

# EFFECT OF RETAIL VISUAL APPAREL TECHNIQUES ON PURCHASE DECISIONS OF WOMEN APPAREL SHOPPERS IN THIRUVANANTHAURAM DISTRICT

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**Abstract:** This study investigates the impact of retail visual apparel techniques on the purchase decisions of women apparel shoppers in Thiruvananthapuram district. The research examines the various visual merchandising strategies used by apparel retailers, including window displays, in-store displays, mannequin displays, and lighting, and their influence on women's buying behavior. A survey of 200 women apparel shoppers in Thiruvananthapuram district reveals that visual appeal, product display, and store ambiance significantly influence their purchase decisions. The findings suggest that retailers can enhance customer engagement and drive sales by adopting effective visual merchandising strategies. This research provides valuable insights for apparel retailers and marketers seeking to understand the preferences and behavior of women shoppers in Thiruvananthapuram district. The contribution that other research studies provide to the creation of tactical visual merchandising components that can be incorporated into the retail strategies of clothing merchants is what gives them worth. By using visual merchandising features, designers and planners may increase their visual merchandising expertise and, as a result, have a bigger influence on the layout and design of existing stores as well as when creating new ones (Cant, M. C., & Wiid, J. A., 2020). Visual merchandising was introduced in the clothing retailing industry, and persistent alterations are what characterise fashion. The small-scale garment industry has seen tremendous advancements throughout the years. Instead of being profit-centred, it has changed to be consumer-centred. The majority of retailing sectors use visual merchandising tactics to draw in customers

**Keywords:** Visual Merchandising; Customer behaviour; Women Apparels, Apparel Techniques.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The retail industry in India has witnessed significant growth, with apparel being a major contributor. The rise of fast fashion and changing consumer preferences have intensified competition among retailers, making it essential to create a unique shopping experience. Visual merchandising plays a crucial role in attracting customers and influencing their purchase decisions. Effective visual merchandising can enhance the shopping experience, create brand awareness, and drive sales. Thiruvananthapuram, the capital city of Kerala, has a growing retail sector, with a large number of apparel stores catering

to diverse customer segments. Women apparel shoppers, in particular, are a key target group for retailers, given their increasing participation in the workforce and rising disposable incomes. This study focuses on understanding the effect of retail visual apparel techniques on women apparel shoppers in Thiruvananthapuram district, providing insights for retailers to develop targeted strategies and improve their competitiveness. Walk into any Indian city today, and you'll notice something remarkable. Where your grandparents once shopped exclusively at neighborhood kirana stores, gleaming malls now stand alongside traditional markets. Where fashion choices were limited to what local tailors could stitch, branded outlets now offer global trends. This transformation isn't just about new buildings or fancy stores, it represents one of the most significant economic shifts India has witnessed in the past two decades.

Visual merchandising is vital to improving the sales of women's apparel, especially in the current scenario. The main purpose of this study is to identify the correlation, relationship, and influence of visual merchandising on sales and customer purchasing behaviour. This research study has been carried out in Kerala State, India. A total of 150 respondents were selected through the random sampling method. Simple percentage analysis has been used to identify the respondent's profile, and a simple linear regression method has been used to predict the sales impact of visual merchandising. This study will provide more insights to garment factory owners, shop owners, and the retail industry, which will be helpful in defining strategies for their businesses. The regression line equation:  $\hat{Y} = 12.1105 + 0.6771X$  is derived from the statistical result, and it shows that the regression line slope:  $b_1=0.6771$  CI [-3.0052, 4.3594] means that when you increase the purchasing behaviour of women by 1, the value of the visual merchandise impact on sales increases by 0.6771. The y-intercept:  $b_0=12.1105$  CI [-130.2426, 154.4636] means that when Purchasing Behaviour of Women equals 0, the prediction of Visual-Merchandising Impact on Sales's value is 12.1105. The x-intercept equals -17.887. This study's results are limited to Kerala State only. It might differ from region to region and country to country. There is further research scope in this subject to explore how the sales percentage varies with respect to year on year with changes in apparel models, sizes, nuance, trends, fashions for different age groups, etc.

#### RESEARCH GAPS

Limited research in Indian context. There is a dearth of research on visual merchandising in the Indian context, particularly in the apparel sector.

