


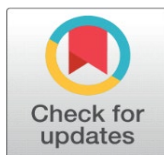
ORGANIZED GEM AND JEWELLERY RETAILERS STORE IMAGE COMPONENTS – CONCEPTUAL

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ABSTRACT

This research paves way for understanding India's retail industry at present, the growth of organized retailers in Gem and Jewellery industry with reference to India, the concept of store image and its formation components in a broader way. Many researches have been done on identifying the store image attributes from shoppers perspective. This research is different in terms of identifying the store image formation component conceptually. To cover the store image research under retailing it is necessary to find the components in a broader way. Doing an extensive literature review it is found that store image formation is beyond functional and psychological. To conclude image formation for retailers are based upon Physical, Cognitive, Emotional and Self Image. This study will ignite more empirical research in the field of retailing for managing the store and to create competitive advantage. Further this research paper will help the retailers to overcome the difficulties by limiting the number of store image items into various categories.

Keywords: Store Image, Physical, Emotional, Self-Image, Cognitive

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. INDIA'S RETAIL INDUSTRY

International retailers are taking long term view on investments in developing markets. According to AT Kearney 2021 India ranked 2nd next to China in the Global Retail Development Index. Despite slowdown in the India economy due to Covid pandemic and inflation, the retail industry is witnessing growth due to higher disposable income change in lifestyle of middle income group, growth in tier II and tier III cities. When comparing to the metros with tier II and tier III cities the retail growth is higher outside the metros. Furthermore many offline stores are partnering with online stores

like Amazon, Flipkart by that delivering product in two hours leads to high frequency purchase and repeat orders. (AT Kearney 2021)

The India's retail sector is expected to reach 1.5 trillion \$ in 2030 from 0.8 trillion \$ at present. The overall FDI inflow in retail sector during 2000- December 2021 is 572 billion \$. It shows a robust and high inflow of investment by the FDI. (IBEF 2021). The new of new players makes the market to grow fast and accounts 10% of the country's GDP and provides overall 8% employment. The offline retail sales i.e. the brick and mortar expected to grow 10,000 to 12,000 crore in the year 2021. The offline retail market is valued at 2.14 billion \$ during 2021. IBEF 2021.

One of the reasons for the robust growth for the India's retail sector is the transformation from unorganized to organized retail sector. The driving factors for the growth of Organized retailers in India are changing demographic profile, brand consciousness, change in consumer mindset, increasing disposable income, healthy economy growth and changing consumers preferences and taste . (IBEF 2021). The organized retailers are growing CAGR of 20% -25% per year. Under retailing category the luxury segment is gaining importance. The overall market is expected to reach 30 billion USD by 2021 from 23.8 Billion USD during the year 2017. The driving forces are the tier II people higher purchasing power and exposure to international brands. Under this luxury category the Gem and Jewellery market is growing at a rapid pace.

1.2. INDIA'S JEWELLERY MARKET

India Jewellery market is one of the world's largest and fastest growing Gem and Jewellery market in the world and demand is very high. (WGC 2021). According to Indians gold is considered to be a symbol of wealth, higher value for gold and rituals related. The rural India prefers to buy gold in the form of jewellery as it stands as an investment (WGC 2021). Apart from this the Indians prefers to gift gold in important occasions and 50% of the gold is demanded by Indians during the marriage ceremony. As of February 2021 the gold and diamond trade is valued at 7.5 % of overall GDP of the country and in overall export gold contributes 14% (IBEF 2021). Beyond gold as a ornament it is bough for celebrating important days like Akshaya Tritiya. The gem and jewellery industry is valued at Rs 5.63 trillion during the year 2020 and predicted to reach 6.64 Trillion during the year 2023. The driving factors for the growth of jewellery industry in India are raising middle income group population, Increasing working women, gem stone as a fashion, and growth of organized retailers. IKON (2021). The gem and jewellery market is highly fragmented and Indians are tend to buy jewellery from unorganized retailers . Now the industry is witnessing transformation and people are preferred to buy gold from branded jewelers. The growth of branded jewellery, growing urbanization, technology advancement, innovative product launch contributes for the overall growth of Jewellery Industry in India CISION (2022). People prefers to buy jewellery from organized branded retailers because of wider variety and designs of jewellery. IKON (2021).

