

Ambient Factors and Consumer Purchase Decision of Fast-Food Stores in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the study was to investigate the effect of ambient factors on consumer purchase decision of fast-food stores in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. A cross-sectional research design was adopted to collect data from a sample of 400 respondents determined using the Taro Yamane formula and respondents were selected using convenience sampling technique. Data were collected through structured questionnaire and analyzed using tables and simple percentages. While hypotheses were tested using multiple regression analysis with the help of SPSS 23. The results showed that ambient factors (colour, music and lighting) all had positive and significant effect on consumer purchase decision. It was concluded that colour, music and lighting were positive and significant predictors of consumer purchase decision of fast foods stores. It was recommended amongst others that managers and owners of fast-food stores should continually promote the use of colour within the fast-food stores to create a more pleasing and relaxed atmosphere by incorporating vibrant colors in the interior design of their stores.

Keywords: *Colour, Music, Lighting Consumer Purchase Decision Fast Food Store, Akwa Ibom State.*

INTRODUCTION

Consumers are not just moved by what they hear, but mostly what they see, feel and experience (The store ambience or atmosphere, therefore, remains a major competitive tool for a business owner to not only gain customers but also retain them for continuous patronage in the competing market environment (Kotler & Keller., 2021).

According to Kotler & Keller (2021), store ambience can be described as the emotional interpretation of the purchase or consumption experience of a product or service. In other words, Store ambience is the design of the environment through visual communication, lighting, colours, music, and fragrances used to enhance the emotional responses and perceptions of customers and to influence them in buying products.

When a customer feels satisfied from the retail environment of the store, he spends quality time in a particular store and buys more because of pleasant environmental stimuli. The store atmosphere therefore has a huge impact on the consumers' emotion and purchase decision. The consumer's purchase decision forms the foundation of any

successful business. It leads to repeat purchase, brand loyalty, and positive word of mouth (Bohl, 2022).

Despite these possibilities, some fast-food stores are not very careful about their aesthetic environment they project to the public. Less attention has been given to their atmospheric attributes. To increase and encourage consumer purchase decision, some fast-food stores in Akwa Ibom State have employed the attributes of store ambience or atmospheric to help create positive word of mouth and strong loyalty among their consumers (Etuk & Udonde, 2022). In other to have a better understanding of whether store ambient attributes such as colour, music and lighting affect consumer purchase decisions was carried out.

Statement of the Problem

The fast-food industry in Akwa Ibom State is competitive, and owners are constantly considering augmenting and remodelling their stores. These strategies are prompted by continuous developments in the industry and the need for an improved store ambience to reinforce consumer purchase decisions.

It has been observed that sales/purchase in fast food stores has not been encouraging. Some fast foods have few product assortments offered for sale, unattractive store, poor infrastructure, cleanliness and no good background music, yet they seem not to be bothered about it.

Thus, it was against this backdrop that this study was conducted to determine the effects of store ambient factors (colour, music and lighting) on consumer purchase decision of fast-food stores in Akwa Ibom State.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study was to determine the effect of ambient factors on consumer purchase decision for fast food stores in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The specific objectives therefore include to;

- i. determine the effect of colour on consumer purchase decision for fast food stores in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.
- ii. examine the effect of music purchase decision for fast food stores in kwa Ibom State, Nigeria.
- iii. determine the effect of lighting on consumer purchase decision for fast food stores in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses

Based on the research objectives and the research questions, the following hypotheses were formulated for the study:

- H₀₁:** Colour has no significant effect on consumer purchase decision of fast-food stores in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.
- H₀₂:** Music has no significant effect on consumer purchase decision of fast-food stores in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.
- H₀₃:** Lighting has no significant effect on consumer purchase decision of fast-food stores in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview of Ambient factors

In today's competitive retail landscape, creating a memorable and engaging shopping

experience is essential for attracting and retaining customers. One crucial aspect of shaping the consumer experience is the management of ambient factors within retail environments. Ambient factors encompass a range of environmental elements, including colour, music, lighting, temperature, and scent, that collectively affect consumers' perceptions, emotions, and behaviours during their shopping experiences (Spangenberg et al., 2015).

Kotler and Keller (2021) stated that ambient factors have been shown to influence consumers' mood, behaviour, and purchase intentions. For example, soothing music and soft lighting can encourage relaxation and prolonged browsing, while vibrant colours and upbeat music may stimulate impulse buying and increase sales. While discrepancies in lighting, music selection, or scent diffusion can create inconsistencies in brand image and customer experience (Udonde & Ekong, 2023).

