

Retail design and layout Effectson Purchaserminds

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ABSTRACT: Store layout is an important factor affecting consumer behaviour and a critical determinant towards the creation of store image. Well-designed layouts are extremely important because they strongly influence in-store traffic patterns, shopping atmosphere, shopping behaviour, and operational efficiency. When an inconsistency occurs, some consumers will abandon that establishment in search of another one which offers fast, convenient, and better services. Taking a more strategic approach to store layout can reap big rewards by boosting sales, increasing customer loyalty, and ultimately increasing turnover.

The overall aim of the study was to ascertain if independent convenience stores are aware of the impact of store layout on purchasing patterns of consumers. To accomplish the objectives of the study, a quantitative study was conducted by means of self-administered questionnaires. A sample of 100 respondents was asked questions pertaining to the study. The respondents were selected through non-probability sampling within which convenience sampling was applied. Conclusions and recommendations were thereafter drawn from the literature and the findings of the study.

The results of this study show that consumers experience problems with store layout. It was found that appearance of the store, merchandise display, store atmosphere, instore service and accessibility are the major causes of this discomfort. Therefore, it is recommended that convenience retail owners see to it that necessary strategies are implemented to help customers where there is a need.

I. INTRODUCTION:

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Store layout is a critical factor driving consumer elaboration and response in retailing. While considerable attention has focused on store layout in relation to brick and mortar retailing, store layout has been virtually ignored in the study of retailing. The layout of a retail store has been found to significantly impact a retailer's overall performance through its influence on information

processing, purchase intentions and attitude towards the retail establishment. Retailers' store layout results in greater consumer elaboration and more positive consumer outcomes. The retail environment is changing more than ever before. It is characterised by intensifying competition and more sophisticated and demanding customers who have greater expectations related to their consumption experiences. A retail store experience involves more than a nonretail services experience in terms of customers negotiating their way through a store, finding the merchandising they want, interacting with several store personnel along the way, and returning merchandise, all of which influence customers' evaluations of service quality.

1.2 DEFINING CORE CONCEPTS AND TERMINOLOGY:

It is necessary to define the core concepts and terminology of this research to facilitate as wide an understanding of the issues as possible. The explanation of core concepts and terms in the present context is systematically presented and aligned to the logical progression of the thesis. Store layout, consumer purchasing behaviour and convenience stores are defined within the context of marketing and retailing.

Store layout is ease of user movement through the store to provide maximum exposure of goods and attractive display. This includes doors, merchandise placement, shelf orientation, music, check-out counters, interior decorating, staff attitude, lighting, and location of the loading facilities.

Consumer purchasing behaviour is the process by which individuals search for, select, purchase, use, and dispose of goods and services to satisfy their needs and wants. This process is influenced by the social and cultural environment.

Convenience store is a small retail self-service store selling a limited line of fastmoving food and non-food items, usually with extended hours of operation.

1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM:

Notwithstanding the commercial and academic research that has taken place, there are still many

uncertainties about the behaviours and rituals of customers pertaining to store layout.

Today's customers are more sensitive and demanding than ever. They want fast, friendly service on their terms every time they come to a store. If they do not get fast and friendly service, they will abandon that establishment in search of another one which offers fast, convenient, and better services. A front that does not have a positive store image loses potential customers who shy away from it and go to stores they understand. Such a negative front also brings in a certain number of people who think it might be their kind of store and are disappointed and angry when they discover that they misjudged it. A non-descript front not only loses sales, but it also increases expenses.

Based on the views of Shaffer and Greenwald, a well-defined, attractive and friendly store layout will attract potential customers to the store and, at the same time, discourage those who are not interested in the merchandise from entering the store. As a result, the study investigates the impact of store layout on consumer purchasing behaviour and intends to present suggestions to improve the quality of service delivery.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

The overall aim of the study is to investigate the impact of store layout on consumer purchasing behaviour at convenience stores.

The following objectives are drawn from the overall aim of the study:

- To determine the essential characteristics of layout of convenience stores.
- To establish if problems are encountered by consumers regarding different store settings while shopping around independent convenience stores.
- To investigate whether consumers are satisfied with the level of service they get from convenience stores in terms of accessibility, quality of merchandise and general appearance.
- To make recommendations to improve store layout in independent convenience stores.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Data will be collected by means of self-administered questionnaires conducted by survey to ascertain consumers' views about the impact of store layout and their purchasing behaviour in convenience store. The study is quantitative in nature. Convenience sampling was applied to facilitate the collection of data. This approach was practised because almost everybody is a grocery

customer, and samples are easier to setup, cheaper in financial terms, and are adequate in their representativeness within the scope of the defined research. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed to one hundred respondents through survey form.