1.3. INCREASING PENETRATION OF BRANDED JEWELERS:

Drastic growth of the organized retail players is going to boost the performance of the Gem and Jewellery Industry in India. The buying behavior of the Indians towards gem and jewellery is changed due to the growth of organized retailers. Indians prefers to buy jewellery from organized retailers because of better resale value of the old jewellery, adoption of mandatory hallmarking and transparency in jewellery buying transactions. From the 23% of market share the organized retailers surged to 29% during the year 2018 and it is expected to reach 31% in year 2023. Offering variety of designs, introduction of gold schemes, repurchasing/ exchanging old ornaments related schemes, offering light weight jewellery and creation of trust over the store are the factors which adds for the growth of organized retailers. Dilip kumar (2018)

1.4. CHANGING INDIAN CONSUMERS

Indians are changing in Economical Level and in terms of attitudes, values and behavior at a rapid pace. The major changes among the Indians are their preference over branded products / services which accelerate the growth of organized retailers. The branded retailers offers value added experiences services to their customers which influences them in a positive way and decides them to purchase. India Retailer (2022)It is not meant that only the metros residing Indians are preferring branded retail outlet. In the past 10 years the consumer preferences changed in tier II and tier III cities and they are showing interest to buy from branded outlets and further retailers too prefers to expand their outlet

beyond tier I cities. Mobile internet connectivity, supporting infrastructure and higher spending are factors which contribute for the growth of organized retailers beyond tier I cities. In retail category especially the luxury related retailers are witnessing drastic growth with 60% in 2018 from 9% in 2013 in non metro cities. The covid pandemic less impacted the retail sales in non metros when comparing with tier I cities. The gem and Jewellery retailers also expanded their retail outlets in non metros and their growth is high in tier II and tier III cities. Though there is growth for organized retailers their market share is 10% and the India's retail is ruled by unorganized retailers with 90% market share. Kiranas are having strong market in India. Kiranas attract the shoppers through location which will not withstand for a long time. Beyond location while shopping Consumers look for other factors like helpful, trustworthy salespeople, home shopping, cleanliness, offers, quality, branding which is offered by Organized retailers. Thus unorganized retailers are poised to transform into organized retailers by focusing on other dimension of store patronage beyond location. A new store Image is emerging in the minds of the customers because of the growth of organized retailers.

Thus the need arises for the organized retailers in establishing innovative store brands, store attributes and store image among the shoppers..(Rajesh Sharma 2021, Amit Saraswat 2010, Piyali Ghosh 2009, Mridula S. Mishra 2009)

Understanding the way in which the Retail store brand, store attributes and store image is formed are to be studied by that the way in which shoppers selecting the shops is identified and through that retailers can establish positive store brand image with store attributes to attract and retain shoppers.

2. CONCEPTUAL BACK GROUND

Store Image is a retail strategy used by retailers to attract shoppers. Burlison (2018) which also provides Competitive advantages Coskun Samli (2015). Many authors have given various definition and Martineau, Pierre (1958) first to portray about store image as the way in which store is defined in the minds of the customers. Exploring his paper, store image formation in the minds of shoppers is beyond functional factors like location, price ranges and merchandise offering. Psychological factor like cleanliness, personal help, pleasant feeling while shopping, also contributes for framing store image. Shoppers do select a store through a force which is beyond functional factors and the store image is partly based on functional qualities and partly by psychological attributes.

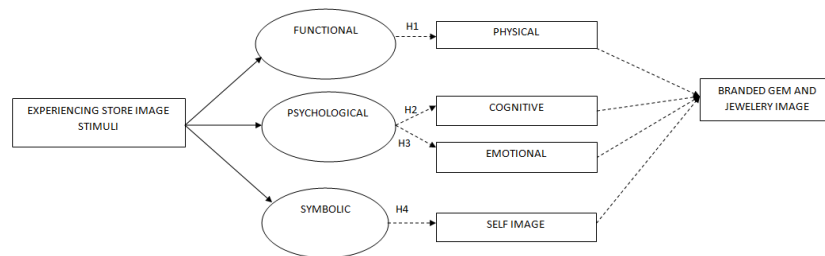
An extension to this definition Kunkel (1968) defined Store image in the behavioral approach, as discriminative stimuli for an action with expected reinforcement defines. The retail store image formation is basically from shoppers previous experience. Retail image is based on total conceptualization a shopper gets or experienced in a particular store. In a new approach Oxenfeldt (1974) defines store image as a combination of Factual and emotional material which are tangible and intangible in nature. To support the above mentioned definition Doyle, Peter; Fenwick (1974) defines store image as a customer reacts to the store characteristics through emotion and the output of the feel determines the store image. Thus image is not based on the factual based opinion rather what they feel towards it determines the Store Image. Lindquist (1974) take a mid way that store image is complex by nature and consist of Tangible or Functional factors and intangible or Psychological factors that a consumer perceives to be present. Further Don L. James & Richard M. Durand (1976) on his perspective define store image as a set of attitudes based upon evaluation of those store attributes deemed important by consumers. store image is dependent upon an individual experiences concerning a store. Store image is complex and David Mazursky & Jacob Jacoby (1986) A cognition and/or affect (or a set of cognitions and/or affects) which is (are) inferred either from perceptions or memory for an individual. Bloemer (1997) states Store image is defined on the basis of functional attributes what shoppers offers to the customers. The complex of a consumer's perceptions of a store on different (salient) attributes beyond merchandise offered. According to Barbara Stern, George M. Zinkhan and Anupam Jaju (2001) Store image is defined on the basis of Functional , Emotional and Gestalt (Transactive) basics. Amit Saraswat (2010), store image is defined as The symbolic, experiential expression of the manner in which consumers "see" or "visualize" a store is store image. The store image in India is in emerging stage as shoppers differentiate stores through the functional dimension offered by the retailers. Amit Saraswat (2012) Store image is based on the good reputation among the customers what retailers offers through services and merchandise with their experience determines the store image. Coskun Samli (2015) The image is projected and communicated through personal and impersonal communications in the form of a combination of tangible and intangible characteristics that provide an overall symbolic impression.

