in store.

4.4.4 Correlation between Customers' Intention to Revisit the Outlet (DV) and Various Factors (IV)

There is a positive correlation between the intention to revisit and other variables as shown below. Each of the independent variables makes a significantly positive contribution to shaping the intention to revisit on the part of customers. According to the magnitude of their contribution, the level of relationship is shown below:

- Music .253
- Lighting .230
- Cleanliness .224
- Floor Adverts .203
- Employee Appearance .171

Karl, Peluchette and McIntyre Hall (2016) report that adult shoppers are of the view that the uniform, worn by employees has no impact on how they perceive the quality of a store (as opposed to their younger counterparts). This finding is supported by this study, since employee appearance once again has the lowest degree of correlation. However, employee efficient service has the highest correlation, indicating that quality of service could indeed persuade a customer to revisit a store.

Table 4.11: Regression Coefficients for Dependent Variable: Intentions to Revisit the Store

Parameter	B	Std. Error	95% Wald Confidence Interval		Hypothesis Test		
			Lower	Upper	Wald Chi-Square	df	Sig.
(Intercept)	.083	.0850	-.084	.249	.947	1	.330
Floor Adverts	.036	.0200	-.004	.075	3.165	1	.075
Music	.057	.0218	.014	.100	6.821	1	.009
Lighting	.022	.0325	-.042	.085	.444	1	.505
Cleanliness	.072	.0306	.012	.132	5.533	1	.019
Employee Efficient Service	.048	.0231	.002	.093	4.266	1	.039
Employee Appearance	.048	.0277	-.007	.102	2.952	1	.086
(Scale)	.161 ^a	.0113	.140	.185			

From the beta values in Table 4.11, it can be seen that none of the independent variables makes a particularly large contribution to consumers' desire to revisit the store.

4.5 Hypothesis Results

Based on the conceptual model, the descriptive statistics, the correlations, and the regressions, all discussed above, conclusions about accepting or rejecting the hypotheses can be reached.

H1: The various constructs isolated have an effect on customers' feelings and mood, hypothesis 1 is fully accepted.

Constructs F2 (floor adverts), F3 (music), F5 (cleanliness), and F6 (employee service) have a significant positive effect on promoting pleasant feelings and a good mood

But F4 (lighting) and F7 (employee appearance) have no effect on feelings and mood

H2: The constructs have an effect on positive image of store, hypothesis 2 is fully accepted.

Constructs F2 (Floor Adverts), F3 (Music), F4 (Lighting), F5 (Cleanliness), and F6 (Employee Efficient Service) have a significant effect on the positive image of store.

Construct F7 (Employee Appearance) has no significant positive effect on a customer's positive image of store.

H3: The constructs have an effect on customer's time spent in an outlet, hypothesis 3 is accepted.

Constructs F1 (Customer's intentions to revisit the outlet), F3 (Music), F4 (Lighting), F5 (Cleanliness), F6 (Employee Efficient Service), F7 (Employee Appearance), all had a significant positive effect on time spent in an outlet.

H4: The constructs have an effect on customer's intention to revisit the outlet: hypothesis 4 is accepted.

Constructs F1 (Customer's intentions to revisit the outlet), F3 (Music), F4 (Lighting), F5 (Cleanliness), F6 (Employee Efficient Service), F7 (Employee Appearance), all had a significant positive effect on intention to revisit the outlet.

4.6 Qualitative Findings

As mentioned above in Chapter 3, a qualitative study encourages open-ended questions that give respondents the opportunity to respond in greater depth or with more specificity than a formal structured questionnaire (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). A brief discussion of the respondents' comments or recommendations was provided. These comments and recommendations further discussed in Chapter 5 of the study, below. Listed here are some of the salient comments and recommendations recorded on the questionnaires:

4.6.1 Comments from Respondents:

- At times the service is excellent, but it is certain individuals that give poor service.
- I always get what I'm looking for.
- Out of stock and price labels not always visible.
- Clean store, happy to revisit again.
- The company sells expired food and the outlet is disorganised.
- The store is sometimes dirty and the stock is not packed properly on shelves. The cashiers are sometimes rude.
- Enjoyed my shopping here at the store, the service is good.
- The queues are long and the service is poor.

4.6.2 Recommendations by Respondents:

- Check stock for damages and expiry dates, employ more people to remove trolleys and baskets.
- Company must ensure that at end of the month they should place cashiers on each and every till.
- Employees must adhere to customer service policies.
- Employees must get proper training in order to better assist customers. Must always maintain a clean floor.
- Employees should be more friendly and polite to create a more welcoming atmosphere.
- Employees should go an extra mile in assisting customers. Availing public toilets for customers to stay longer and purchase more.
- Extend trading hours.
- Improve your merchandising to create sufficient space.

- Products should be arranged accordingly.
- Put correct prices on shelf and provide training to staff on customer service.
- The store should look at their health and safety procedures, which might be harm customers.
- Train shelf packers on product knowledge and not rely on merchandisers.

