

Power of Scent Marketing to Influence Consumer Behavior

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Abstract

The smell of food cooking in the kitchen can invoke numerous thoughts of good experiences while enjoying that food. This same effect is used by scent marketers to emotionally connect with customers in case of other products besides food. Hence, the current paper attempted to study previous literature relating to the use of scent marketing as well as cited certain instances where this technique is being applied. In the present study, previous articles and papers were reviewed and analyzed to get a grip of what is the present knowledge in this area and what more can be done in the future. It was found that for the past two decades, marketers have been trying to find the relationship between the use of different kinds of scents and their effects in varied environments. It was seen that when an ambient scent was congruent with the environment, it had a significantly positive impact on the behavior of the customers present. Similarly, the approach-avoidance behavior of customers was influenced by manipulating their moods with the use of scents. Thus, it can be said that the products are no longer judged only by their inherent quality, it is also the quality of the environment in which they are purchased that appeals to the customers. The study is novel in its approach of viewing behavioral responses to scent and use of technology in scenting the environment. The study also provided certain propositions which can be tested in future research studies.

Keywords : scent marketing, mood, consumer behavior, retail

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“Nothing is more memorable than a smell. One scent can be unexpected, momentary and fleeting, yet conjure up a childhood summer beside a lake in the mountains.”

- Diane Ackerman (1990, p.17)

People understand the world through the five senses - smell, taste, touch, sight, and hearing (Lindstrom, 2005). There is a linkage of these five senses to memory, and they draw right into the emotions of a person. In the past, marketing was limited to visual marketing methods, ignoring the other senses. It has been found that 75% of our emotions are triggered through smell. It is the strongest of all human senses, and acts as a protection mechanism from various health hazards, for example, milk that has soured or leakage of gas. The limbic system is the processing centre of scents in the human brain which is responsible for memory and emotional responses. Most of today's marketing focuses on only two senses - sight and sound. However, what one smells influences mood in a significantly greater proportion than any other sense. Everyday, thousands of smells are encountered, and humans are capable of remembering as many as 10,000 distinct scents. Marketers can make use of this fact and can use it to their advantage. Scent marketing is defined as, “using scents to set a mood, promote products or position a brand” (Swanson, 2014, p. 17).

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The present study reviews existing literature in the field of scent marketing and gives certain propositions for future research. In order to gather data for the review, a meticulous keyword search of the literature using Emerald, Indian Journal of Marketing, Elsevier, Taylor and Francis, and Sage publishers was done. The keywords “scent marketing,” “sensory marketing,” and “olfaction” were initially used to generate a large number of articles for review. To ensure the validity of the review, high-quality journals in the core management disciplines were searched for any article that addressed a scent marketing concept. From the selected 45 papers, those directly addressing the impact of scent marketing on consumer moods and behavior were finally reviewed. The study has focused upon the role of mood as a mediator in between scent and consumer behaviour. It is novel in its approach of viewing behavioral responses (approach - avoidance, time spent, purchase decision) to scent and use of technology in scenting both brick and mortar and online retailing environments (smell dispensers, odour diffusers, etc.). The study also attempted to find gaps that exist in the scent marketing literature which can be further tested.

Review of Literature

(1) Ambient Scents in Shopping Environments : With the growing competition among retailers, they can no longer depend just on the quality of the goods and services being sold. The need of the hour is to provide a pleasant shopping environment that appeals to the customers. In an article, Shukla (2007) stressed on the shift from traditional marketing to the new paradigm of experiential marketing. The author said that experiential marketing focused on the need to evoke senses to create a positive customer experience where each of the senses played a crucial part. Among the five senses, the use of scent is on the rise due to its direct impact on human emotions. Several studies have contributed to this fact and there no longer remains any doubt regarding the effectiveness of this technique. In one of the studies, Chebat and Michon (2003) explored the environment of a shopping centre to study the effect of ambient scents. The authors used two competing models wherein the first model was extracted from the research stream of environmental psychology and focused on the use of atmospheric cues that induced feelings of arousal and pleasure ; and consequently, a behavior of approach or avoidance. The second model to be examined was based on emotions using cognitive theory. In the second model, understanding of shoppers regarding the product quality and retail environment mediated the influence of ambient scent cues on emotions and expending behaviors. The study concluded that presence of ambient scent had an influence on the cognizance of a mall environment leading to favorable evaluation of both the environment and product quality and further leading to increased spending.