The above mentioned from various literatures defines store image through different perception and which are not alike and generalized. Some authors defines store image is complex in nature which is beyond Tangible and Intangible

Attributes Martineau, Pierre (1958) ,Kunkel, J. H. and Berry, L. L. (1968), Eleanor May (1975) David Mazursky & Jacob Jacoby (1986), Bloemer,J., and Ruyter,K. (1998), Barbara Stern (2001) Euler Alves Brandão (2010) .

In a broader classification Barbara Stern, George M. Zinkhan, Anupam Jaju (2001) defines Store Image by categorizing into Functional (locate store image in bricks-and-mortar store properties), Psychological (locate image in the consumer’s mind and treat it as a cognitive and/or emotional) and Gestalt (image is considered transactive rather than static.)

Marry. R.Zimmer (1988) states Retail store image are complex in nature and research focusing the store attributes alone is partial in capturing the store Image. Hansen, Robert A.; Deutscher, Terry (1977) The complex of Image definition is based on three elements Attribute, Component and Dimension.This study takes a broader way in identifying the store image components and its formation by segmenting store image on Geographical and Demographical base. In the in-depth view of the Martineau (1958) & Barbara Stern, George M. Zinkhan, Anupam Jaju (2001) his broader approaches on the total Store Image stimuli among shoppers are based on Functional (Tangible & Intangible) Psychological (Cognitive & Emotional) & Symbolic (Self – Image) contributes. Thus the study paves way that beyond functional, psychological attributes contributes the shoppers to have a store image in their minds about stores.



Source Researcher

Proposed Conceptual Model for Image Formation Components

————> Relationship Exist - - - - -> To be Tested

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND HYPOTHESIS FORMATION

3.1. DIMENSION ON THE BASIS OF FUNCTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL

Different authors focused upon varieties of attributes which falls on Functional and Psychological category for Store Image. Martineau, Pierre (1958) Doyle, Peter; Fenwick (1974) Lindquist (1974) Amit Saraswat (2010). The functional category of Store Image are the physical characters of the store like Store Layout, Atmosphere, Merchandise, Price etc. and the psychological attributes includes of brand name, value for money fashion etc.,Lindquist (1974) comprises twenty six authors paper on summarizing the 35 store attributes into nine dimension: merchandise, service, clientele, physical facilities, convenience, promotion, store atmosphere, institutional attributes, and post transaction satisfaction and stated that the predominant factor for the Consumer assessment of store is Merchandise (Selection, Quality, Pricing, Styling and Fashion). Ronald B. Marks (1976) studied the store image formation for speciality store with thirty items on image component to identify which are the components important for Image formation. He concluded with 8 Factor which are manageable of which most important was "fashionability" of such variables as: "style," "quality," "value," "variety," "brand names," "interesting," "neat," "attractive," "progressive," "exciting," and "modem." David Mazursky (1986) studied the Image Formation based on the cues which are of 15 Attributes of which external environmental cues (such as interior design, brand names, price levels, etc.) through retailers communicates their images. On a broader study with the inclusion of 12 Components on the combination of Image formation for the Departmental Store Image Leonard L Berry (1969) tested with the 3737 respondent reflected to a given question reflected on the mentioned component. Amit Saraswat (2010) segregated image components into functional and Psychological for studying organized retailers store