Focus on women apparel shoppers. Limited research has focused on women apparel shoppers, a key target audience for retailers

#### HYPOTHESES

1. H1: There is a significant positive relationship between visual merchandising techniques and purchase decisions of women apparel shoppers in Thiruvananthapuram district
2. H2: In-store display has a significant positive impact on purchase decisions of women apparel shoppers
3. H3: Window display has a significant positive impact on purchase decisions of women apparel shoppers.
4. H4: Mannequin display has a significant positive impact on purchase decisions of women apparel shoppers.
5. H5: Lighting and color scheme have a significant positive impact on purchase decisions of women apparel shoppers.

These hypotheses aim to test the relationship between visual merchandising techniques and purchase decisions of women apparel shoppers, and provide insights into the most effective techniques

## 2. OBJECTIVES

1. To identify the influence of visual merchandising techniques on women apparel shoppers in Thiruvananthapuram district.
2. To examine the impact of visual merchandising on purchase decisions of women apparel shoppers.
3. To determine the factors influencing women apparel shoppers in Thiruvananthapuram district.
4. To provide insights and recommendations for apparel retailers to enhance their visual merchandising strategies.

These objectives aim to understand the role of visual merchandising in influencing women apparel shoppers and provide actionable insights for retailers to improve their marketing strategies.

### **3. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Visual merchandising is a crucial aspect of retail strategy that can influence customer purchasing decisions and drive sales. Several studies have examined the impact of visual merchandising on customer behavior, and this review aims to summarize the key findings.

#### **Visual Merchandising Techniques**

**Window Display:** Window displays are a key visual merchandising technique used to attract customers into the store (Kaufmann, 2011). A study by Jain and Sharma (2014) found that window displays significantly influence customer purchasing decisions.

**In-Store Display:** In-store displays are used to showcase products and create an engaging shopping environment (Park et al., 2015). Research by Turley and Milliman (2000) found that in-store displays can increase sales by up to 20%.

Visual merchandising is a critical aspect of retail strategy that influences customer purchasing behavior (Park et al., 2015). Studies have shown that visual merchandising elements such as store layout, display, and packaging significantly impact customer satisfaction and loyalty (Mehta & Chugan, 2013). In the context of apparel retail, visual merchandising techniques like window displays, mannequin displays, and in-store promotions play a crucial role in attracting customers and driving sales (Law et al., 2012). Research on women apparel shoppers has highlighted the importance of factors like product quality, brand image, and shopping experience in influencing their purchase decisions (Jain & Sharma, 2014). However, there is a lack of research on the specific impact of visual apparel techniques on women shoppers in the Thiruvananthapuram district.

Park et al. (2015). Visual merchandising impact on consumer behavior. Visual merchandising significantly influences customer satisfaction and loyalty. Mehta & Chugan (2013). Store layout and display impact on customer satisfaction. Store layout and display significantly impact customer satisfaction. Law et al. (2012). Visual merchandising in apparel retail: Window displays, mannequin displays, and in-store promotions drive sales. Jain & Sharma (2014) Factors influencing women apparel shoppers: Product quality, brand image, and shopping experience influence purchase decisions.

- **\*Mannequin Display\*:** Mannequin displays are used to showcase apparel and create a visual representation of the product (Law et al., 2012). A study by Summers and Hebert (2001) found that mannequin displays can increase sales by up to 15%.

**Lighting:** Lighting is a key aspect of visual merchandising that can create a welcoming atmosphere and highlight products (Baker & Cameron, 1996).

**Color Scheme:** Color schemes can influence customer emotions and purchasing decisions (Donovan & Rossiter, 1982).

#### **Impact of Visual Merchandising on Customer Behavior**

**Purchase Decision:** Visual merchandising can significantly influence customer purchasing decisions (Jain & Sharma, 2014).

**Customer Engagement:** Visual merchandising can increase customer engagement and dwell time in the store (Park et al., 2015).

**Sales:** Visual merchandising can increase sales and revenue for retailers (Turley & Milliman, 2000).

### **4. RESEARCH GAPS**

Based on the earlier studies, it is understood that there are many studies already available. However, there are only a few studies that address the region-specific. Hence, this study focuses on Kerala State, India. This study will analyse customer behaviour, their interest, attractiveness, and buying tendency over visual merchandising, which will bring more perceptions to Kerala garment factory owners, Kerala shop owners, and the retail industry in Kerala, which will be helpful in defining strategies for their businesses to make more profits.