Recently, Alex and Menon (2018) validated the results of this study in the Indian context. They tested the models in a branded retail store that sold apparels in South India. As per the outcomes of their study, both the models explained the influence of perfumes on consumer spending. Earlier also, Teller and Dennis (2012) investigated the advantage of using ambient scent in a regional shopping centre. For this, the authors conducted a survey of shoppers who were selected randomly and assigned to control and experimental groups using before-and-after surveys along with simulation of different experimental designs. In a mall, the strong effect from countless extraneous variables was visible and the difference between the design before the experiment and the most sophisticated design was clearly observed, which, in particular, included influence of other atmospheric stimuli. Both groups showed significant differences with respect to the dependent variables, which appeared to be interconnected to significant differences in one emotional variable and five perceptual variables. Yun and Yazdanifard (2013), through implementation of ambient scents into retailers' outlets, raised awareness towards the benefits acquired. Ambient scent had most powerful consequences in elevating consumer behavior in terms of purchasing intention ; willingness to revisit the store ; evaluation, emotion, and cognition in contrast to other atmospheric variables. The potential to change a browsing customer into a purchasing customer is possible through the use of ambient scents in the form of instrument for businesses to change window shopping experience and lead to more money being spent by the customer willingly in the same store. These positive customer behaviors

were exact outcomes of ambient scents and this outcome could be reached successfully by ushering advantages for the retailers with minimal effort and minimal cost.

Parsons (2009) studied retail stores that were typically odorless and introduced the concept of associated scents for them. Precursory studies advocated that just as the existence of pleasant scent can boost positive sales behavior and enhance liking for the store, this research showed that for a store that is commonly odorless, gaining positive responses depends on the scent having a perceived association with the store-type. The study also revealed that there can be negative behavioral responses in the presence of a scent that is pleasant but non-associated. Similarly, Lunardo (2012) also proposed that as opposed to several positive effects, if customers were introduced to an ambient scent in the surroundings in which such a scent was not expected, they developed skepticism towards the motives of the retailers. The findings suggested that customers' skepticism negatively impacted pleasure. The study demonstrated that the negative influence of atmosphere on pleasure could also be illustrated by the skepticism of customers. Surely, the outcomes showed that if the atmosphere was skepticism-inducing, it would be less pleasurable.

(2) Congruency Effects : In an early research, Knasko (1995) found that when subjects viewed slides of different items in the existence of two different pleasant odors (chocolate or baby powder), they found that baby slides were congruent with the smell of baby powder and incongruent with the smell of chocolate. They also found that in comparison to no odor, the pleasant odor had certain effects (i.e. lower hunger ratings, better mood, and longer looking time). Later, Goldkuhl and Styven (2007) contributed to services marketing by understanding the use of scents. The authors believed that at least four important aspects should be considered while using scents for the purpose of services marketing: the presence (or absence) of a scent ; its congruity or fit with the actual service ; its pleasantness (or unpleasantness) ; and the relationship between memory and scents. In a recent research, Leenders, Smids, and El (2016) studied the influence of a selected simple ambient scent that was congruent to a real-world supermarket setting. The outcomes showed that, in the stores where scent intensity was high, the scent had a significantly positive influence on store level sales, time spent inside store, and shopper's store evaluations. The authors provided evidence that there was a strong mediation by mood regarding the influence of scent on positive assessment. It was also found that scent, as inducer of mood, was especially successful for buyers who were in a hurry. It was interesting to find, in terms of general mood inducement, that at lower intensity levels, shoppers tended to over- estimate the amount of time spent shopping and underestimated time spent shopping at higher scent intensity.

Similarly, Chaturvedi (2013) found that several in-store factors influenced impulse purchasing significantly. One of these factors was retail service-scape which also contributed towards impulse buying decisions. Earlier, Mitchell, Kahn, and Knasko (1995) had tested the impact on cognitive variables due to various effects of odor that influenced the decision-making process. The authors found that when the product class was congruent with ambient odor contrary to being incongruent, subjects were more holistic in their processing, spent more time in the processing of data, and were more plausible to go beyond the information given, depending more on self-references and inferences. More recently Azeema, Jayaraman, and Kiumarsi (2016) applied the stimulus-organism-response model to the purchase of perfumes in Malaysia. The authors suggested that habit acted as a mediating variable in the purchase decision of perfumes. Jacob, Stefan, and Guéguen (2014) measured customer behavior taking place in two different situations, when lavender aroma was dispersed and when it was not dispersed inside a French flower shop. The outcomes depicted that both the amount of purchasing and the number of customers were positively affected by ambient aroma. The congruency of this aroma with the products that emerged in the retail setting could be explained by the positive effect of lavender.

