

## **Interior design of shoe stores and its impact on customer satisfaction**

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### **Abstract**

A shopping mall is a modern form of shopping center in which one or more buildings form a complex of shops representing merchandisers with interconnecting walkways that enable customers to walk from unit to unit. This special architectural feature provides a perfect platform for cooperative as well as competitive bargaining. Price and quality of goods, interior design and the service quality of each shop are under the influence of this atmosphere. By considering the interior design of successful shoe stores, this study aimed to establish the interior layout design parameters. In this descriptive research by using observation and case study methods and distributing questionnaires, the impact of various parameters in interior design of a shoe store on customer satisfaction was analyzed.

**Keywords:** interior design, shoe store, customer satisfaction.

## **Introduction**

The earliest bazaars are believed to have originated in Persia, from where they spread to the rest of the Middle East and Europe. Bazaars initially developed outside city walls where they were often associated with serving the needs of caravanserais. As towns and cities became more populous, these bazaars moved into the city centers and developed in a linear pattern along streets stretching from one city gate to another gate on the opposite side of the city. The fully enclosed shopping mall did not appear until the mid-1950s. Nowadays these shopping centers are quite popular in many cities throughout the world.

The concept of a bazaar or a market is any structure that allows buyers and sellers to exchange any type of goods, services and information. Market participants consist of all the buyers and sellers of a good who influence its price, which is a major topic of study of economics and has given rise to several theories and models concerning the basic market forces of supply and demand.

Supply and demand is perhaps one of the most fundamental concepts of economics and it is the backbone of the economy in the markets. In economics, demand is the quantities of a commodity or a service that people are willing and able to buy at various prices, over a given period of time. Although product's quality is the major factor in increasing the demand, still there are various other methods for increasing product demand among them common techniques that have become increasingly used are providing a luxurious store space and the possibility of in-store product demonstration.

This study is evaluating different parameters in interior design of successful shoe stores in order to find their impact on customer satisfaction as a major factor for increasing the demand.

## **Problem definition**

Working at a shoe store has its ups and downs and the problems mainly depend on three major factors including the quality of the products, interior design of the shoe store, and the salesmen and their experience in sale.

Shoe salesmen who are supposed to help clients select shoes that will make them happy in terms of overall fit, style and their budget, should work in a comfortable atmosphere. Climbing up and down ladders and walking in and out of the stockroom with heavy boxes of boots and shoes are their usual daily experiences. Kneeling down to measure customers' feet and getting back up 100 times a day is another important experience.

A store layout is the strategic use of space to influence the customer as well as salesmen experience. How customers interact with the merchandise affects their purchase behavior. Since the more satisfied a customer is, the higher the chances they will make another purchase in the future, planning an effective store layout that makes it easy for customers to shop and the staff to work is felt crucial.

### **Environment psychology**

Environment psychology studies individuals in their physical and social context. It aims to bring to light the logic of interrelations between individual and environment by giving a prominent place to environmental perceptions, attitudes, evaluations, and representations while at the same time taking account of accompanying behavior. Environmental psychology is interested in both the effects of environmental conditions on individual behavior, and how individuals perceive and act on the environment. Even if the point of departure of analysis is often the physical characteristics of the environment (noise, pollution, planning, and layout of physical space) or social variables in the environment (crowding, population heterogeneity, etc.), these variables frequently bring to light interrelational and systematic explanations (Moser, 2018).

According to Gifford, environmental psychology differs from the mainstream of psychology, because it deals with everyday physical environment. This science provides a framework for opinions, and assumptions that can help to better understand the interactions of man and his surroundings (Gifford, 1997). Therefore, the designers' attention to a psychological study of the designed spaces has created unbroken linkages between environmental psychologists and them (Katz, 1994).

Studies show an intriguing relationship between sales figures and the layout of a retail store. Indeed, an ideal store layout, with an optimised arrangement of product displays, aisles and checkout counters, influence customer behavior in a subtle, yet powerful, way. Big retailers have a profound understanding of this correlation and know precisely how to design their stores in order to create tempting displays that keep their customers shopping.