### **5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The main purpose of this study is to identify the correlation, relationship, and influence of visual merchandising on sales and customer purchasing behaviour. This research study has been carried out in Kerala State, India. A total of 150 respondents were selected through the random sampling method. A structure questionnaire has been prepared based on the earlier studies and the identified research gap that needs to be addressed in this study. Data has been collected on retail stores, garment shops, shopping malls, apparel factory outlets, etc., and further analysis was carried out to interpret the

results. Simple percentage analysis has been used to identify the respondent’s profile, and a simple linear regression method has been used to predict the sales impact of visual merchandising. This study will provide more insights to garment factory owners, shop owners, and the retail industry, which will be helpful in defining strategies for their businesses.

## 6. RESULTS SUMMARY

### 6.1 PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Table 1 indicates the profile of respondents along with their role and age group. The sample size is 150, where 22.67% of respondents fall under the 20–30 year age group, 24.67% of respondents fall under the 30–40 year age group, 24.00% of respondents fall under the 40–50 year age group, and 28.67% of respondents fall under the above 50 year age group. Out of 150 respondents, 50.00% were customers, whereas 16.67% were shop proprietors, shop employees, and sales representatives, respectively.

Table-1. Profile of Respondents

Age Group	N=150	% Percentage
20-30 years	34	22.67
30-40 Years	37	24.67
40-50 years	36	24.00
above 50 years	43	28.67
<b>Respondent Profile</b>		
Customer	75	50.00
Shop proprietor	25	16.67
Shop Employee	25	16.67
Sales representative	25	16.67

### 6.2 LINEAR REGRESSION ANALYSIS TO PREDICT THE EFFECT OF VISUAL APPAREL TECHNIQUES ON PURCHASE DECISION

Effect of visual apparel techniques on purchase decision of women apparel shoppers: R-Squared ( $R^2$ ) equals 0.6248. This means that 62.5% of the variability of the visual apparel techniques on purchase is explained by the purchasing behaviour of women. The correlation ( $R$ ) equals 0.7904. This means that there is a strong direct relationship between the purchasing behaviour of women and the effect of visual apparel techniques. Figure 1 indicates the distribution and degree of freedom, along with the p and  $\alpha$  values. Table 2 represents the results of the regression ANOVA. Figure 2 indicates the regression line fit plot, Figure 3 indicates the prediction interval between the visual merchandising impact on sales and purchasing behaviour, and Figure 4 indicates the residual histogram and Q-Q plot, whereas Figure 5 indicates the residual plot of the purchasing behaviour of women.

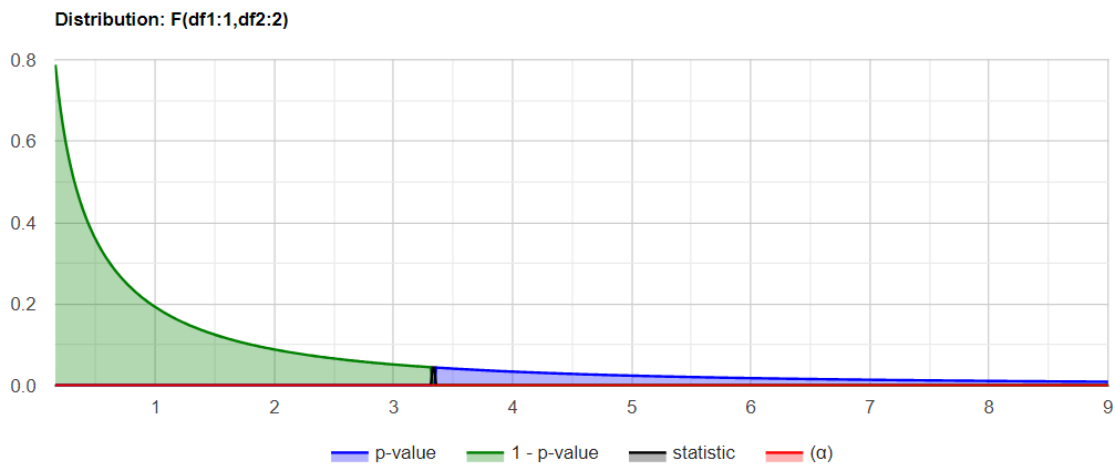


Figure 1- Degree of freedom (p value and  $\alpha$ )

Table. 2 Regression ANOVA results

Source	DF	Sum of Square	Mean Square	F Statistic (df1,df2)	P-value
Regression (between $\hat{y}_i$ and $\bar{y}$ )	1	161.8159	161.8159	3.3301 (1,2)	0.2096
Residual (between $y_i$ and $\hat{y}_i$ )	2	97.1841	48.5921		
Total (between $y_i$ and $\bar{y}$ )	3	259	86.3333		

At 1 % Significance level

Regression line equation:  $\hat{Y} = 12.1105 + 0.6771X$

Where  $R^2 = .62$ ,  $F(1,2) = 3.33$ ,  $p = .210$ .