Doucé, Poels, Janssens, and Backer (2013) investigated the impact of an ambient chocolate scent, which when dispersed in a retail outlet, had a positive effect on conduct of customers towards products that were thematically congruent. It was also inspected whether the ambient scent of chocolate had a different impact on general approach

versus goal-directed behavior. The authors established that the existence of a chocolate scent had a negative impact on goal-directed behavior and a positive influence on general approach behavior in the store. Moreover, this study confirmed the positive influence of the scent of chocolate on approach and buying behavior towards books that were thematically congruent. Adams, Doucé, Janssens, Vanrie, and Petermans (2014) studied the consequences of scent expertise (experts vs. novice vs. laymen) on taste and product valuations of three products that were (in) congruent with an ambient scent. The authors also examined the mediation effects of awareness in groups regarding scents in the environment and also by their identification of different scents. The outcomes showed that compared to laymen, the novice experts and experts evaluated an incongruent product in a less positive manner.

(3) Varied Behavioral Responses to Scents : In an early study, Gulas and Bloch (1995) discussed ambient scents as an important part of the environment. The influence of ambient scents on customers was described by the authors through a model proposed by them. Ambient scents were proposed as an environmental cue in comparison to scent preferences to influence approach-avoidance behaviors and affective responses. In a study inside a museum, Aggleton and Waskett (1999) found that due to a strong link between memory and emotional arousal, the presence of an unwanted scent that is affectively arousing might be an effective retrieval cue. Results showed that the actual visit at the museum was felt by the participants in the presence of particular scents that acted as effective retrieval cues. In a significant work on effect of scent on memory, Morrin and Ratneshwar (2003) probed the recognition and recall of brands due to the impact of ambient scent based on two studies. Both the studies showed that ambient scent improved both recognition and recall of familiar and unfamiliar brands. Even though ambient scent altered self-assessed mood of subjects or arousal levels, it enhanced their attention with reference to longer stimulus viewing times. Additional analysis also revealed that in enhancement of brand memory, a mediating role was played by stimulus viewing time. Guéguen and Petr (2006) analyzed ambient scents' effects in a restaurant setting. The outcomes confirmed the hypothesis that scents have an impact on behavior of restaurant consumers. It was found through the study that both amount of money and the length of time spent were positively affected by lavender. However, for either of the above two variables, the lemon aroma was found to have no effect. De Lange, Debets, Ruitenburg, and Holland (2012) demonstrated that exposure to scents could be used as a tool to achieve behavioral change. Passengers littered lesser (as calculated by number of items left behind and their weight) in compartments diffused with cleaner scent in comparison to passengers in unscented compartments. Toncar and Fetscherin (2012) investigated the expectations of respondents by comparing their reactions to print ads and the product assessment that followed with reference to visual exaggerations of fragrance advertisements. These outcomes showed that the imagery and visual cues in the fragrance ads resulted in product expectations that exceeded actual product assessment, recommending the subsistence of visual puffery. The researchers also confirmed that there were significantly higher expectations when more abstract descriptors of the ad were used, while the more concrete descriptors showed significantly lesser expectations in comparison to actual product evaluation.

Bouzaabia (2014) studied particularly the moderating effect of customer type and his/her state of accompaniment besides the influence of ambient scents on responses of customers. The outcomes indicated that a pleasant ambient scent refined customers' cognitive (quality of services provided, evaluation of store environment and its products), affective (the level of stimulation, the level of pleasure experienced), and conative (spending of customers and their intention to return to the store) responses. Doucé, Janssens, Swinnen, and Van Cleempoel (2014) examined whether a dispersion of pleasant scents could overpower customers' negative reaction to a store that is messy. Clearly, the authors investigated the influence of pleasant scents (un)connected to neatness on consumer assessment of a tidy versus a messy store. In a messy store, consumers assessed the products more negatively in the presence of a pleasant scent not related with neatness in comparison to when no scent was present, although reactions of respondents did not significantly vary between the scent conditions in case of a tidy store. Gagarina and Pikturniene (2015) identified the relationship of ambient scent, based upon the intensity and type,