II. BRIEF DETAILS OF DESIGN & LAYOUT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The choice of the store of consumers depends on the appearance of the outside store. That is why more attention is paid towards external appearance and as per the survey, it is found that if the external appearance of the store is not attractive, the consumer does not enter the store. Retailers' overall performance is impacted by the layout design through its influence on purchase intentions, information processing, and attitude towards the retail establishment.

The store layout influences the shopping behaviour and shopping atmosphere of consumers who are visiting the store. The kind of shopping behaviour which a store owner is expecting which can lead to a positive atmosphere of shopping can be achieved by a well-designed store layout.

Both merchandise and service quality which are measured by customer growth and sales growth are influenced by store performance. The mere survey of the information is much less important than the aim of the literature review. "Research facilitator" is more for a literature review which provides a conceptual framework to be built in which relationships, facts, and findings can be introduced and help to refine the relevant scope of the study.

2.2 RETAIL STORE LAYOUT

A retail location design (regardless of whether physical or computerized) is the vital utilization of room to impact the client experience. How clients collaborate with your product influences their buy conduct. This retail guideline is one of the numerous from Paco Underhill, creator of *Why We Buy: The Science of Shopping*, author of *Envirosell* and keynote speaker.

The inside retail location format has two significant segments:

- **Store Design:** The utilization of key floor plans and space the board, including furniture, shows, installations, lighting, and signage. Web specialists and client experience analysts use space the board methods and website architecture standards to enhance online business sites.

- **Client Flow:** This is the example of conduct and way that a client explores through a store. Understanding client stream and the normal examples that develop when clients associate with stock dependent on the store format is basic to retail the executive’s technique. Physical retailers can follow this utilizing investigation programming and information from in-store video and the Wi-Fi signal from cell phones

While the outside retail location format incorporates outside store structure and client stream, it additionally incorporates the accompanying elements:

- The geographic area of the retail location (land)
- Size of the structure and length of the walkways open from the passage and exit
- Utilization of furniture and outside space for individuals to accumulate and communicate
- Style of design of the retail constructing
- The shade of paint and decision of outside structure materials
- Plan of the physical passageway and outside window shows