4.7 Chapter Summary

The findings of the study were tabulated and presented in the form of graphs, charts and tables. Comprehensive analyses were provided. The chapter revisited the matter of the response rate, according to the store's location. Subsequent to that, the reliability of the results was tested using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha. These coefficients were found to be satisfactory (as indicated in Table 4.2), following a factor analysis that helped to restructure the conceptual model.

In an effort to support the distribution of every variable to respond to the study's objectives, this chapter reflected on the descriptive statistics. Various techniques were applied to achieve the descriptive statistics. Discussion of the findings extended to testing the hypotheses through inferential statistical techniques. The next chapter provides conclusions and recommendations based on the findings presented in this chapter.

Chapter Five

Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

The nexus between store atmospherics and customer satisfaction is the key focus area of the study. The aim has been to identify the nature and extent of relationships among these variables.

The current chapter furnishes readers with a summary of the most significant findings of the study and addresses the research hypotheses modelled. Conclusions drawn from this and recommendations for future research are presented. The chapter proceeds by revisiting key fundamentals of the study, including the research objectives, research hypotheses, research problem, and the limitations of the research.

5.2 Discussion

Generally, store atmosphere relates to the stimulation of customers' senses within the store environment. Certain ambient design and social factors which were believed to have the most significant impact on customer satisfaction were highlighted. This was achieved by identifying those components that received the highest 'strongly agree' and 'disagree' scores. Points of argument were extrapolated from the frequencies recorded to lend substance to the discussion and to test hypotheses. Arguments to support or refutation of the hypotheses were underpinned by literature reviewed in the study.

5.2.1 Summary of Key Findings

In this segment of the chapter, a summary of the key research findings from the previous chapter is provided.

It was observed that respondents enjoy background music, although it was perturbing that 12.1% of respondents did not have an opinion regarding this notion. This could be because, as Andersson, et al. (2012) maintain, some customers simply respond contrarily to the popular belief in the benefit of music in the store environment. However, Zeeshan and Obaid (2008) insist that background music can produce constructive outcomes in respect of customer support in retail stores.

With regard to lighting, it was apparent that the majority of the respondents shared similar positive views. Among the respondents, 68.8% agreed that lighting in the stores was sufficient. A lack of proper lighting in the store undermines the intentions to craft a flawless environment. Even if a store has created a perfect and appealing layout with impeccable merchandise presentation, the lack of sufficient lighting could create a bad mood. Therefore, it is logical that adequate lighting has the capacity to influence any colour type in the store (Pegler, 2010).

As far as cleanliness is concerned, 79.9% of respondents shared similar positive views. This meant that the majority of the respondents were happy with the state of cleanliness in the stores. Cleanliness of the store is one of the critical issues retailers should never falter on, as it compromises the standards of the store and customers could react negatively to it (Yun & Good, 2007). Furthermore, store cleanliness is regarded as the most crucial factor in creating a pleasant store ambience for shoppers. Therefore, whether a customer is a frequent shopper or not, the experience of cleanliness is paramount and should be attended to with high diligence. A customer's sentiments about the store are largely derived from its appearance and how it is laid out, and most importantly, its cleanliness (Banat & Wandebori, 2012).

As far as flooring and product display is concerned, it was evident that respondents were content with how the floor looked and how products were arranged in the stores. Furthermore, a significant 60.1% of the respondents agreed that the artistic and logical merchandising of the products assisted customers to select the right product. Asuquo and Igbongidi (2015) assert that customers have to be the major concern when deciding how to effectively display products on shelves. The merchandising of products should be done according to the customer's needs and wishes. Arranging products based on colour, country and size should reflect the retailer's understanding of the consumer's behaviour in stores (Bergsma, 2005). More than 70% of respondents shared the view that signage in the form of tags was welcome, increasing their awareness and offering them more information about the product.

The majority of respondents (85.6%) were also content with display innovations created by the outlets as these motivated them to look at the products more critically. This means that outlets were doing a great job with regard to in-store displays. Only 20 of the respondents disagreed with this notion, while 36 of them had no opinion.

With regard to employee behaviour, 58.2% of the respondents felt that employees had sufficient knowledge of their duties and tasks. It was perturbing that 22.9% had no opinion

about this, whilst 18.8% of customers did not feel that employees had sufficient knowledge of their duties and tasks.

As the result of pleasant atmospheric conditions, 60.1% of respondents were willing to spend more time in the supermarkets. As is evident from the findings, the majority of the respondents spend between 30 minutes and an hour in the store. This meant that 53.6% of the respondents were happy to spend more time in the store. As much as 14.4% of the respondents were willing to spend between one and two hours or even longer in the shop, while 32% preferred to spend less than 30 minutes in the store.

In as far as patronage intentions are concerned, more than 80% of the respondents expressed the intention of visiting the store again, while less than 6% have indicated no interest to visit again. Furthermore, more than 75% of the respondents indicated their interest in buying there again in the future. This demonstrates a very positive reaction to the stores.