with decision making when risks were included. Ambient scent type (peppermint vs. vanilla) and intensiveness 8 sprays (1mg) vs. 16 sprays (2mg) of scent were manipulated as between subject variables. It was found that in comparison to vanilla scent, bidding was significantly higher in case of peppermint condition. In high intensity scent condition, risk was perceived as significantly lower in comparison to slightly scented or non-scented environments. Cirrincione, Estes, and Caru (2014) studied the influence on perception and memory of art in the presence of ambient scent for which an experimental study was conducted. Besides, the interactive effect of art and scent on arousal was established. It was concluded that through sensorial cues, experiences could be enhanced and obstruct memory and evaluation of art. Garg and Atwaru (2017) in their study on a shopping mall in South Africa observed a range of behavioural variables that came into play once the customers entered a shopping mall. The variables observed by the authors included time spent, money spent, and frequency of visit. The authors studied the interaction of these variables with demographic and mall factors. The Table 1 presents a brief summary of major behavioral responses towards scent marketing as studied by previous authors.

Table 1. Behavioral Responses Towards Scent Marketing

Behavioral Responses	Author	Effect of Scent Marketing
Approach- Avoidance	Gulas & Bloch (1995)	Affective reactions to ambient scent were believed to result in avoidance or approach reactions pertinent to the situation of consumption.
	Douc�� et al. (2013)	Chocolate scent improved buying as well as approach behavior toward books that were thematically congruent and decreased buying as well as approach behavior toward incongruent books.
Time Spent	Gu��guen and Petr (2006)	Length of time spent was positively affected by type of scent, that is, lavender.
	Leenders et al. (2016)	Shoppers tended to over-estimate the amount of time spent shopping at intensity levels which were lower and underestimated time spent buying at scent intensity levels which were higher.
Purchase Decision	Mitchell et al. (1995)	Respondents spent more time in data processing when ambient odor was congruent with the product class and contrary to when it was incongruent.
	Gagarina and Pikturnien�� (2015)	Risky decisions were perceived as significantly less in high intensity scent conditions in comparison to slightly scented or non-scented environments.

(4) Scent and Technology : Emsenhuber (2009) delivered insight into the psychological background of scent marketing as well as current air design technology and gave a basis of discussing the relevance of olfactory communication for human-computer interaction and pervasive advertising. Current issues of computer scientists and also air designers included the improvement of intensity control and evaporation, advancing psychological investigation of the olfactory perception, and being responsive to customer's individual preferences. Herz and von Clef (2001) examined whether a verbal context could produce olfactory illusions. The authors showed through an experiment that the presence of a verbal label could act as a function used to invert the cognizance of an invariant physical stimulus (an odorant). The study explained that depending upon the presentation of verbal context, similar physical odor stimulus could produce opposite interpretation. Swanson (2014) suggested that emotion and olfaction were deeply connected by neuro - evolution. The screen environment is thus far bereft of smell, although video games and the Internet provide a large number of aural and visual stimuli. However, the addition of an olfactory "virtual reality" to the gaming and Internet experience uses same technologies that facilitate ambient scent marketing. The author described selective releasing of smells, ideally through a headset or a mobile telephone, using a scent generator. The scent travels to the nose of the consumer by dispersion. Kim (2015) developed complex-functional textiles by sticking cinnamon, pine, and lemon-scented micro capsules on sports-towels which gave the effect of refreshing fragrance features for user's health. On emotional evaluation, using principal component analysis (PCA) for category identification and regression analysis for quantification theory,

five emotion factors were categorized. Most specific factors correlated moderately with “refreshment” and “eco-friendly” emotion. Special attention was given to the relation between emotional evaluation and “refreshment” of emotion. Bradford and Desrochers (2009) tried to study the ethical issues and create awareness in the scent marketing industry. Particularly, the authors illuminated areas of interest in relation to the application of smells to lure customers and its prospects in making customers vulnerable to marketing communications. As this is a new area for marketing professionals, the authors began with a clarification of how the sense of smell was disparate from other senses and then provided a description of current use of scents in marketing. Vinitzky and Mazursky (2011) observed that similar to traditional store environments, in online settings as well, when consumers were exposed to scents, they displayed an approach behavior. The results suggested the extension of stimulus-organism-reaction model with the addition of cognitive thinking style as a mediator. The Table 2 presents the use of different technology for scent marketing based upon the type of retailer.