While the design of a building should be done in accordance with certain principles, it should be noted that what is made is placed in the service of man; therefore, it should be based on a human basis based on the tendencies, morale and vitality of the human being (Raygani, 2010). The interior architecture of a store is very important in terms of psychological criteria. The level of security, intimacy, excitement and tranquility in one space can be exaggerated or weakened by appropriate solutions (Najjar Bashi et al, 2015).

Through interior design psychology the performance and efficiency of the space and the wellbeing of the individual are improved. By incorporating this psychology into

design, controlling the environment and to an extent, the relationship and behavior of its inhabitants is quite possible.

### **Shop architecture and interior design**

Beyond just creating a good-looking with aesthetically pleasing display, retail store design is a well-thought-out strategy to set up a store in a certain way to optimize space and sales.

Architectural space without internal design is either not usable at all or, if it is usable, does not have the necessary and optimal efficiency. Since interior design is directly related to human psychological characteristics, in order to achieve a desirable design, the characteristics of human behavior in indoor and outdoor spaces, both public and private, must be carefully considered in design. Therefore, the designer has two issues when designing the interior space: the application of that space, and the feeling and the effect that the user wants to have on the space (D.K, Ching, 2007).

Window display, furnishings, lighting, flooring, music and store layout are design factors necessary to consider in order to create a brand or specific appeal. Stores are usually laid out with new merchandise up front to entice shoppers into the store. The front of the store creates a sense of the store's identity as can be seen in the store design shown in Figure (1).

The main purpose of store design is to show a product to its best advantage. This is achieved through a combination of ambience, functionality and an inviting design. First impressions are critical to any retail establishment. Exterior elements should convey the spirit of the store's inventory, such that customers unfamiliar with the retailer get an immediate impression on what the store has to offer. Clear uninterrupted lines of vision throughout the store are enhanced with focal point displays. When these points are placed far into the store, customers will walk to them, and thus be exposed to more of the merchandise.



Figure (1): Window display, Dorsa, Tehran

Lighting is one of the most important aspects of “shop design”. A retail space virtually breathes by the success of its lighting design. A good lighting system will not only enhance furniture, it changes the percept of the store in the minds of the customers. Lighting could also be helpful in attracting customers to the focal point displays. The luxury retailer may choose to wash the space in golden light, while the family stores might stick to cheerful bright white lighting (Laverne O’Neal, 2018). Controlling the beam spread is a technique for highlighting particular areas in order to attract the customers and this technique is used in the store shown in Figure (2).



Figure (2): Lighting in shop design, Dorsa

The ceiling, like the flooring, is another important feature of the interior design, which can create an irrational design of surface, color and volume (Sharifian, 2009).



Figure (3): Placing a table in order to slow down the customers

When it comes to select colors, it is best to stick to a neutral pallet of timeless colors. Cool colors including gray, blue-green, soft gray-greens and blue violets are conservative and let the merchandise take the center of the stage.

Including a few speed bumps to slow customers down as they move through the store (Fabregas, 2018), is quite helpful as shown in Figure (3).

Studies have proven that customers do not like to be jostled when shopping. Three feet of pathway space between all movable and modular units including tables, is a necessity to meet the requirements and customers' comfort (Fabregas, 2018) as shown in Figure (4). Customers can move freely and examine products when the design requirements were considered carefully.



Figure (4): Providing sufficient width of pathways to meet customers' comfort

## Discussion and conclusion

Measuring how the main factors of shoe store interior design meet customer satisfaction shows that:

- Comfortable place to sit and fit the shoe is considered, by 80% of the customers, the most important factor in floor plan of the shoe stores
- Appropriately located mirror is mentioned by 80% of the customers as a necessity in a shoe store interior design
- 25% of the customers believe that wide corridors between all display units is a very important feature of interior design in the shoe stores

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