

# Measurement of the Demographic Inclination towards Store Image

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## Key Words:

1. Demographics
2. Store Image
3. Specialty Store
4. Shopping Mall
5. Shoppers Pune

## Abstract

This study was aimed to measure the demographic inclination towards the store image of shoppers while visiting mall based specialty stores. The study yielded rich research results. Most notably, a significant relationship has been found between demographic characteristics viz. gender, age group, education, occupation and household income of respondents and inclination towards store image. Further, Results depict a high degree of demographic inclination towards store image among respondents. A good store image lures customers to make a purchase and impulse purchase too, spend more time & money in the store, revisit the store and also maintain customer interest, increase frequency to visit the store, motivate customers to spread positive word of mouth. Therefore, a store needs to be simple to navigate; it must appeal to shopper's sensory perceptions and must create a sense of belonging, a sense of relationship, a sense of security or assurance and a sense of pleasure in the shopping experience in order to flourish, thrive, and germinate by laps & bounce in the Indian retail market.

## INTRODUCTION

The store is most important mode of communication between a retailer and its shoppers. It is the place where all the sales happen or not to happen. The store is also an important extension of the retailer's image and plays a critical role in reinforcing desired store image.

Defining store image is far from easy (Sewell, 1974); store image is as a set of attributes based upon evaluation of those stores attributes, deemed important by consumers. The interplay of tangible and intangible elements and the customers overall interpretation of them, based upon previous knowledge and experiences, are widely accepted to determine store image (Hirschman, 1981; Marzursky and Jacoby 1986). For Levy et al. (2008) a store image is the way a store is defined in a shopper's mind. Store image is the overall perception; the consumer has of the store on different salient attributes (Bloemer and Ruyter 1998; Dunne et al., 2007). The mixture of tangible and intangible dimensions and the complexity of meanings and relationships attributed to retailers by customers have long been recognized (Myers, 1960; Arons, 1961; Weale, 1961; Rich and Portis, 1964; Kunkel and Berry, 1968; Perry and Norton, 1970; May, 1974; Marks, 1976).

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The store image is based on the store's physical characteristics, retail mix, and a set of psychological attributes. Physical characteristics of a store include the exterior and interior of the store, comprising internal layout, methods of display, and atmospheres such as lighting, sounds, smells, and colors (Kotler, 1974). Retail mix comprises the assortment of product, services, stock; promotional activities; time, place & possession utilities. While psychological attributes of a store affect the consumer's sensory perceptions and makes him relate to the store in a particular manner (Pradhan, 2009).

As India is a country, where, the huge diversity has been seen in demographics of the shoppers. Shoppers live in a complex social environment. The types of products and services they buy may be influenced by the culture they grew up in, by demographic factors such as their age and income, by their social status, by their house hold makeup, by the groups they belong to and by the people they know (Gupta, 2007). The present study has been carried out with an objective to measure the demographic inclination towards the store image of visitors/shoppers while visiting mall based specialty stores. The demographic inclination towards the store image also differs due to this diversity in India. This study also measures this difference. Before inhabiting on the hypothesis of the research, a brief review of literature has been taken.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Mayer (1989) suggested that store image has been one of the main topics in retailing. Literally number of details is applied in a successful store image, and all must be



carefully coordinated to create a cohesive, targeted store image that reflects the retailer's mission (Dunne et al., 2007). Pan and Zinkhan (2006) in their study concluded that store image and attributes strongly affects the store visit frequency. Creating an image depends heavily on a retailer's atmosphere, which is comprised of all of its physical characteristics, such as the store exterior, the general interior, layout, and display (Berman and Evans, 2008). Store image is the overall perception the consumer has of the store on different salient attributes (Bloemer and Ruyter 1998; Dunne et al., 2007). Retail-related factors and the image influence attractiveness most significantly (Teller and Jonathan, 2010). Store image has a positive impact only on overall trust in the store.

Dunne et al. (2007) opines that high profit retailers, whether operating traditional stores or virtual stores, place a heavy emphasis on designing their physical facilities or website so as to enhance image and increase productivity. O'Cass and Grace (2008) explain that little effort has, however, been devoted to understanding the effects of consumer image-store image congruency. Image congruency has not only been shown to be valuable in relation to product choices, but has also been shown to contribute to our understanding of retail store choice and preferences. Their study examines the role of self-store image congruence in the above relationships. The findings indicate that the effects are stronger for those individuals experiencing high self-store image congruence.

Newman and Cullion (2002) believed that the key to success in retailing is to create a store image that is congruent with the life styles and expectations of the consumers that the retailer is targeting. Retailers try to increase the number of impulse purchase through store image, product displays, package design and sales (Hoyer and MacInnis, 1997). Sherman et al. (1997) found a positive effect of arousal in a mall based specialty store due to store image. Store image is critical component in store choice and store loyalty (Arons, 1961). Well experienced professional interior designers are often engaged for creating a good retail environment for luxury products to create good store image (Kumar, 2009).