$\beta = .68$ ,  $p = .210$ ,  $\alpha = 12.11$ ,  $p = .487$ .

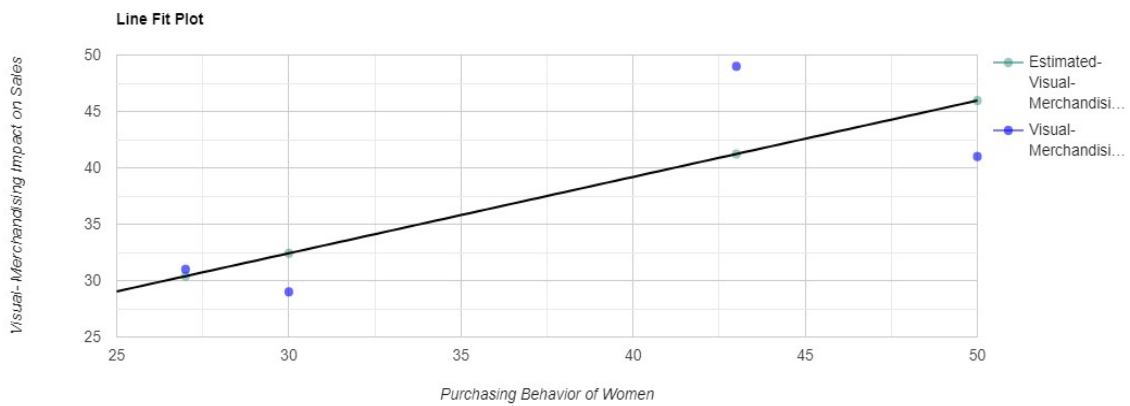


Figure 2. Regression Line fit Plot

The slope:  $b_1=0.6771$  CI [-3.0052, 4.3594] means that when you increase the purchase decision of women by 1, the value of the visual apparel techniques on sales increases by 0.6771. The y-intercept:  $b_0=12.1105$  CI [-130.2426, 154.4636] means that when Purchasing Behaviour of Women equals 0, the prediction of Visual-Merchandising Impact on Sales's value is 12.1105. The x-intercept equals -17.887.

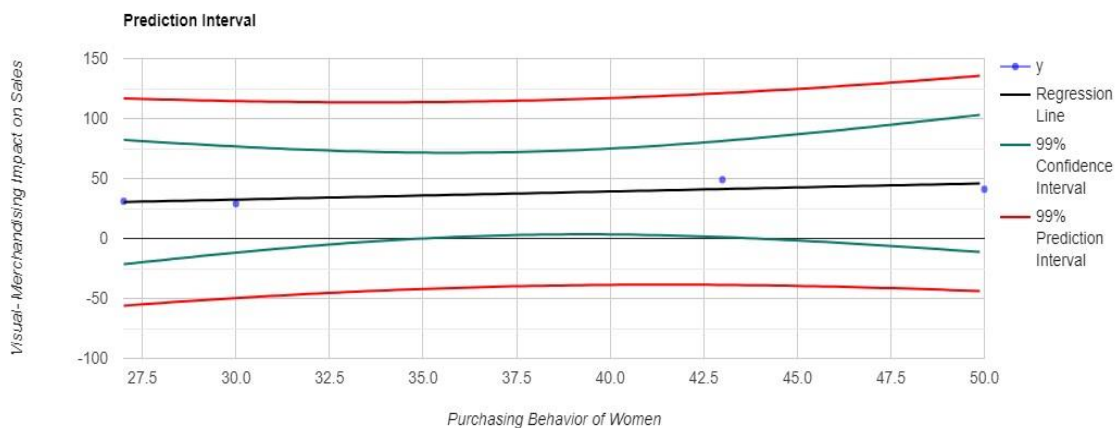


Figure 3. Prediction Interval between VMD Impact and Purchasing behaviour

Goodness of fit: Overall regression- right-tailed,  $F(1,2) = 3.3301$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.2096$ . Since the  $p\text{-value}$  is  $\geq \alpha$  (0.01), we accept  $H_0$ . The linear regression model,  $Y = b_0 + b_1X + \epsilon$ , doesn't provide a better fit than the model without the independent variable, resulting in  $Y = b_0 + \epsilon$ . The slope ( $b_1$ ) is two-tailed, with  $T(2) = 1.8249$  and a  $p\text{-value}$  of 0.2096. For one predictor,

it is the same as the p-value for the overall model. The y-intercept ( $b_0$ ) is two-tailed, with  $T(2) = 0.8443$  and a p-value of 0.4874. Hence,  $b_0$  is not significantly different from zero. It is still most likely recommended not to force  $b_0$  to be zero.