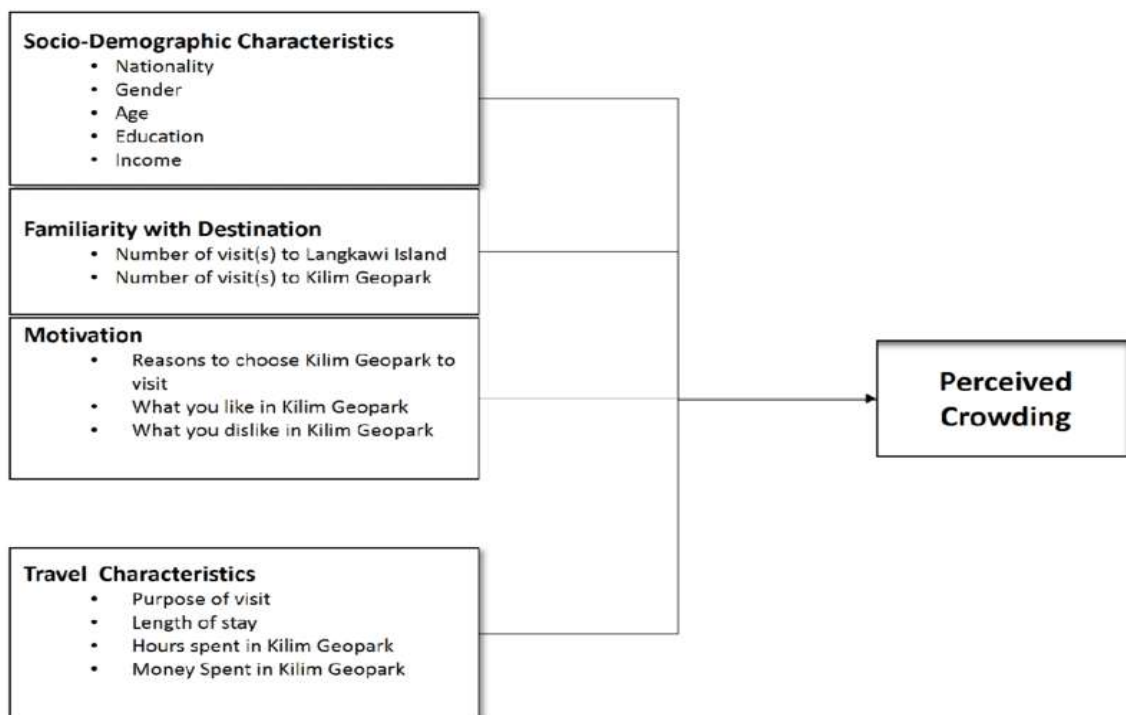
2.3 STORE LAYOUT AND CROWD DENSITY

The perception of the shopping environment and crowding designed by the retail stores has become increasingly important with the satisfactory experience of shopping. In the retail environment, adequate allocation of merchandise, seller, and customers has limited space for shoppers.

Two dimensions of crowding are proposed by Machleit et al (1994) which are:

- **Human crowding:** The perception of human crowding is participating in the transaction, browsing, and interactive activities on the selling floor.
- **Spatial crowding:** The perception of shoppers is judged in spatial crowding which concerns physical body movement restriction within a limited space for customers.

In the specific surrounding, perceived crowding is the subjective evaluation of density level and within the given area it is defined as a negative assessment. The framework of perceived crowding is as follows:

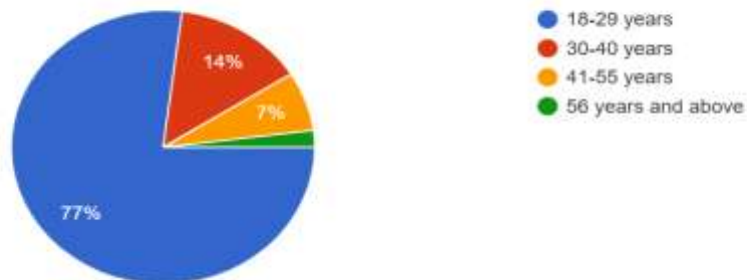


III. RESEARCH ANALYSIS

This survey was done by taking the responses of 100 respondents.

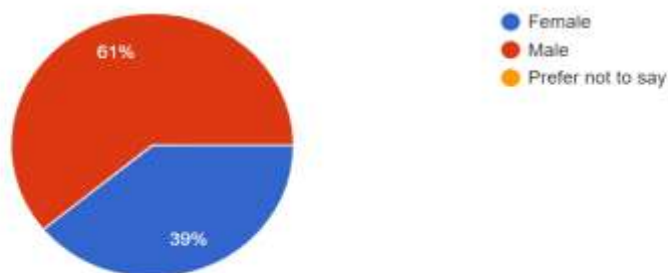
Age

100 responses



Gender

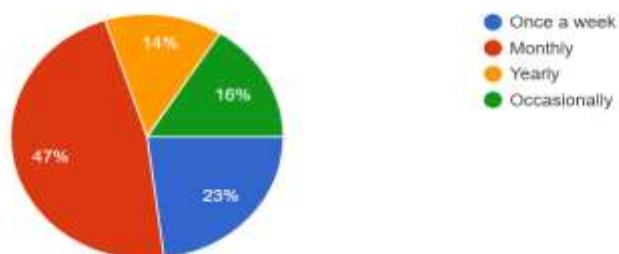
100 responses



From the survey done, 61% were male and 39% were female respondents who participated in the study. The results reveal that men are the predominant shoppers.

How frequently you go for shopping

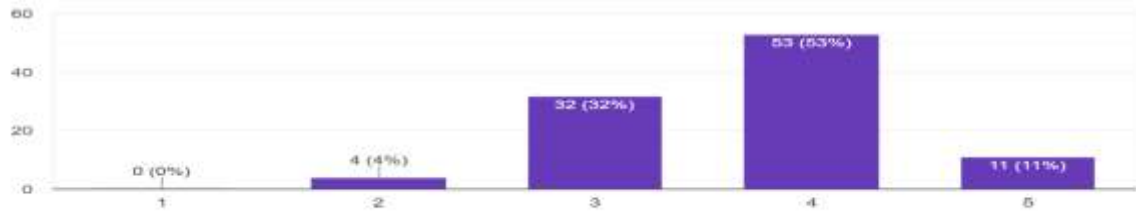
100 responses



23% of respondents indicated that they did their shopping once in a week, 47% of them shop once in month, 14% shop yearly and 16% did shopping occasionally. The results illustrate that a significant portion (70%) of respondents did shopping once in a week and monthly. The results show consumers shop often.