Colour as Store Ambient Factor

Colour is a ubiquitous and pervasive aspect in the store environment, providing clarity about the nature of the store and quickly influencing customer's perceptions about the outlet, and ultimately their feelings and mood. Feelings and moods vary from time to time, so colours play a significant role in inducing customer attitudes and behaviour (Ndengane, et al; 2021). Therefore, retailers need to understand the significance of colour when marketing and presenting their outlets to customer's colour shapes customers' moods, thus influencing behaviour in the store.

Colour can be used to attract customers, deliver the store's message, and is an important selling tool in the store environment. In the branding world, choosing the right colours is crucial not only to distinguishing products from competitors, but also to stimulating attitudes and feelings of consumers. Colour builds feelings and affects consumer behaviour and attitude (Hussain & Ali, 2025).

Music as Store Ambient Factor

Music can be defined as a pleasant sound that impacts consumers' conscious and unconscious decisions (Hussain & Ali, 2025). Music played in retail outlet significantly impacts consumer purchase decision. Music styles and tempos deeply influence consumers in increasing sales of the retail outlets. Pleasant music is associated with longer consumption time (Hussain & Ali, 2025).

The variety of the background music significantly impacts on the consumer perceptions and preferences. Consumers spend less time in stores when the music is played louder as compared to soft (Hussain & Ali, 2025).

Lighting as Store Ambient Factor

According to (Ndengane, et al; 2021), appropriate lighting supports the concept of store atmosphere and the image that the retailer seeks to create. Clear and visible lighting that shows the merchandise in the store has a major role in stimulating impulse buying. Suitable lighting is a critical component for the perfect store environment, inducing a positive mood in shoppers, regardless of the type or format of the store. The main purpose of using brighter lighting in retail outlets is to grab the customers' attention so that they start purchasing from the outlets due to their comfort. Mfon and Uford (2022), pointed out that, customers make preference based on their perceptions.

Consumer Purchase Decision

According to Mfon and Uford (2022), customer purchase decision is largely influenced

by external environmental factors and consumer perception, which shape buying behaviour. The consumer's purchase decision is one of the stages on the consumer decision making process. The Consumer Decision-Making Process consists of five stages which are: Need recognition, Information search, Evaluations of alternatives, Purchase behaviour/decision and post-purchase behaviour. After alternatives have been evaluated, purchase decisions become the next stage in the consumer decision-making process. The purchase decision is mainly influenced by the previous stages of the consumer decision-making process (Etuk & Udonde, 2022).

Similarly, Attih et al. (2024) described consumer buying behaviour as behaviour exhibited by consumer to search, buy, and use goods and service to satisfy his/her needs and wants.

Store Ambient Factors and Consumer Purchase Decision

Store ambient factors refer to the physical and sensory elements of a retail environment that influence consumer behavior and perceptions. These elements, which include ambient factors such as colour, music and lighting, parking space, temperature and so on. (Baker et al., 2022). A well-crafted store with enough ambient not only attracts customers but also encourages longer store visits and increases the likelihood of making a purchase.

Similarly, well-designed lighting enhances product visibility, making consumers feel more comfortable and thus increasing their willingness to shop (Quartier et al., 2024).

Theoretical Framework

Engel-Kollat-Blackwell Model (Engel, Kollat & Blackwell, 1968)

This theory was introduced by Engel, Kollat and Blackwell in 1968 and serves as an anchor theory for this study. It is as a theoretical framework for the assessment of consumer behaviour. This theory states that the consumer-decision-making process is influenced and shaped by a number of factors and determinants, categorized in three broad categories, namely individual differences, environmental influences and psychological processes.

In the context of store ambience, for example, the initial phase of the EKB Model, which deals with the absorption of marketing input, aligns with how consumers respond to store ambient factors such as lighting, color and music. Showing that the physical environment of a store plays a pivotal role in drawing customer attention and shaping their purchase intentions (Wang & Ha, 2020). During this stage, store atmospherics factors function as the main input influencing the consumer's decision to explore further.

Empirical Review

Ndengane et al (2021) examined the influence of store atmospherics on customers' satisfaction at selected South African retail outlets. Their study aimed to examine the influence of atmospheric store elements on the factors that influence customers' satisfaction. A quantitative, cross-sectional, descriptive study was conducted in four retail outlets in Cape Town, South Africa, with data collected through a structured questionnaire distributed to the outlets' customers. A systematic random sample of 388 responses was achieved. The information collected was analysed using relevant descriptive and inferential statistics. Although small, positive correlations were found between the independent variables (cleanliness, lighting, music, floor adverts, employee efficient service, and employee appearance) and the dependent variables (positive image of store, pleasant mood, time spent in store, intention to revisit store). The data were

processed and thoroughly checked for administrative errors. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (version 24) was used to conduct descriptive analyses of the data with tables and figures, including univariate and bivariate analyses and inferential analyses such as factor analysis, correlations, and regression analysis. In addressing the research problem, the study has explored different store atmosphere dimensions, adding to the existing body of knowledge. The different dimensions of store atmospherics explored included ambient, design, and social factors. The study concluded on the relationships and correlations between store atmospherics and the factors influencing customers' satisfaction to intensify engagement with the research problem and recommended the implementation of positive image of store. No proper recommendations were made by the researchers.