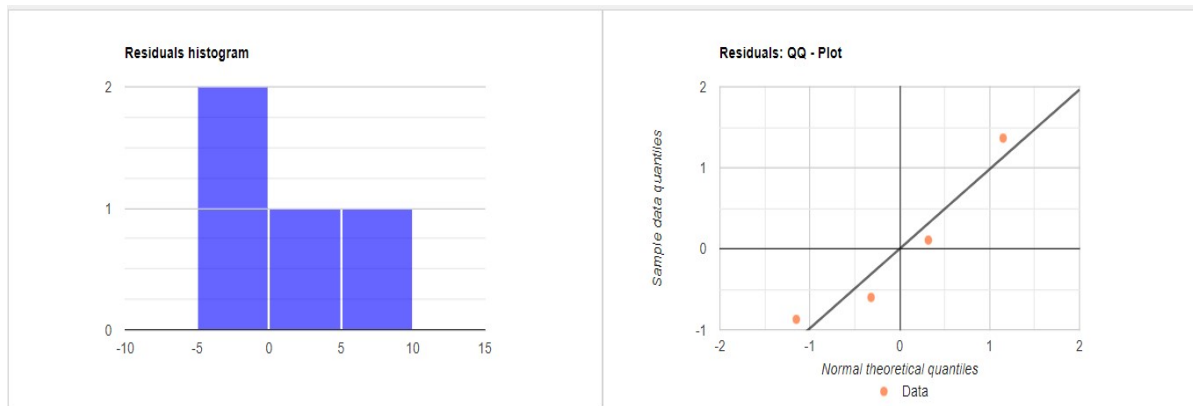


Figure 4. Residuals Histogram and Q-Q Plot

Residual normality: The linear regression model assumes normality for residual errors. The Shapiro-Wilk p-value equals 0.705. It is assumed that the data is normally distributed. Outliers: The data does not contain any outliers.