According to you what should be the adequacy of the product assortment at convenience stores (1 is the lowest and 5 is the highest)

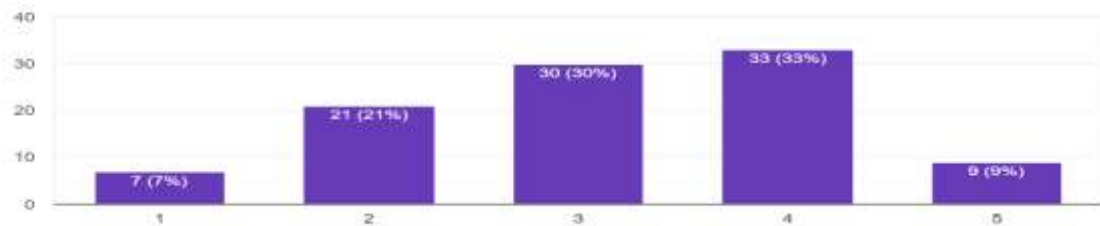
100 responses



4% of respondents disagreed that they found product assortment of convenience stores in their area adequate, 32% were uncertain and neutral, 53% agreed and 11% strongly agreed. The results, therefore, indicate that 36% of the respondents from convenience stores found product assortment inadequate.

Encountering problems with merchandise display in stores (1 is the lowest and 5 is the highest)

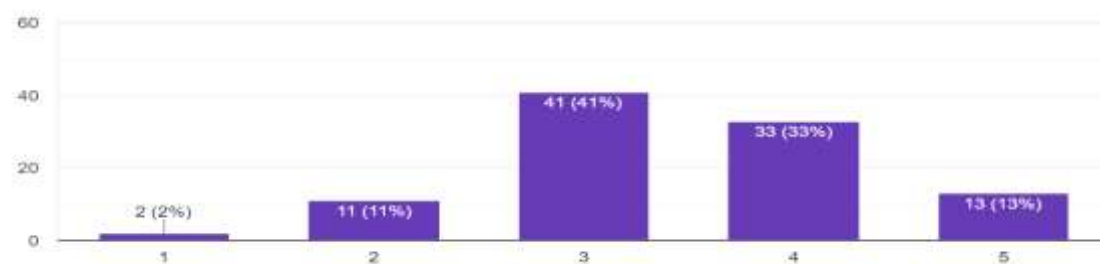
100 responses



7% of respondents strongly disagreed that they encountered problems with merchandise display in stores, 21% disagreed, 30% were uncertain and neutral, 33% agreed and 9% strongly agreed. Therefore, the majority (63%) of the respondents encountered problems with merchandise display in convenience stores.

Adequacy of the aisle width (1 is the lowest and 5 is the highest)

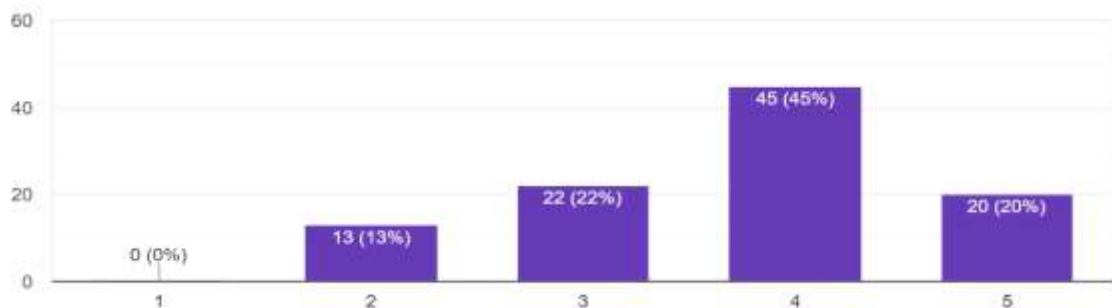
100 responses



2% of respondents strongly disagreed that they found the aisle width in stores adequate, 11% disagreed, 41% were uncertain, 33% agreed, and 13% strongly agreed. The results, therefore, indicate that 13% of the respondents did not find the aisle width at convenience store adequate and 41% respondents are neutral.