5.3 Research Objectives Revisited

The purpose of this study was to scrutinise the influence of atmospheric store elements on customer satisfaction in selected grocery retailers at Cape Town. The study endeavoured to address the following research objectives:

- To find out whether store atmospherics do influence a customer's mood and feelings.

The results presented in Chapter 4, indicate a positive correlation between feelings and mood and many of the atmospherics variables, meaning that the objective was met.

- To explore whether a customer's time spent in an outlet is influenced by store atmospheric.

Chapter Four further showed that there was a correlation between the time customers spent in an outlet and many of the variables, which means that this objective was also met.

- To discover whether store atmospherics have the ability to impact on a consumer's intent to revisit the store.

There was also a correlation between customer's intention to revisit the outlet and other variables, meaning that the third objective was met.

5.4 Evaluation of Hypotheses

Quantitative data was collected to address the hypotheses. These hypotheses express proposed relationships between the independent (store atmospherics) and dependent variables (feeling and mood, time spent in an outlet, intention to revisit the outlet) identified from the literature review.

H1: Store atmospherics can have a positive influence on a customer's mood and feelings.

As shown in Section 4.4.2 a positive correlation was shown between most store atmospherics factors and feelings and mood. Hypothesis 1 was therefore accepted.

H2: Store atmospherics can influence the time a customer spends in an outlet.

As shown in Section 4.4.3 a correlation was found between most store atmospherics factors and time spent in store. Thus, hypothesis 2 was accepted.

H3: Store atmospherics can positively influence a customer's intention to revisit the outlet.

As shown in Section 4.4.4 a correlation was found between most store atmospherics factors and the intention to revisit the store. Hypothesis 3 was therefore accepted.

However, as mentioned earlier, from analysis and revision based on the factor analysis and the reliability analysis, a new, revised conceptual model of the factors was developed. In Chapter Four, various relationships between the factors (independent variables) and the dependent variables were explored. A fourth hypothesis was consequently developed:

H4 Store atmospherics can positively influence a customer's positive image of a store.

As indicated in Section 4.4.1, a correlation was found between most store atmospherics factors and positive store image. Thus, hypothesis 4 was accepted.

5.5 Conclusions

The study provides knowledge about the role of store atmospherics and how they relate to customer satisfaction. Furthermore, the study aspired to provide a comprehensive interpretation of the area of store atmospherics in relation to customer satisfaction. How these goals were achieved is discussed in the sections that follow.

5.5.1 Conclusions about Chapters

This dissertation comprises five chapters. Chapter 1 offered an overview of the study and included a description of background of the study, a statement of the research problem, the purpose of the study, its objectives and hypotheses. Relevant ethical considerations of the study were also covered, and some critical concepts adumbrated. The chapter concluded with an account of the limitations and delimitations of the study.

Chapter 2 comprised the review of published literature on the topic of store atmospherics in relation to customer satisfaction. The chapter was segmented according to store atmospherics factors, which included ambient, design and social factors. Customer satisfaction components were also addressed in the light of previous research. The points of discussion were in line with the hypotheses and the purpose of the study.

The research methodology of the study was addressed in Chapter 3, with attention paid to the research frame, philosophy, approach and strategy. The method of data collection was described. The population of interest was identified and analysis was delineated and justified.

Chapter 4 presented the data analysis and findings. The quantitative data was coded and presented in themes. The chapter dealt with the response rate, the population sample demographics, descriptive statistics, reliability testing and frequencies. The result of the hypotheses testing of the study was reported.

The current and last chapter, Chapter 5, draws conclusions and makes recommendations on the basis of the previous chapters. Chapter 5 reminds readers of the central argument and contributes an evaluation and interpretation of the study. The limitations and implications of the study are also discussed in this chapter. Recommendations and suggestions for future study also form part of the discussion.

5.5.2 Conclusions about the Research Problem

The research problem, as stated in Chapter 1, is whether and how store atmospherics influence the level of customer satisfaction in retail outlets in Cape Town.

According to Zeynep and Nilgun (2011), various studies have discovered that, with today's rapid pace of change and improvement, store atmosphere has turned out to be the focal point in determining store success. Retail stores therefore devote their time to discovering creative store environment interventions using various blends of incitements.

Ertekin, Bayraktaroglu and Gurkaynak (2014) note that the majority of previous studies have examined a single dimension of store atmosphere, and studies including multiple dimensions of physical atmosphere in consumption settings are few in number. They also observe that there has not been much research on how shopping motives may affect the assessment of atmospheric cues.

In addressing the research problem, the study has explored different dimensions of store atmosphere, adding to the existing body of knowledge. The different dimensions of store atmospherics explored included ambient, design and social factors. To intensify engagement with the research problem, the study focused on the relationships and correlations between store atmospherics and customer satisfaction, store atmospherics and feelings/mood, relations between store atmosphere, customers' mood, satisfaction and purchasing behaviour, store atmospherics and time spent in outlet, and store atmospherics and intention to revisit.