A number of studies however point to the issues associated with implementing image and the dissonance which may exist between management and consumer perceptions of store image. Marcus (1972) examined image variation across stores within a chain. Oppewal and Timmermans (1997) explored management perceptions of store image in a competitive context. Others, have compared management or corporate views of image with customer views, highlighting the "gap" in perceptions which often

exists (McClure and Ryan, 1968; Pathak et al., 1974; Samli and Lincoln, 1989; Keaveny and Hunt, 1992).

## RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

On the basis of literature review and the objectives of the study, the following hypothesis has been formulated-

- H1- Demographics of shoppers has significant relationship with inclination towards store image.
- H2- Degree of demographic inclination towards store image differs to shoppers.

## METHODS & METHODOLOGY

Both exploratory and descriptive researches were used in compiling this whole study. While exploratory research helped us in developing the hypotheses through the analysis of secondary data, descriptive research was used in order to study the demographic inclination of shoppers towards store image while visiting mall based specialty stores. Our study was based on both secondary and primary data. Secondary data played a vital role to review of literature, formulate hypothesis and questionnaire preparation. It was accumulated from books, journals, magazines, websites and other published sources available, references are cited for the same. Utilizing the information from the secondary data, a structured questionnaire was prepared for respondents to accumulate the primary data, comprising close ended questions.

The questionnaire was tested by conducting a pilot survey of a few respondents selected on random basis. Utilizing the insight from pilot study, questionnaire was modified for the final study. This primary data was accumulated from shoppers of mall based specialty stores in Pune city. Survey method was employed to carry out this study through printed questionnaire. The questionnaire was administrated personally using face to face method in order to improve response rate. Nominal and ordinal scales were utilized to take the responses of respondents regarding demographic variables while Likert's (1970) five point scale (basically an ordinal scale) was used to take the responses regarding importance of store image on importance scale ranging from very important to not at all important with the middle of the scale identified by the response alternative neither important nor unimportant. Cross tabulation has been utilized to represent the responses of respondents.

Respondents were selected on random basis when they visited mall based specialty stores on week days. The questionnaires were distributed simultaneously among 200 respondents in January and February 2012. Survey was done in all seven days but we specially surveyed on Saturday and Sunday to get more positive respondents. For

the purpose of this survey, Random Sampling of Probability Sampling Technique has been employed as it gives every unit of the population a known and equal probability of being selected.

#### OBSERVATIONS

Simple percentage method has been used to analyze the demographic variables of respondents. The demographic characteristics of the respondents for this study are presented in Table 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.

#### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Chi Square Test of Independence is applied to test the hypothesis H1. Table 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 also delineate that chi square calculated at 4, 16, 16, 12, and 16 degree of freedom respectively is greater than tabulated value. Therefore hypothesis H1 is accepted at 5% level of significance in case of demographic characteristics viz. gender, age group, education, occupation and household

income of respondents and inclination towards store image. But Table 4 depicts that chi square calculated at 4 degree of freedom and 50% level of significance is less than tabulated value. Hence hypothesis H1 is rejected in case of demographic characteristic viz. marital status. To test the hypothesis H2 Kolmogorov-Smirnov One Sample test has been employed. It is similar to Chi Square Test, test of goodness of fit. Table 7 delineates calculated Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) 'D' values. As the calculated 'D' exceeds the critical value of 0.115 at of 5%, hence the hypothesis H2 is accepted.

#### CONCLUSIONS & IMPLICATIONS

Most of the shoppers/visitors of mall based specialty stores were youth, highly educated, having household income of more than 1 lakh per annum. It is concluded from the results that females are more inclined towards store image than male shoppers. Shoppers belongs to age group of 21

Table 1: Cross tabulation of Gender of respondents and importance of store image

Gender	Very Important		Important		Neither Important Nor Unimportant		Unimportant		Not at all Important		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	28	14.0	34	17.0	33	16.5	11	05.5	06	03.0	112	56.0
Female	30	15.0	42	21.0	15	07.5	01	00.5	00	00.0	88	44.0
Total	58	29.0	76	38.0	48	24.0	12	06.0	06	03.0	200	100
Chi Square Test of Independence												
Chi Square Calculated			df		Level of significance			Chi Square Tabulated				
19.392			4		5%			9.488				

Table 2: Cross tabulation of Age group of respondents and importance of store image

Age (Years)	Very Important		Important		Neither Important Nor Unimportant		Unimportant		Not at all Important		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
< 21	05	02.5	05	02.5	01	0.50	00	00.0	00	00.0	11	05.5
21-30	26	13.0	32	16.0	05	02.5	00	00.0	00	00.0	63	31.5
31-40	17	08.5	19	09.5	11	05.5	01	05.0	00	00.0	48	24.0
41-50	09	04.5	15	07.5	14	07.0	05	02.5	00	00.0	43	21.5
> 50	01	0.50	05	02.5	17	08.5	06	03.0	06	03.0	35	17.5
Total	58	29.0	76	38.0	48	24.0	12	06.0	06	03.0	200	100
Chi Square Test of Independence												
Chi Square Calculated			df		Level of significance			Chi Square Tabulated				
83.789			16		5%			26.296				

to 40 are more oriented towards store image than others. Highly educated shoppers give more importance to store image. Single shoppers are more inclined than married shoppers towards store image. Students and house wives (others) are more oriented towards store image. Shoppers belongs to more than 3 lakhs per annum household income group are more inclined towards store image.

