

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR- 58517

Title: How In-Store Factors Influence Purchase Decisions in a Traditional Ethnic Retail Settings.

Recommendation:

Accept after minor revision.

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality	✓			
Techn. Quality		✓		
Clarity		✓		
Significance		✓		

Reviewer Name: Dr. Bishwajit Rout

Reviewer's Comment for Publication.

(To be published with the manuscript in the journal)

The reviewer is requested to provide a brief comment (3-4 lines) highlighting the significance, strengths, or key insights of the manuscript. This comment will be Displayed in the journal publication alongside with the reviewers name.

- Significance:** The study contributes to experiential retail literature by investigating purchase behaviour within India's traditional ethnic wear retail sector, an area receiving limited scholarly attention. By integrating customer perceptions with transactional sales data, the research offers practical insights for improving customer experience, store performance, and retail management. The findings have relevance for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers interested in consumer behaviour.
- Strength:** The manuscript addresses a contemporary retail issue using primary customer survey data combined with objective billing records. Application of the Stimulus–Organism–Response framework provides theoretical grounding, while the practical recommendations are directly relevant for retail managers. The study also focuses on an underexplored regional market, enhancing its contextual contribution to ethnic retailing and experiential consumer behaviour research.
- Key Insight:** The research demonstrates that product quality and staff behaviour are the strongest determinants of customer purchase decisions, while store ambience enhances engagement rather than directly driving purchases. Customers spending longer periods in-store and using trial rooms exhibit higher purchase values. These findings reinforce the importance of combining superior product offerings with personalized service to maximize customer satisfaction and retail performance.

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Reviewer's Comment / Report

The paper titled “*How In-Store Factors Influence Purchase Decisions in a Traditional Ethnic Retail Settings.*” mixed-method study investigates how in-store factors (staff behavior, ambience, experiential elements) influence purchase decisions in a traditional ethnic wear retail setting in Jammu, India. Drawing on the S-O-R framework, it combines survey data (189 responses) with sales logs from retailer Khwaab. Findings show positive staff interactions, personalized assistance, and comfortable environments significantly boost engagement and conversions. Recommends investments in staff training and store design for mid-sized retailers. Relevant for experiential retail strategies.

Suggestions for Improvement:

1. Strengthen justification by discussing existing inconsistencies in experiential retail literature and explaining how the present research addresses identified knowledge gaps.
2. Include more recent retail marketing studies.
3. Clearly identify unresolved research gaps and explain how the present study extends existing knowledge beyond previous investigations in ethnic retailing.
4. Justify convenience sampling with supporting literature.
5. Report questionnaire reliability and validity statistics.
6. Explain why convenience sampling adequately represents customers and discuss its implications for external validity and generalization of research findings.
7. Develop conceptual framework with directional hypotheses.
8. Explain relationships among study constructs explicitly.
9. Compare empirical findings with previous retail studies while explaining similarities, differences, theoretical implications, and managerial relevance for ethnic retail businesses.
10. Prioritize recommendations based on empirical evidence.
11. Discuss implementation feasibility considering retailer size, financial constraints, employee capability, and long-term organizational sustainability within competitive ethnic retail markets.
12. Ensure consistent citation formatting and verify that every in-text citation appears accurately within the reference list following journal guidelines.

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The manuscript addresses an interesting and practically significant topic by examining experiential retail factors influencing purchase decisions within a traditional ethnic retail environment. The integration of customer survey responses with actual transaction records enhances the study's practical value. Nevertheless, the manuscript requires major improvements in theoretical justification, methodological rigor, statistical analysis, discussion depth, and scholarly referencing. Recommendation: Minor Revision before the manuscript can be considered for publication. Addressing the identified weaknesses will make it suitable for publication in IJAR.

I recommend this paper for publication after minor revision.