Table 2. Use of Different Technology for Scent Marketing

Type of Retailer	Author	Scent Technology
Brick and Mortar	Kim (2015)	Sticking cinnamon, pine, and lemon scented microcapsules on sports-towels, which gave the effect of refreshing fragrance.
	Emsenhuber (2009)	Digital olfactory devices evaporating odors or detecting volatile components can be defined as olfactory technology and can act as olfactory displays or odor sensors.
Online	Swanson (2014)	Selective release of smells through smell generator, preferably through a mobile telephone or a headset.
	Vinitzky and Mazursky (2011)	Using telepresence or computer-generated surroundings to spread the fragrances.

Instances of Retailers Applying Scent Marketing Techniques

There are several instances of retailers using scent marketing techniques in their outlets. **Baristas** use freshly ground coffee to seduce passers-by with the aromatic attraction of the scent. Bakers blast their oven fans with the anticipation of stimulating appetites - they understand that smell can tantalize the taste buds and mesmerize consumers into a short detour from their frantic shopping routine. In real estate, there is also an old trick wherein fresh cookies or breads are baked just before a home is open for inspection. The theory is that it will increase the saleability of the property more than a fresh lick of paint or its proximity to the local shops. Another example is of **Cinnabon**, everyone loves the smell of freshly baked Cinnabon or cinnamon rolls, as they are always enticing for anyone. However, according to the President of Cinnabon, this is an entire strategy and no accident. In order to spread the smell all over the airports and malls where the stores are generally located, the stores follow the strategy of placing the ovens specifically at the front so that the scent would waft out. To help trap the sweet aromas inside, the vendors deliberately use low quality oven covers and ventilation systems. This successful chain utilizes natural odors to boost sales and draw in their consumers (Nassauer, 2014).

The **M&M World** store utilized chocolate aroma created by a scent marketing company which was diffused around the store in Leicester Square (London) which stored pre-packaged goodies. By injecting coffee smells directly into each store, coffee shop chain **Starbucks** amplifies the smell of coffee in its stores. The idea behind the extra coffee smell is the creation of an alluring smell that consumers expect in a particular environment (Chakravarty, 2015). Ice-cream chain **Emack & Bolio's**, also a U.S. company, boosted its sales by developing an “aroma billboard” to send out the smell of waffle cones to allure consumers to its outlets. One of the upmarket malls in Delhi, **Select City**, has put a wide variety of smells at each of its entrances. The smell of right-out-of-the-oven-cookies, freshly brewed coffee, of caramelized pear and toasted pecan ice cream, and of cheese melting over sun-dried tomatoes attract the customers in every corner of the mall (Yadav, 2010).

One of the first brands that made ambient fragrances a crucial part of its identity was **Abercrombie & Fitch**. This fact is not surprising to anyone who in the early 2000s wandered into its stores. Though not an ideal delivery method, Fierce, a men's cologne and the brand's signature scent, was once manually sprayed inside the stores by employees. Certain retailers, like Abercrombie & Fitch, went against the concept of placing subtle scents, which was the best practice. Such retailers featured powerful and even overpowering fragrances in their outlets. These brands employ a strategy called "billboard scents," because the peculiar smells chosen by them to associate with their brand are as unavoidable as a billboard. In a study, **Nike** found introducing scent in a petrol station with a mini-mart increased sales of the drinks by 300%, and introducing the scent of coffee increased intent to purchase by 80%. ScentAir developed the piña colada scent being used in children's toy store **Hamleys** which makes parents apparently "linger longer". **Jimmy Choo**, a high-end shoe brand, uses smells such as cardamom and ivory to emanate wealth and luxury. Another example of scent marketing is the Le Meridien chain of hotels. In India, the hotel branded itself as a hotel for guests who seek out a new perspective and cultural discovery in their travel experience. When a person enters the hotel lobby, a peculiar scent of old books and parchment is felt (Anand, 2018).