The result of the study indicated a significant relationship between demographic characteristics viz. gender, age group, education, occupation and income of respondents and inclination towards store design. But the demographic characteristic marital status has no significant relationship with inclination towards store design. Furthermore, Results depict a high degree of demographic inclination towards store design.

Today people in India are not viewing retailing as just

merchandising. Now they expect much more each time they step into a store. While insisting on value for money and cost effectiveness, today consumers want a better shopping experience, recreation, friendly interactions, safe & healthy environment, better services and a wide choice of products. Therefore, it is better to create good store image in consumer mind. A good store image entices customers to make a purchase, spend more time & money, revisit, impulse purchase, and also maintain customer interest, increase frequency to visit the store, motivate customers to spread positive word of mouth. From shopper's perspective, a store needs to be simple to navigate; it must appeal to shopper's sensory perceptions and must create a sense of belonging, a sense of relationship, a sense of security or assurance and a sense of pleasure in the shopping experience.

Table 3: Cross tabulation of Education of respondents and importance of store image

Marital Status	Very Important		Important		Neither Important Nor Unimportant		Unimportant		Not at all Important		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Illiterate	00	00.0	00	00.0	03	01.5	04	02.0	04	02.0	11	05.5
< HSC	01	0.50	05	02.5	21	10.5	04	02.0	01	0.50	32	16.0
HSC-SSC	12	06.0	14	07.0	19	09.5	04	02.0	01	0.50	50	25.0
Graduation	21	10.5	26	13.0	03	01.5	00	00.0	00	00.0	50	25.0
P.G.	24	12.0	31	15.5	02	01.0	00	00.0	00	00.0	57	28.5
Total	58	29.0	76	38.0	48	24.0	12	06.0	06	03.0	200	100

  

Chi Square Test of Independence			
Chi Square Calculated	df	Level of significance	Chi Square Tabulated
159.223	16	5%	26.296

Table 4: Cross tabulation of Marital Status of respondents and importance of store image

Marital Status	Very Important		Important		Neither Important Nor Unimportant		Unimportant		Not at all Important		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Single	33	16.5	41	20.5	27	13.5	04	02.0	03	01.5	108	54.0
Married	25	12.5	35	17.5	21	10.5	08	04.0	03	01.5	92	46.0
Total	58	29.0	76	38.0	48	24.0	12	06.0	06	03.0	200	100

  

Chi Square Test of Independence			
Chi Square Calculated	df	Level of significance	Chi Square Tabulated
2.396	4	50%	3.357

Table 5: Cross tabulation of Occupation of respondents and importance of store image

Occu- pation	Very Important		Important		Neither Important Nor Unimportant		Unimportant		Not at all Important		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Student	23	11.5	26	13.0	11	05.5	02	01.0	00	00.0	62
Salaried	12	06.0	22	11.0	13	06.5	02	01.0	00	00.0	49	24.5
Business	08	04.0	11	05.5	06	03.0	01	0.50	00	00.0	26	13.0
Others	15	07.5	17	08.5	18	09.0	07	03.5	06	03.0	63	31.5
Total	58	29.0	76	38.0	48	24.0	12	06.0	06	03.0	200	100

  

Chi Square Test of Independence			
Chi Square Calculated	df	Level of significance	Chi Square Tabulated
24.144	12	5%	21.026

Table 6: Cross tabulation of Household income of respondents and importance of store image

Occu- pation	Very Important		Important		Neither Important Nor Unimportant		Unimportant		Not at all Important		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	< 1 Lac	01	05.0	02	01.0	14	07.0	07	03.5	04	02.0	28
1-3 Lac	15	07.5	21	10.5	18	09.0	04	02.0	02	01.0	60	30.0
3-5 Lac	27	13.5	25	12.5	11	05.5	01	05.0	00	00.0	64	32.0
> 5 Lac	15	07.5	28	14.0	05	02.5	00	00.0	00	00.0	48	24.0
Total	58	29.0	76	38.0	48	24.0	12	06.0	06	03.0	200	100

  

Chi Square Test of Independence			
Chi Square Calculated	df	Level of significance	Chi Square Tabulated
74.585	16	5%	26.296

Table 7: Worksheet for the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) D Value

Importance Scale	Observed Number	Observed Proportion	Observed Cumulative Proportion	Null Proportion	Null Cumulative Proportion	Absolute Difference Observed & Null
Very Important	58	0.29	0.29	0.20	0.20	0.090
Important	76	0.38	0.67	0.20	0.40	0.270
Neither Important Nor Unimportant	48	0.24	0.91	0.20	0.60	0.310*
Unimportant	12	0.06	0.97	0.20	0.80	0.170
Not at all Important	06	0.03	1.00	0.20	1.00	0.000
*K-S 'D' Value Calculated			Level of significance ( )		K-S 'D' Value Tabulated	
0.310			5%		0.096	

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