From the summary evaluation of the hypotheses discussed in Section 5.4, it can be seen that the study has succeeded in providing information to address the research problem, namely whether and how store atmospherics influence the level of customer satisfaction in retail outlets in Cape Town.

5.6 Recommendations

The following recommendations were derived from the research findings and the (qualitative) responses from respondents. They should help retailers to plan and strategise all the ambient, design and social factors of their stores. This will promote customer satisfaction and improve relations between the retailers and their customers.

From the summary evaluation of the hypotheses in Section 5.4, it can be seen that the study has succeeded in providing information relevant to the research problem, namely whether and how store atmospherics influence the level of customer satisfaction in retail outlets in Cape Town.

5.6.1 Recommendations for Retailers

As much as Andersson, et al. (2012) argue that some customers are negatively reactive to background music, retailers should take note, as Zeeshan and Obaid (2008) suggest, that background music has the ability to produce calm and/or buoyant customer behaviour in retail settings. Furthermore, it should be noted by retailers, that background music in stores is ideally used to influence and increase the customers' shopping appetite so that they spend more time in the outlet (Graves, 2010).

The majority of the respondents felt positive about lighting in stores, which is why the retailers should first ensure that the store is highly visible, from all corners, passages and corridors. A perfect store ambience cannot be fully achieved unless there is sufficient and appropriate lighting in the store. Therefore it is advisable that retailers should outsource this requirement to experts in the field.

As far as cleanliness is concerned, Yun & Good (2007) assert that regardless of time of day or circumstances, retailers must never compromise on the hygiene of the store.

They should always maintain a clean environment in their stores and ensure a hygienically sound environment. In this regard, management should always follow up when delegating cleaning duties. Furthermore, there should be a cleaning schedule for cleaners, to be signed off by management. Upon signing off the schedule, management should undertake a floor walk and tick the check list.

As for the question of flooring and product display, the floor layout of the store should be used to maximise returns. The ease of navigation for shoppers to every corner and all sides of the store depends on the effectiveness of the floor display. Retailers must position racks and other movable shelves in prime spots.

Although colour was deleted from the variables after the factor analysis, the literature and the respondents have indicated its importance. Therefore, retailers should choose colours that entice customers to buy and spend more time in the outlet. Merchandise planners should be sensitive to the distribution of colour. They should select colours that will be

appealing and lure customer to buy and enjoy the environment. In the same breath, the dominant colours should be those that reflect the retailer's values and guiding philosophy (Tornetta, *et al.*, 2014).

With regard to the systematic arrangement of products, retailers should strategically choose an excellent product mix presentation, with complementing products on shelves. Furthermore, to present merchandise in stores effectively, retailers should group products according to colour, country and size (Bergsma, 2005).

It is recommended that signage in the form of tags should be intensified in stores to increase customers' awareness and offer them more information about the product. Display innovations should be created to motivate customers to look at the products more critically.

Although most respondents (58.2%) agreed that employees have sufficient knowledge of their duties and tasks, service can be improved by training employees, shelf packers in particular, on product knowledge, so that customers do not have to rely solely upon merchandisers for information.

The majority of respondents (60.1%) indicated that pleasant atmospheric conditions would induce them to spend more time in the supermarket. Therefore, it is the retailer's duty to create an inviting and pleasant shopping atmosphere to ensure repeat purchasing and customer loyalty. Babin, Darden and Griffin (2004) believe that a pleasing and attractive environment persuades customers to linger longer in any store. With such an atmosphere, there is a great likelihood of creating loyalty among customers.

As far as patronage intentions are concerned, it is important that retailers utilise all atmospheric cues in a store, as through these they have the power and ability to create an exceptional store environment, to increase customer's likelihood of buying and to encourage recurring store visits. When implemented well, store atmosphere will ultimately amplify the consumer's patronage intent (Mitchell, Oppewal & Beverland, 2009).

5.6.2 Recommendations from Findings

The recommendations in Table 5.1, below, are derived from the research findings. They seek to address specific issues pertaining to pleasant feelings and mood, time spent in store and intentions to revisit the store, as well as the newly developed variable relating to the customer's positive image of the store.

Table 5.1 Findings and Recommendations for retailers

<u>Store Atmospheric Factors</u>	<u>Variables and Findings</u>	<u>Recommendations</u>
Ambient Factors	<p>Colour</p> <p>53.6% of the respondents agreed that the outlet's colour scheme does create a positive image in their minds.</p>	<p>Retailers should aim at lively complementing colours in their stores to create an appealing atmosphere and positive mood for customers.</p>
	<p>Music</p> <p>More than 70% of respondents shared similar views with regard to music, saying that listening to music creates a relaxed atmosphere while they are shopping.</p>	<p>Retailers should play happy and relevant music to inspire customers to linger even more in the stores and encourage repeat purchasing.</p>
	<p>Lighting</p> <p>54.1% of the respondents also agreed that the overall light in the store was sufficient.</p>	<p>Retailers should have an understanding of the importance and effective uses of lighting. Ideally, they should outsource lighting to professionals and create a business cycle to maintain and refurbish lighting.</p>
	<p>Cleanliness</p> <p>Almost 80% (46.6+33.2) of the respondents also shared similar views with regard to cleanliness, namely that cleanliness and tidiness in the store increases my well-being and comfort.</p>	<p>A clean environment should be maintained at all times. There should be cleaners on the sales floor all the time. Management should delegate and follow up to ensure a clean environment.</p>
Design Factors	<p>Flooring</p> <p>About 83.7% of the respondents prefer to shop only in a retail outlet that has ample space to move in, with broad aisles and proper layout.</p>	<p>Sales floor must be managed effectively and avoid clutter, through creating an appealing floor merchandising effect. Floor space needs to be effectively managed so that customers can browse and shop freely in the aisle without any congestion.</p>