Hussain & Ali (2025) examined the Effect of Store Atmosphere on Consumer Purchase Intention in Pakistan. This study aimed at identifying the effects of atmosphere on the consumer purchase intention in international retail chain outlets of Karachi, Pakistan. This was the first study, which investigated the collective impact of atmospheric variables at one point in time on purchase intention. This research was causal in nature. A sample of 300 consumers was taken who usually visited these outlets. Data was collected through a well-structured questionnaire and analysed through regression analysis. Research findings indicate that atmospheric variables such as cleanliness, scent, lighting, and display/layout have a positive influence on consumers' purchase intention, whereas music and colour have insignificant impact on consumers' purchase intention. The temperature has almost no impact on the purchase intention of the consumers. The study provided an important recommendation for Practitioners and Academicians. This research was causal in nature.

Bohl (2022) studied a literature review of the effects of store atmosphere on shopping behaviour in UK. This study provided an insight into how the atmospherics of a retail environment influence shopping behaviour. Its objective was to support researchers and practitioners by summarizing the current state of knowledge and identifying gaps and avenues for future research. The scope covers studies in retail marketing and environmental psychology published during the last 35 years. It was shown that environmental cues (music, scent etc.) have an effect on the emotional state of the consumer, which in turn causes behavioural changes, both positive (approach, buy more, stay longer etc.) and negative (not approach, buy less, leave earlier etc.). Most studies make reference to the PAD model, which proposes that the relevant emotions in this process can be measured along three dimensions Pleasure, Arousal and Dominance. Since then, significant advances have been made to understand the effect of individual cues, their interaction, as well as the role of moderators, such as gender, age, or shopping motivation. However, there are a number of opportunities for further research. Too little is known about the moderating effects of Arousal and Dominance and how they interact with each other and with Pleasure dimension. Also a number of other moderators, such as gender and culture, should be integrated into the model. The study adopted a literature review. This, the findings cannot be quantified.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted using a cross sectional research design. A cross sectional research design seeks data through cross examinations of the variables in question from more than one or two organizations.

The population for this study consisted of 5,211,000 consumers of 16 (sixteen) selected

fast food stores in Akwa Ibom State. Since the population was known, the researcher adopted the Taro Yamane's formula to obtain the sample size which was 400. Convenience sampling technique was adopted to select those who would participate in the study. This technique was adopted based on the grounds of availability of respondent and willingness to participate in the study.

The source of data collection was the primary source with the use of questionnaire. The data collected from this source helped in obtaining data for analysis to generate findings and make acceptable conclusion on the effect of store ambience on consumer's purchase decision of fast-food stores in Akwa Ibom State.

The researcher also employed the use of secondary data where the fast-food annual database was assessed. The questionnaire was employed in data collection because it allowed respondents to meaningfully respond to statement from their comfort. The questionnaire was divided into two sections: 'A' and 'B'. Section 'A' contained data on the respondents' demographic characteristics or profile, whereas Section 'B' gathered data on all the variables to be tested.

The results of Cronbach coefficients for each item were 0.6 above, showing the reliability, or internal consistency, of the tested items.

Data collected were analyzed using both descriptive statistics (frequency and simple percentages) and inferential statistics, including multiple regression analysis, to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Table 4.0: Summary of multiple regression analysis for the combined effect of colour, music and lighting in Akwa Ibom State.

Model Summary

| Table 4.0: | | Model Summary | | |
|---|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
| 1 | .699 ^a | .700 | .710 | 1.18401 |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), Colour, Music and Lighting | | | | |

Source: Researcher's computation (2025) using SPSS 23.0.

| Table 4.0: | | ANOVA ^a | | | | |
|--|------------|--------------------|----|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| Model | | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
| 1 | Regression | 28.128 | 4 | 57.426 | 37.663 | .000 ^b |
| | Residual | 45.609 | 25 | 1.402 | | |
| | Total | 42.737 | 30 | | | |
| a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision of Fast Food Stores | | | | | | |
| b. Predictors: (Constant) Colour, Music and Lighting | | | | | | |

Table 4.0: Coefficients^a

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|-------|------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | .628 | .297 | | 2.118 | .035 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|----------|------|------|------|-------|------|
| | Colour | .161 | .028 | .274 | 5.809 | .000 |
| | Music | .215 | .031 | .349 | 6.861 | .000 |
| | Lighting | .358 | .040 | .418 | 9.019 | .000 |
| | | | | | | |
| a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision of Fast-Food Store | | | | | | |

Table 4.0 shows a regression coefficient of $R^2 = 0.700$, which indicates that the independent variables explained approximately 70% of the variation in dependent variable. 70% of the changes in dependent variable, while 30% was attribute.