Adequacy of the floor space (1 is the lowest and 5 is the highest)

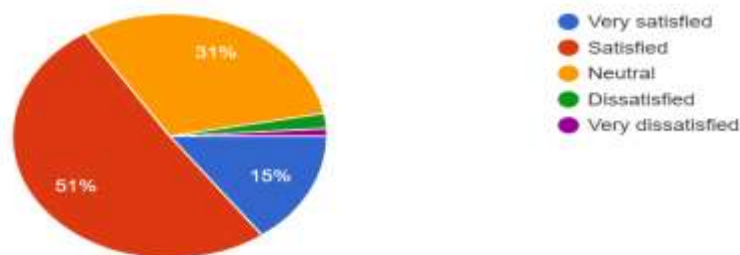
100 responses



13% disagreed, 22 % were uncertain, 45% agreed, and 20% strongly agreed. The results, therefore, indicate that a significant portion (53%) of the respondents found the floor space of convenience stores inadequate.

According to you how is the level of satisfaction about store ventilation systems

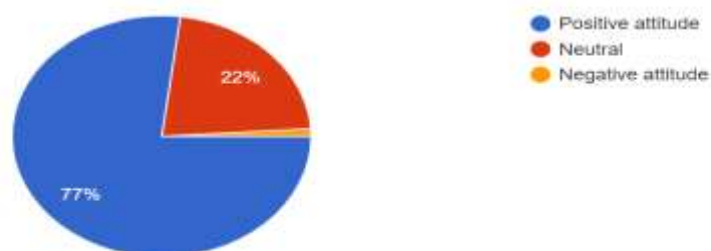
100 responses



2% of respondents strongly disagreed that they were satisfied with the ventilation systems of convenience stores, 1% disagreed, 31% were uncertain and neutral, 21.50% satisfied and 15% strongly agreed. From the results. Several store image studies concluded that store ventilation systems and service provided by the store contributed much to the customer's intention to return to the store

According to you how should be the staff attitude towards shoppers

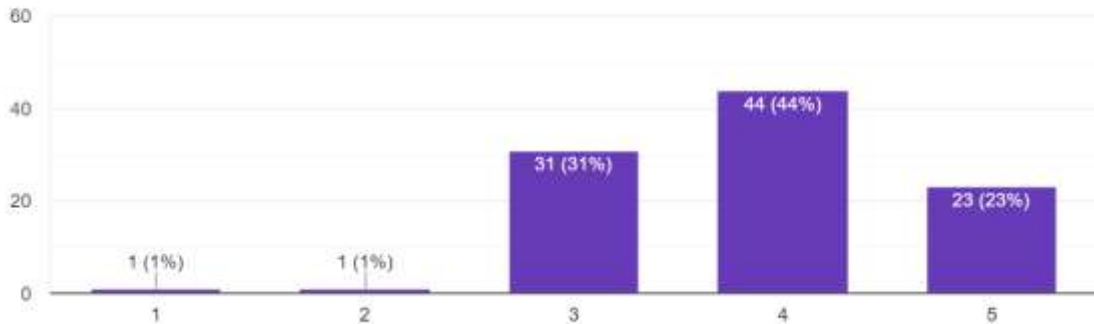
100 responses



A total of 77% of the respondents want a positive attitude of the staff towards shoppers and 22% of the respondents wants a neutral attitude of the staff towards shoppers. Therefore, more emphasis should be placed on having positive attitude towards shoppers, staff training and development.

Staff knowledgeable about merchandise assortment and display

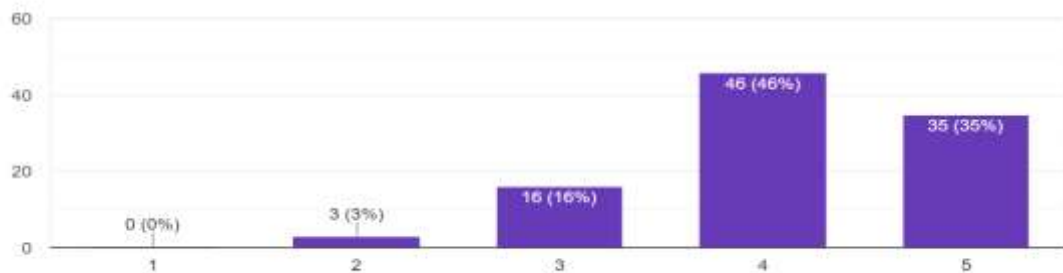
100 responses



Of the 100 respondents interviewed, 1% of the respondents strongly disagreed that the staff were knowledgeable about merchandise assortment and display. 1% of the respondents disagreed, 31% of these respondents were uncertain and neutral. 44% of these respondents agreed and 23% of these respondents strongly agreed.

