

The Impact of Store Atmosphere on Retailer Evaluations: Discounters vs. Supermarkets

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Abstract

Drawing on the Mehrabian-Russell model, price–quality heuristics, and schema congruity theory, this study examines how store atmosphere (pleasant vs. unpleasant) and retail for-mat (discounter vs. supermarket) affect consumers' retailer evaluations. A 2×2 experiment (n=303) manipulated both factors. Results show that a pleasant atmosphere consistently enhances consumers' attitudes, quality perceptions, and store patronage intentions across both formats. Compared to discounters, supermarkets are associated with higher quality. Contrary to schema-based expectations, no significant interaction effect emerged. These findings underscore the universal value of a pleasant store atmosphere, supporting the trend of discounters investing in their store environments.

Track: Consumer Behaviour