Results on the table also indicates that the joint effect of the independent variables in the model and the dependent variable was very strong at $R = 0.699$. According to the coefficient of determination $R^2 = 0.700$ and the adjusted coefficient of determination; adjusted $R^2 = 0.710$, the regression model of this study is said to have a very strong explanatory power of the dependent variable.

Furthermore, the F-ratio = 37.663 and p-value < 0.000 on the ANOVA suggest that the results of the regression model could not have occurred by chance and that colour, music and lighting significantly predicted the changes in purchase decision of fast-food stores. The regression results show that all the three ambience indicators significantly affect purchase decision of fast-food stores.

Discussion of Findings

The Effect of Colour on Consumer Purchase Decision

The regression analysis revealed that ambient factor- colour has a significant effect on consumer purchase decisions in fast food stores in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The unstandardized coefficient ($B = .161$, $p = 0.000$) indicates a positive influence of colour on consumer purchase decisions. Additionally, the model's statistical significance was confirmed by the ANOVA results ($F = 36.387$, $p = 0.000$). These findings suggest that the colour within fast food stores significantly influences consumer behavior. Enhancing ambient factors such as can lead to increased customer satisfaction and higher sales. Ndengane et al. (2021) found that atmospheric elements like colour significantly influence customer satisfaction in South African retail outlets, aligning with the current findings.

The Effect of Music on Consumer Purchase Decision

The regression analysis indicated a substantial positive effect with a coefficient of 0.215 ($p = 0.000$). The F-test results ($F = 37.663$, $p = 0.000$) also confirmed the model's significance. The implications of these findings are profound for fast food store managers. Investing in appropriate music can enhance the dining experience and encourages customers to stay longer and potentially spend more. This is in line with the work of Bohl (2022) who emphasized that environmental cues such as music and scent impact consumers' emotional states and behavior, which can translate into purchasing decisions.

The Effect of Lighting on Consumer Purchase Decision

The regression analysis revealed that lighting has a significant effect on consumer purchase decisions in fast food stores in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The unstandardized

coefficient ($B = .358$, $p = 0.000$) showed a positive influence of lighting on consumer purchase decisions. Additionally, the model's statistical significance was confirmed by the ANOVA results ($F = 37.663$, $p = 0.000$). Strategic use of lighting can create a welcoming and comfortable environment. Hussain and Ali (2025) who found that lighting and colour had insignificant impacts on consumer purchase intentions in Pakistan, which contrasts with the current study's findings. This discrepancy could be attributed to cultural differences or variations in consumer expectations and preferences across regions.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The study conducted on the effect of store ambient factors on consumer purchase decision of fast-food stores in Uyo metropolis, Akwa Ibom had the following conclusion.

- i. Colour positively and significantly impact consumer purchase decisions of fast-food restaurants in Akwa Ibom state.
- ii. Music positively and significantly affects consumer purchase decisions of fast-food restaurants in Akwa Ibom state.
- iii. Lighting has a positive and significant impact on consumer purchase decisions of fast-food restaurants in Akwa Ibom state.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were proposed for fast food stores in Akwa Ibom State:

- i. Managers of fast-food restaurants should continually enhance the use of colour within the fast-food stores to create a more pleasing and relaxed atmosphere by incorporating vibrant colors in the interior design of their stores.
- ii. Playing of background music that matches with the brand image should always be done in fast-food restaurants as this would impact consumers' emotional states and behavior.
- iii. Managers of fast-food restaurants should strategically use lighting in their stores so as to create a welcoming and comfortable environment and encourage repeat purchase.

FUTURE RESEARCH INTEREST

- i. Other sectors such as hospitality, services, and manufacturing should be studied using same variables. This would help in understanding whether the factors identified influence consumer behaviours across different industries.
- ii. Conduct similar studies in states other than Akwa Ibom to provide a more comprehensive view of regional differences. Exploring multiple locations can reveal how cultural, economic, and demographic variations impact consumer behaviours.
- iii. Relevant variables in the study, such as customer service quality, store layout variations, and marketing strategies should also be studied. These factors could give a more understanding of their combined effects on consumer behaviours.

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