	<p>Product Display</p> <p>Over 60% of respondents agreed that the creative and systematic arrangement of products in the retail outlet helps them select products.</p>	<p>Product categories should be merchandised in accordance to the planogram, ought to be based on customers' aspirations and desires. Retailers should conduct thorough research so as to allow for creative and systematic arrangement of products in the retail outlet.</p>
Social Factors	<p>Point-of-Sale</p> <p>82% of the respondents claimed that the more information they have about the product through display and signage the more likely they will buy it.</p>	<p>Retailers should design POS material that is in accordance with the store's theme. The POS should also be inviting to lure customers already in the store. POS should be exciting and different for every cycle.</p>
	<p>Store Signage</p> <p>53.1% of the respondents agreed that signage in the form of tags increases awareness and offers them more information about the product (e.g. price, material), attracts their attention and navigates them towards the merchandise.</p>	<p>As a result of effective store signage, customers should find it easy to browse the store. Retailers should maintain simple and easy-to-read store signage. Store signage in the form of directions should be clear and uncomplicated.</p>
	<p>Employee Behaviour</p> <p>58.3% of the respondents agree that employees have sufficient knowledge of their duties and tasks.</p>	<p>Employees must appear neat and presentable at all times. They should act like ambassadors of the store and carry the brand with dignity and self-respect. Just as respondents advised, send them for training on customer service. Employees should be advised on the importance of customer courtesy in the stores. During their induction, employees' product knowledge should be intensified before they assume their duties.</p>

5.7 Contribution to the Field of Knowledge

These above-mentioned findings seek to provide practical implications for the retail industry, to align retailers with the atmospheric factors so as to strengthen and reinforce customer satisfaction. Furthermore, these findings can become the retailers' strategic objectives for sustainability and competitive advantage. Earlier, Ertekin, Bayraktaroglu and Gurkaynak (2014) were cited as mentioning that a number of preceding studies have, somewhat, neglected other dimensions of store atmospherics. As such there has been a shortage of multi dimension studies in the consumption settings. This study thus supplements the theoretical implications of the multi dimension approach of atmospheric cues. Hence, with this approach, the body of knowledge about the retail industry is augmented.

5.8 Limitations and Directions for Future Research

It is recommended that a qualitative study be conducted for further research. A qualitative approach will allow the researcher to probe for more information about the influence of store atmospherics on customer satisfaction. This is due to the fact that it was observed that respondents wanted to comment further and discuss issues arising from this research, but were prevented from doing so by the structured questionnaire.

Data was collected only in Gugulethu, Khayelitsha and Cape Town. These areas are located in the lower-middle income setting, hence the research findings. These findings may thus not be a reflection of the entire population. Had opinions been obtained from higher income respondents as well, the findings might have been different. Therefore, it is suggested that a similar study be conducted on both lower-middle and higher income groups.

5.9 Closing Summary

This research study highlighted the influence of store atmospherics on customer satisfaction in grocery retailer stores in Cape Town. The focus was on aspects of store ambience and how they are translated into the behaviour of consumers.

During the literature study, it was discovered that the majority of studies have covered only a single store atmospheric stimulus, disregarding combinations of stimuli in developing universal pronouncements on the retail environment (Zeynep & Nilgun, 2011). However, this study has explored different dimensions of store atmosphere, adding to the existing body of knowledge in this field.

This study collected data via a survey questionnaire, administered to consumers in grocery retail outlets in Cape Town. The conclusions reached and recommendations made are intended to help retailers improve their store atmosphere and customer satisfaction levels.