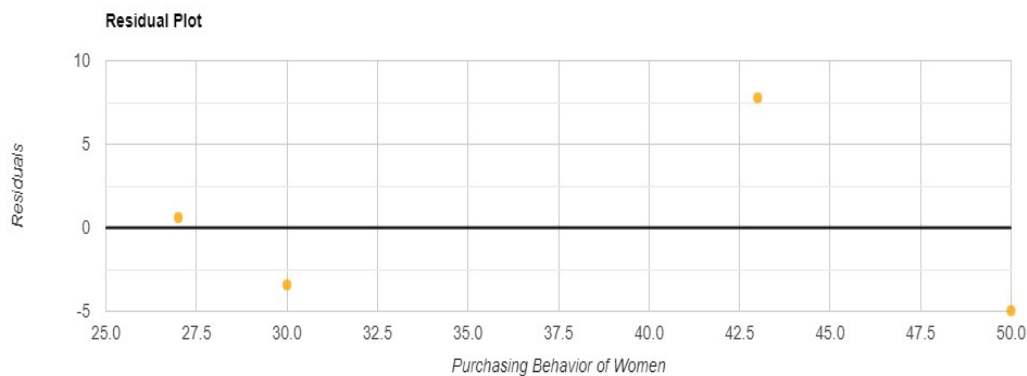


Figure 5. Residual plot Purchasing behaviour of women

## 7. DISCUSSIONS

The results of certain research studies highlighted a number of topics, including sustainability concerns in the textile and apparel (T&A) industry, enhanced value generation methods with cutting-edge BI solutions, and perceived challenges in the adoption of BIS. Because garment firms are more likely to combine Industry 4.0 technology with cutting-edge business intelligence (BI) solutions, the apparel retail industry has seen significant advancements. The findings demonstrate the critical role that economic sustainability plays in T&A enterprises' adoption of BIS and Industry 4.0 technologies (Ahmad, S., Miskon, S., Alabdan, R., & Tlili, I., 2020). Seven advanced digital fashions (ADFs) and 34 luxury brands that joined Luxury Stores by the end of the first half of 2021 were the subjects of an empirical analysis that used a techno-economic analysis, analogical evidence approach, literature review, and SWOT analysis (Watanabe, C., Akhtar, W., Tou, Y., & Neittaanmäki, P., 2021). According to other research, there is a strong and positive correlation between store layout and consumers' inclination to buy. Then, a favourable and substantial correlation between product presentation and customer purchase intent is discovered. Additionally, a favourable and strong correlation between colour and illumination and consumers' inclination to buy has been discovered. Furthermore, there is little evidence of a strong correlation between cleanliness and consumers' inclination to buy (Mondol, Edward Probir, et al., 2021). Another study suggests that theme presentation, which came in at the top with a weighted mean score for the visual merchandising criteria, is the most important one. With a weighted mean score, visual merchandising, which comprises techniques for drawing clients into a store to increase foot traffic, was voted top by respondents. About 25% of merchants were motivated by specific websites, followed by about 35% who were motivated by their prior experiences. The majority of respondents thought that visual merchandising initiatives increased customer foot traffic, which increased sales turnover at the retail establishment (Kaur, K., & Saini, H. K., 2022). The development of size-inclusive garment design has the potential to be supported by cutting-

edge computer-aided design tools, but little design study has been done to outline these tools' potential uses. Through a mixed-methods approach, the study sought to understand the demands of plus-size women and include 3D prototyping to improve plus-size clothing design. With the combination of 3D prototyping and the functional, expressive, and aesthetic (FEA) process, this study addresses the pressing need to improve clothing design for plus-size customers. This new method puts plus-size women at the centre of the model. The study's findings may also give designers and students who are less familiar with plus-size women's body types useful advice and increase their interest in designing for larger body types to encourage a sense of inclusion (Hudson, K., & Hwang, C., 2022). Some study findings suggest that virtual wardrobe marketers should emphasise technology innovation and social responsibility in their product and service offerings. Consumers may be more strategic about their clothing consumption, use, and disposal by obtaining insight into their closets (Bang, H., & Su, J., 2022). As retail companies, particularly fashion labels, attempt to compete in a market that is already crowded, visual merchandising becomes a crucial differentiator from merchants in the same sector. Today, successful branding is essential to the success of all kinds of fashion businesses. Fashion businesses may boost profitability, foster customer brand loyalty, and generate equity by employing powerful branding strategies. For businesses to grow and get value from their consumers, visual merchandising is essential. Its main objective is now to stand out, create the right brand image, and provide the best customer experience rather than making products appealing in order to sell them quickly (Akhilendra, S. P., & Aravendan, M., 2023). The effects of "virtual try-on" technology (AR) and "3D virtual store" (VR) integrated into an apparel retail website on purchase intentions have been studied. The research emphasises the mediating role of cognitive elaboration in the process through which these technologies influence purchase intentions, and it looks at how consumers' shopping goals (searching vs. browsing) interact with the website technology and influence their responses. Additionally, for browsers rather than searchers, cognitive elaboration mediated the relationship between a technology and a shopping aim on purchase inclinations (Park, H., & Kim, S., 2023).

Adoption intention was significantly impacted by the inspiration brought on by the customization affordance in the exploratory assignment, just as Fit Confidence was. Users' pleasure with their avatar image for both scenarios had a greater impact on perceived augmentation than did the individual quality of body esteem. The research also exemplifies how TIME's Sense of Agency component may aid in theorising favourable customer reactions to mobile marketing technologies, which were in this case triggered by the Mix and Match function of the app. Additionally, it was shown that body-image emotional judgements made during the pre-task VTO avatar construction phase might have an impact on perceived augmentation (Tawira, L., & Ivanov, A., 2023).

## 8. CONCLUSION

Visual apparel techniques is vital to improving the sales of women's apparel, especially in the current scenario. Further, this study also proves there is a strong direct relationship between the purchasing behaviour of women and the visual apparel techniques on sales. Virtual reality-based apparel modelling and showing how the apparel suits the customer through body image scanning are the current trends in visual merchandising. Similarly, online-based visual merchandising also brings the cost benefit of advertising models to garment shop owners for marketing their products. This study's results are limited to Kerala State only. It might differ from region to region and country to country. There is further research scope in this subject to explore how the sales percentage varies with respect to year on year with changes in apparel models, sizes, nuance, trends, fashions for different age groups, etc.

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