One of the first service providers to create a custom scent was **Singapore Airlines**, who used to spray this scent inside their hot towels. The citrus and floral odor was so well received that the airline named it Stefan Floridian Waters. **Cineplex** uses the smell of fresh popcorn, which is their scent brand. They considered that the assortment of the entertainment vibe with the scent of theatre made popcorn (which tastes quite different at home) in all corners of the building was alluring. Movie attendees were able to hear and see it being made too, which added context to the smell. When a person walks into one of Lowe's brightly lit stores, he/she encounters the scent of freshly cut wood. The smell inspires a customer to renovate his home as the smell lingers on. A more transparent approach is taken by **Muji** for their strategy of scent marketing. A curated mix of stationery, household goods, textiles, and more is sold by these stores, and though originally started out in Japan, they boast of locations in more than a dozen countries. Like many shops, they do not believe in hiding diffusers in air ducts as the chain has chosen a scent strategy having a pleasant background. Instead, aroma diffusers are sold in their shops and are visibly operated in stores (Orvis, 2016). The department store in Japan by the name of **Matsuzakaya** dispersed different scents at different times of the day – using relaxing scents for tired customers in the evening and stimulating aromas in the morning. This depicts how use of aromatherapy can directly affect our wellbeing and mood.

The Kumho Tyre Company sells lavender-scented tyres, costing up to \$330, but still being a sensation in Australia as well as overseas. According to the company officials, the Ecsta DX Aroma tyre was designed for "trend-setting, fashion-conscious drivers". The scent - lavender, with indications of mint, white musk, and iris - can be smelt within 10 meters of a vehicle. The scent lasts for almost a year and when the tyres are warm after normal driving, then it is most noticeable immediately. The smell of a new device is known to customers of **Apple** computers, iPhones, and other products all too well. Although some people have proposed that the packaging is responsible for this very peculiar scent, but it is also rumored to come from inside the devices. The aluminum MacBook has the same smell as the plastic iPhone, so the scent is probably not affixed to the plastic. The Apple Mac scent has been produced by the Air Aroma company, even though it has never been owned up by Apple, but they combine the fragrances of ink, cardboard, and other ingredients (Bever, 2013). In January 2014, leading newspapers in India came smelling like babies as their papers were infused with the smell of Johnson & Johnson baby powder. The idea behind this strategy was to use print media to immediately grasp attention by using baby smells (Shah, 2014).

Impact of Scent on Moods

Scents are powerful triggers of human thoughts and actions. Scents may alter an individual's general mood and consequent behavior and approach - avoidance inclinations (Bone & Ellen, 1999 ; Spangenberg, Crowley, &

Henderson, 1996). The reminiscent influences of odor cues are so strong that in a study, Knasko, Gilbert, and Sabini (1990) found that respondents who were told that the odor was either neutral or unpleasant did not report a positive mood compared to those who were exposed to a pleasant ambient odor. There is a transfer of feelings towards pleasant odors which creates a mood that transfers to the product in judgment (Bone & Jantrania, 1992). Even when odors are presented indirectly, they may usher in characteristic changes in moods of people. This was evidenced by self-rating by participants of their affect as more pleasant and more positive when in exposure of pleasant ambient scents in comparison to participants in a no-odor condition (Castellanos, Hudson, Haviland - Jones, & Wilson, 2010). Likewise, there has been an improvement in the moods of shoppers in a mall environment using pleasant ambient scents (Chebat & Michon, 2003). Knasko (1995) showed in the case of a museum visit that a pleasant scent was associated with a positive mood. Herz (2007) indicated that the intensity of surrounding disturbances could be decreased by inducing a pleasant mood through pleasant scents.

If ambient scents alter mood states of consumers, state-dependent memory mechanisms have an impact on stimulus recall, which is possible through ambient scent. State-dependent memory refers to the finding that memory for the stimulus is likely to be upgraded when the internal state (e.g., mood) of a person at the time of encoding is re-established at the point of retrieval (Morris & Ratneshwar, 2003). Rinkute, Moraes, and Ferreira (2016) explored the key thematic areas of the literature related to scent in the fields of psychology and marketing. The authors suggested that increased likelihood of purchase can be achieved through exposure to scent, which was found to have a positive effect on enhancement of memory for brands and attitude towards service environments. Exposure to citrus affected food choice, increased physical activity in young adults, and resulted in an elevated mood. In contrast, projected emotions were affected only by exposure to vanilla (Wijk & Zijlstra, 2012). Generally, changes in moods are elicited by perfumes, which are believed to create these effects by stimulating the olfactory system with odorant molecules. Some examples of the many ways in which people's moods may be affected by perfumes include ascribing a good smell of a product to its good quality, turning around in response to smelling a beautiful perfume to look for a beautiful woman (Van Toller, 1988), and application of perfume or aftershave because it makes the user "feel good" and may give confidence to them. Another example is of shoppers who encounter a floral scent that goes well with their priorities, and this experience leads to some elevation in mood. Marketing professionals are completely aware of the power of scent on purchase decisions, emotions, and mood (Cross, Lin, & Childers, 2015) and scent marketing today is estimated to be a billion-dollar industry. Some shoppers may already be in a good mood and if the scent is used to have a positive effect on mood, the desired effects may not be obtained. Other shoppers who may be in a relatively bad mood due to stress or time pressures might experience an alleviation in their mood due to presence of ambient scent. This, in turn, leads to enhanced evaluation of products and the environment.