The study will give retailers particular insight into how consumers in the middle and lower end of the market view and respond to store atmosphere. In closing, it is clear that retailers need always to stay abreast of store atmospheric innovations so as to remain competitive in the commercial context of Cape Town.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A:
Questionnaire Design & Derivation Table

Q No.	Construct	Concept	Variable	Question	Hypotheses	Reference
	Store Atmospherics	Ambient Factors	Colour			
24.				The store's corporate identity colour is fine.	H1	Hussain, R. & Ali, M. 2015:38
25.				The outlet colour does not create a positive image in my mind.	H1	Hussain, R. & Ali, M. 2015:38
26.				The colour of retail outlet creates a positive perception in my mind.	H1	Hussain, R. & Ali, M. 2015:38
			Music			
27.				Listening to music creates a relaxed atmosphere while I am shopping.	H1	Hussain, R. & Ali, M. 2015:38
28.				Music in store motivates me to buy more.	H1	Hussain, R. & Ali, M. 2015:38
29.				Pleasant environment created by music makes me spend more time in the store.	H2	Hussain, R. & Ali, M. 2015:38
30.				The adequate rhythm of the background music makes me comfortable.	H1	Hussain, R. & Ali, M. 2015:38
			Lighting			
31.				The light in the aisles do not allow me to evaluate the quality of the products.	H1	Han, C.R., Sher Li, K., Yen, L.B & Fei, Y.S. 2011:89-94
32.				The light at the corners of the store (more hidden areas) is sufficient.	H1	Han, C.R., Sher Li, K., Yen, L.B & Fei, Y.S. 2011:89-94
33.				The overall light in the store is sufficient.	H1	Han, C.R., Sher Li, K., Yen, L.B & Fei, Y.S. 2011:89-94
34.				Different lighting used in each area inside the store is important.	H1	Han, C.R., Sher Li, K., Yen, L.B & Fei, Y.S. 2011:89-94
35.				The greater the clarity, the greater my well-being and comfort.	H1	Han, C.R., Sher Li, K., Yen, L.B & Fei, Y.S. 2011:89-94
			Cleanliness			
37.				The shelves are not clean.	H1	Han, C.R., Sher Li, K., Yen,

						L.B & Fei, Y.S. 2011:89-94
38.				The entire store is clean.	H1	Han, C.R., Sher Li, K., Yen, L.B & Fei, Y.S. 2011:89-94
39.				The products are tidy and not damaged.	H1	Han, C.R., Sher Li, K., Yen, L.B & Fei, Y.S. 2011:89-94
40.				The cleanliness and tidiness of the store increases my well-being and comfort.	H1	Han, C.R., Sher Li, K., Yen, L.B. & Fei, Y.S. 2011:89-94
		Design Factors	Flooring & Displays			
36.				The store's floor is clean.	H1	Han, C.R., Sher Li, K., Yen, L.B & Fei, Y.S. 2011:89-94
22.				I found floor adverts to be catchy and informative.	H1	Das, S.P. & Das, S.S. 2015:200-201.
23.				The floor adverts changed my attitude towards the product.	H1	Das, S.P. & Das, S.S. 2015:200-201.
21.				I prefer to shop only in a retail outlet which has good space to move in with broad aisles and proper layout.	H1	Miasm, H.K.2013:413-415
			Product Displays			
14.				The clear shelf information increases my well-being and comfort.	H1	Han, C.R., Sher Li, K., Yen, L.B & Fei, Y.S. 2011:89-94
15.				The creative and systematic arrangement of products in the retail outlet helps me in the selection of product.	H1	Hussain, R. & Ali, M. 2015:38
16.				Product arranged according to shades, colour, design and size does not attract my attention nor does it help me in making a right choice.	H1	Miasm, H.K.2013:413-415
17.				I think that space allocated to the display of merchandise affects my buying behaviour.	H1	Sharma, B. & Garg, N. 2015:5
		Social Factors	Store Signage			
20.				Signage in the form of tags increases	H1	Miasm, H.K.2013:413-415

				awareness and offers me more information about the product (e.g. price, material) and attracts my attention and navigates me towards the merchandise.		
			In-store Displays			
18.				The more information I have got about the product through display and signage the more likely I will buy it.	H1	Miasm, H.K.2013:413-415
19.				Display motivates me to look at the products more critically.	H1	Hussain, R. & Ali, M. 2015:38
49.			Employee Behaviour			
41.				The employees are efficient.	H1	Sharma, B. & Garg, N. 2015:5
42.				The employees have sufficient knowledge of their duties and tasks.	H1	Sharma, B. & Garg, N. 2015:5
43.				I don't think that the behaviour of employees in the super market affects my buying behaviour.	H1	Sharma, B. & Garg, N. 2015:5
44.				The employees provide good quality service to me.	H1	Han, C.R., Sher Li, K., Yen, L.B & Fei, Y.S. 2011:89-94
45.				The appearance/neatness of employee is important.	H1	Han, C.R., Sher Li, K., Yen, L.B & Fei, Y.S. 2011:89-94
46.				The politeness of employee is important.	H1	Han, C.R., Sher Li, K., Yen, L.B & Fei, Y.S. 2011:89-94
8.	Customer Satisfaction		Pleasant feeling and mood			
5.				Pleasant atmospheric conditions do not arouse my feeling of "pleasure" in the supermarket.	H1	
6.				A pleasant atmospheric condition makes me want to spend more time in the supermarket.	H2	Sharma, B. & Garg, N. 2015:5
7.				Pleasant atmospheric conditions	H3	Sharma, B. & Garg, N. 2015:5

				make me want to do unplanned shopping in supermarket.		
8.				Pleasant atmospheric conditions make me want to indulge in browsing at the items displayed in store.	H1	Sharma, B. & Garg, N. 2015:5
4.				How likely would you be to recommend this outlet to a friend or colleague?	H3	Smith, S.M. 2016:7
			Time Spent and Patronage Intentions			
10.				I would like to shop longer in the store.	H2	Hussain, R. & Ali, M. 2015:38
29.				Pleasant environment created by music makes me spend more time in the store.	H2	Hussain, R. & Ali, M. 2015:38
12.				I would not like to repurchase in the future.	H3	Hussain, R. & Ali, M. 2015:38
9.				A good ambience with sensory retailing relieves stress, makes my day happy and makes me a fun shopper.	H1	Miasm, H.K.2013:413-415