image. Further the psychological attributes also influences shoppers in terms of differentiating for the store among others . Analysis reveals that shoppers differentiate stores on the functional items of store image like parking space, proximity of the store, and noise levels. Conceptual base identification of store image component Ronel Du Preez (2008) undergone various literature review to define store image component is based on tangible and intangible in nature and they concluded store attributes into eight factor which are Atmosphere, Convenience, Facilities, Institutional, Merchandise, Promotion, Sales personnel and Service. Through an extensive literature review author Christopher (2001) identified seven dimensions of retail store image construct represented by the affective dimensions of atmosphere, convenience and self/store image congruence and by the functional dimensions of price, merchandise, personnel and service. The Store provides various tangible and intangible components to the shoppers which the management considers a positive image will be formed among shoppers. In this perspective question arises that shoppers differentiates the store image dimensions on Tangible and Intangible basis. Thus by focusing the Subjective components retailers can easily distinct their image in the minds of the customers. Jack J. Kasulis (1981)

Through literature review the store image components dimensions and each items were identified on the classification of Functional and Psychological attributes hence the following hypothesis is framed.

H1: Shoppers segregates store image on the basis of Tangible Attributes for Branded Jewellery Retailers.

H2: Shoppers store Image dimension is based on Cognitive for Branded Gem & Jewellery Retailers

3.2. DIMENSION ON THE BASIS OF EMOTION

Oxenfeldt, Alfred R (1975) The author suggested that the Image is a combination of Factual and Emotional Content. A customer reacts to the store characteristics through emotion and the output of the feel determines the store image. Thus image is not based on the factual based opinion rather what they feel towards it determines the Store Image. Store image can be measured through the distinction between customers opinion about the stores and their emotion what they perceived through identifying their feelings. SOLOMON (2002) states that the overall impression about a store is created through the various dimensions provided by the store. Shoppers thinks about the store and they are more likely to say “ I always enjoy shopping there”. This feeling will do more on the Image formation for shoppers as they evaluate the stores based on attributes and a global evaluation. Research provides evidence that the perceived store image has relationship with the emotional state of the shoppers (Grace & O’Cass, 2005). Evidence found on the Image perception based on attitude and emotional base. Ronel du Preez, (2008). Based on the above literature the hypothesis is framed.

H3: Shoppers store Image Dimension is based on Emotional for Branded Gem & Jewellery Retailers

3.3. DIMENSION ON THE BASIS OF SELF IMAGE

Self- Image is a configuration of belief related to themselves. Lidquist (2009). Self Image theory is about an individual have a concept of self based on who they think they are and who they think like to be .Henry Assael (2005). When a consumer Self Image matches with the Brand user image which is self image congruence. This matches in can be done through actual Self Image congruence, Ideal Self Image congruence, Social Self Image congruence and Ideal Social Self Image congruence. Lidquist (2009) (Sirgy 1985).In this study by considering the two Actual Self Image congruence and Ideal Self Image are considered (Sirgy 1985),congruence and the discrepancy between the two is the measure of Self-Esteem. Ideal Self is related to one’s Self – Esteem. Consumer buy products that confirms to their actual self image, but also the product we choose frequently influence our self image. HENRY ASSAEL (2005).

Martineau, Pierre (1958) explains a Force which determines the store for a customer is beyond the functional factor and that force is the personality of the store which is partly by psychological factor. When a shopper looks at the store the psychological factor contributes “What is the status of the store? Is it for high-class or low- Class or What? “ Thus the shopper selects store whose self image is similar with store image .Shoppers self image determines as choosing a store and he/she shops more often at the store whose image is congruent with the customers own self image. Andrew & Newman (2002).The retail store aims to determine the degree of congruence between customer self image and store image. Retail store manipulates and manages store image for a particular segment market to have a positive congruence between and self image and store image. COSKUN SAMLI (1998). The evidence supported in the study shows strongly that the consumer shops in a store whose image are similar to their own self image Bruce L. Stern (1977).

H4: Shoppers store Image Dimension is based on Self Image for Branded Gem & Jewellery Retailers

4. CONCLUSION

This research brief the concept of store image and its formation components conceptually with the support of literature review. The transformation is at rapid pace from unorganized to organized retailers especially in India. For organized retailers the store image attributes are large in numbers and to manage it effective it has to categorized in a broader way. This research model can be empirically tested for branded Gem and Jewellery store or it can be tested for other type of retail store. Findings will be helpful for the retailers to manage their retail stores and to have a positive store image among shoppers. This conceptual research will ignite more empirical research with Physical, Cognitive, Emotional and Self Image variables.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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