Perceptions about store lighting (1 is the lowest and 5 is the highest)

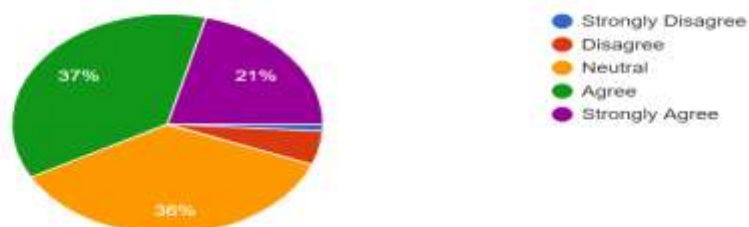
100 responses



Of the 100 respondents interviewed, while 3% of the respondents disagreed, 16% were uncertain and neutral, 46% agreed and 35% strongly agreed. The substantiates that lighting for any retail environment has the potential to dramatically affect sales. Lighting can increase floor traffic, create visual interest, and direct people through the store. This result confirms the importance of store lighting towards merchandise display and store patronage.

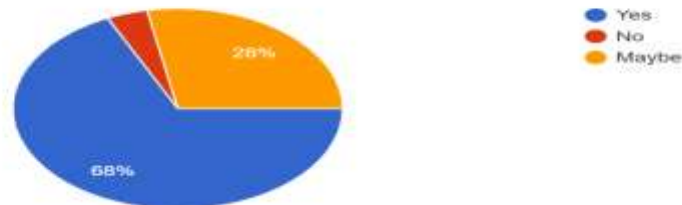
According to you merchandise of related products shelved to be together

100 responses



Of the 100 respondents, 1% strongly disagreed that the merchandise of related products was not shelved together, 5% disagreed, 36% were uncertain and neutral, 37% agreed and 21% strongly agreed

Do you prefer shopping at a well-designed store
 100 responses



4% of the respondents do not prefer well designed store, 68% prefer well designed store and 28% are not sure whether they should buy from well-designed store or not.

According to you how should be the entrance and exit of the store
 100 responses:



With regard to the store entrance and exit points, 55% preferred one separate entrance and one separate exit points, 34% of the respondents preferred one big entrance serving as both entrance and exit points and 11% of the respondents preferred one narrow entrance serving as both entrance and exit point.

According to you what are the best components of a good store layout
 100 responses:



With regard to the best components of a good store layout, 11% of the respondents regarded good store entrances as one of the best components, 19% perceived good merchandise display to be the best component, while store appearance accounted for 35% and easy accessibility accounted for 35%. Easy accessibility and good store appearance were the preferred component of a good store layout.

IV. CONCLUSION

This research provided a quick background about store layout and its impact on purchasing behaviour at convenience stores in. It discussed the research problem of the study, the goals and objectives of the study, rationale of the study, research methodology, limitations and overview of the study.

In summary, retailers should seek to sell products that satisfy the buyer's needs and supply store layouts that entice customers to manoeuvre round the store to get more merchandise than they'll have planned originally. In so doing, it should be remembered that the sale is created only if the particular purchase is complete and retailers should still reinforce the buyer's positive attitudes about their stores the least bit times, even after the sale. This practice reduces the perceived risk of constructing a nasty buy, which allows buyers to concentrate to and trust sellers' sales messages although a few retailers' proposals could also be out of line with their purchase plans. It can also increase rates of customer retention which results in increased profitability and store loyalty. This research reviewed literature on store

appearance and image, store traffic and crowd density, merchandise display, product assortment, floor space, mechanical system, store entrances, store accessibility, music and lighting, staff attitude and training and impulse purchasing pressure. The review shows that customers are faced with many complex situations while shopping around for convenience goods. It suggests that both service and merchandise quality exert a major influence on store performance, measured by sales growth and customer growth, and their impact is mediated by customer satisfaction. It also discussed the methodology adopted during the study still because the aspects of reliability and validity of information. For the study to be reliable and valid, information gathered must be associated with the objectives of the study. All attempts were made to confirm that errors were minimized which the suitable sample was obtained by the interviewers. The researcher also took part in conducting the interviews, which helped to work out if there have been any problems arising from the interviews. This has also presented the analysis of the information gathered within the research study. It is also presented variety of various methods of chemical analysis applied to get both descriptive and inferential statistics. The results were presented within the sort of charts and tables which help to produce a close analysis. Moreover, the results have identified significant relationships and differences between the variables of the study and identified areas that need further attention. Briefly the findings of this chapter may be summarised as follows:

- There are problems experienced with inadequate product assortment
- Problems are encountered with merchandise display in stores
- Inadequate floor space
- Convenience stores do not provide appropriate lighting.

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