APPENDIX B:
Ethical Clearance Certificate

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Office of the Chairperson Research Ethics Committee	Faculty: BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES
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At a meeting of the Faculty's Research Ethics Committee on 02 November 2017, Ethics Approval was granted to Richard Ndengane (208013582) for research activities related to the **MTech: Retail Business Management at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology**

Title of dissertation/thesis/project:	<p>THE INFLUENCE OF STORE ATMOSPHERICS ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AT SELECTED RETAIL OUTLETS IN CAPE TOWN</p> <p>Lead Researcher/Supervisor: Prof R B Mason Co-Supervisor: Mr. M Mutize</p>
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Comment:

Decision: APPROVED

	02 November 2017
Signed: Chairperson: Research Ethics Committee	Date

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APPENDIX C:
Turnitin Plagiarism Report

The Influence of Store Atmospherics on Customer Satisfaction at Selected Grocery Retail Outlets in Cape Town

by Richard Ndengane

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APPENDIX D: Questionnaire

Section A: Customer Satisfaction

(Please place an “X” or a tick “√” in the appropriate box, only one answer is possible).

1.	How often do you visit this store?	
1.1	Everyday	
1.2	Once a week	
1.3	Twice a week	
1.4	Every two weeks	
1.5	Once a month	

2.	How much time do you spend in the store?	
2.1	Less than 30 minutes	
2.2	Between 30 minutes and 1 hour	
2.3	Between 1 and 2 hours	
2.4	2 hours and more	

3.	Did the service meet your expectations?	
3.1	Yes	
3.2	No	
3.3	If not, why not?	

4. How likely would you be to recommend this outlet to a friend or colleague? Please tick “√” or place an “X” above your preferred number.

Less Likely 1 2 3 4 5 Extremely Likely

Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements. (Please place an "X" or a tick "√" in the appropriate box, only one answer is possible)		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Pleasant Feeling and Mood						
5.	Pleasant atmospheric conditions do not arouse my feeling of "pleasure" in the supermarket.					
6.	A pleasant atmospheric condition makes me want to spend more time in the supermarket.					
7.	Pleasant atmospheric conditions make me want to do unplanned shopping in supermarket.					
8.	Pleasant atmospheric conditions make me want to indulge in browsing at the items displayed in store.					

Section B: Customer Patronage Intentions

(Please place an "X" or a tick "√" in the appropriate box, only one answer is possible).

9.	A good ambience with sensory retailing relieves stress, makes my day happy and makes me a fun shopper.	
9.1	Yes	
9.2	No	
9.3	If no, why?	

Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements. (Please place an "X" or a tick "√" in the appropriate box, only one answer is possible)		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Customer Patronage Intention						
10.	I would like to shop longer in the store.					
11.	I would like to visit the store again.					
12.	I would not like to repurchase in the future.					

	Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements. (Please place an “X” or a tick “√” in the appropriate box, only one answer is possible)	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	Colour					
24.	The store’s corporate identity colour is fine.					
25.	The outlet’s colour scheme does not create a positive image in my mind.					
26.	The colours of the retail outlet contribute to a positive store atmosphere.					

	Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements. (Please place an “X” or a tick “√” in the appropriate box, only one answer is possible)	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	Music					
27.	Listening to music creates a relaxed atmosphere while I am shopping.					
28.	Music in store motivates me to buy more.					
29.	Pleasant environment created by music makes me spend more time in the store.					
30.	The adequate rhythm of the background music makes me comfortable.					

	Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements(Please place an “X” or a tick “√” in the appropriate box, only one answer is possible)	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	Lighting					
31.	The light in the aisles do not allow me to evaluate the quality of the products.					
32.	The light at the corners of the store (more hidden areas) is sufficient.					
33.	The overall light in the store is sufficient.					
34.	Different lighting used in each area inside the store is important.					
35.	The greater the clarity, the greater my well-being and comfort.					

Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements. (Please place an “X” or a tick “√” in the appropriate box, only one answer is possible)		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Cleanliness						
36.	The store’s floor is clean.					
37.	The shelves are not clean.					
38.	The entire store is clean.					
39.	The products are tidy and not damaged.					
40.	The cleanliness and tidiness of the store increases my well-being and comfort.					

Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements. (Please place an “X” or a tick “√” in the appropriate box, only one answer is possible)		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Employee Behaviour						
41.	The employees are efficient.					
42.	The employees have sufficient knowledge of their duties and tasks.					
43.	I don’t think that the behaviour of employees in the super market affects my buying behaviour.					
44.	The employees provide good quality service to me.					
45.	The appearance/neatness of employee is important.					
46.	The politeness of employee is important.					

SECTION D: Demographic Profile

(Please place an “X” or a tick “√” in the appropriate box, only one answer is possible)

47.	What is your gender?	
47.1	Male	
47.2	Female	

48.	What is your marital status?	
48.1	Single	
48.2	Married	
48.3	Divorced	
48.4	Widowed	
48.5	Other: <i>(please specify)</i>	

49.	In which age category do you belong?	
49.1	18 – 29 years	
49.2	30 – 39 years	
49.3	40 – 49 years	
49.4	50 – 59 years	
49.5	60+ years	

50.	What is your monthly Income?	
50.1	No Income	
50.2	Below R3 000	
50.3	R4 000-R7 000	
50.4	R8 000-R12 000	
50.5	Above R13 000	

Any Suggestions/Comments (Optional)

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Thank you again for taking your time to complete this questionnaire! It is really appreciated.

APPENDIX E:
Informed Consent



The Influence of Store Atmospherics on Customer Satisfaction in Selected Grocery Retail Outlets at Cape Town.

Dear Participant,

I am currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Retail Business Management at Cape Peninsula University of Technology, under the above-mentioned topic. I kindly request your assistance with some information to be able to complete my study by completing the enclosed questionnaire which will take approximately fifteen to twenty (15-20) minutes of your time. Your responses and suggestions will go a long way in enhancing the quality of research and will contribute to the further development of the concept of Store Atmospherics in relation to Customer Satisfaction.

The information you provide will be handled with strict confidentiality and will be used purely for academic purpose in this study. There are no risks to participating in this study, and you are at liberty to partake or reject the exercise. If you have any questions regarding this survey, please call my supervisor, Dr. M. Mutize on 021 460 3411.

Directions: Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each of the following questions and statements. Please place an "X" or a tick "√" in the appropriate box and give only one answer, and comment where requested.

Thank you in advance for your co-operation in this research.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Yours sincerely
Richard Ndengane
Stud. No. 206013582

APPENDIX F:
Nonparametric Correlations
(Spearman's rho)

		Pleasant Feeling and Mood	Floor Adverts	Music	Lighting	Cleanliness	Employee Efficient Service	Employee Appearance	Positive Image of Store	Customer's Time Spent in an Outlet	Customer's Intention to Revisit the Outlet.
Pleasant Feeling and Mood	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.274**	.262**	.260**	.250**	.287**	.159**	-.197**	.365**	.334**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.002	.000	.000	.000
Floor Adverts	Correlation Coefficient	.274**	1.000	.208**	.406**	.256**	.211**	.038	-.174**	.314**	.203**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.456	.001	.000	.000
Music	Correlation Coefficient	.262**	.208**	1.000	.243**	.246**	.193**	.321**	-.195**	.321**	.253**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Lighting	Correlation Coefficient	.260**	.406**	.243**	1.000	.331**	.189**	.189**	-.207**	.245**	.230**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Cleanliness	Correlation Coefficient	.250**	.256**	.246**	.331**	1.000	.375**	.142**	-.056	.271**	.224**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.	.000	.005	.275	.000	.000
Employee Efficient Service	Correlation Coefficient	.287**	.211**	.193**	.189**	.375**	1.000	.201**	-.188**	.279**	.269**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.000
Employee Appearance	Correlation Coefficient	.159**	.038	.321**	.189**	.142**	.201**	1.000	-.183**	.090	.171**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.456	.000	.000	.005	.000	.	.000	.078	.001
Positive Image of Store	Correlation Coefficient	-.197**	-.174**	-.195**	-.207**	-.056	-.188**	-.183**	1.000	-.221**	-.222**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.001	.000	.000	.275	.000	.000	.	.000	.000
Customer's Time Spent in an Outlet	Correlation Coefficient	.365**	.314**	.321**	.245**	.271**	.279**	.090	-.221**	1.000	.445**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.078	.000	.	.000
Customer's Intention to Revisit the Outlet.	Correlation Coefficient	.334**	.203**	.253**	.230**	.224**	.269**	.171**	-.222**	.445**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.001	.000	.000	.

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

In relation to Table 4.6, the four dependent variables are all significant ($p = \leq 0.005$) to all related independent variables.

APPENDIX G:
Editor's Certificate

Epsilon Editing

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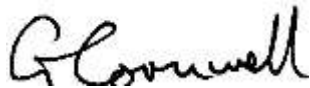
dgncornwell@gmail.com

tel. 084-9897977

16 July 2019

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This serves to confirm that the M.Tech thesis by Richard Ndengane, "The influence of store atmospherics on customer satisfaction at selected grocery retail outlets in Cape Town," has been edited to my satisfaction for language and presentation.



Professor D G N Cornwell (PhD)