What Does the Future Hold ?

The existing literature on scent marketing is just like droplets of water in a vast ocean that is yet to be explored. The interaction of ambient smells with individual olfactory ability can have a profound experiential effect for consumers with very practical implications for marketers, in terms of time spent browsing or lingering, purchase order, product choice, or shopping venue. Ambient scents have the ability to change a browsing customer into a purchasing customer (Yun & Yazdanifard, 2013). Shoppers who are in a hurry or under stress find their mood alleviated in the presence of an ambient scent (Cross et al., 2015 ; Leenders et al., 2016).

🔗 **Proposition 1** : Scent marketing influences the choice of a retail outlet when customers are in a hurry to purchase.

Compared to laymen, there is a different reaction by scent experts to the presence of ambient scents, thus retailers

must be aware of this fact so that they can use ambient scents for the improvement of the shopping experience, as when the scent is incongruent with the product under assessment, it may result in negative reactions. When an ambient odor was congruent with the product class as opposed to incongruent, subjects spent more time in data processing. Still, as long as the ambient scent is congruent with the offerings of the store, the reactions of experts and laymen can be expected to be similar (Adams et al., 2014 ; Doucé et al., 2013 ; Jacob et al., 2014 ; Mitchell et al., 1995). Another study suggested that congruency between environment and ambient odor may influence approach behavior more in congruent situations than in incongruent situations (Knasko, 1995).

✍ **Proposition 2 :** Retail outlets with pleasant ambient scents that are congruent with the environment are evaluated positively by customers.

Retail businesses and service providers are benefited most from ambient scents in their effort to intensify consumer attitudes towards the products and the environment, and to generate better recognition and recall of their brands, which would eventually lead customers to make better purchasing decisions. Ambient scents improve both recognition and recall of familiar and unfamiliar brands. The use of scent can be seen as a form of subliminal nudging, since it is not possible for consumers to turn off their sense of smell as many might not even be aware of its influential nature in a retail setting (Herz, 2007 ; Morrin & Ratneshwar, 2003 ; Rimkute et al., 2016). Studies have gathered proof that reinstatement of the same odors can aid performance on a subsequent test of recall or recognition (Aggleton & Waskett, 1999 ; Schab, 1990).

✍ **Proposition 3 :** Signature scents lead to repeat purchase due to recall of pleasant experience of previous purchases.

Roxana and Ioan (2013) found a lack of studies in identifying the effect of ambient scents in digital service environments. Experiments have shown that the cognizance of an invariant physical stimulus (an odorant) can be reversed as a function of the verbal label that it is presented with. That is, verbal context presented can result in opposite perceptions to the same physical odor stimulus (Herz & von Clef, 2001). Therefore, the following proposition is presented :

✍ **Proposition 4:** Verbal expressions of scents in online purchasing are a possible replacement for actual scents.

Conclusion

Scent marketing has proven to be beneficial for both marketers and customers as can be comprehended from the literature reviewed. It has been shown to influence mood to a great extent and in turn influencing consumer behavior, ultimately leading to an increase in product and service evaluation. One important effect that contributes most to the outcome of scent marketing is the congruency effect. It was found in most studies that the existence of a congruent scent leads to more positive moods and behavior as compared to when the scent was incongruent. Scent marketing proves to be a good source of attracting customers and increasing a product's appeal. As can be seen from the various examples studied, scent can be used in many ways to attract and hold customers. The scent can be in the form of real product scent or artificially created scent which is diffused into the environment to create the desired effect. The examples mentioned included mostly the food brands, but are not limited to it. The brands that use scent marketing are a variety ranging from shoe brands to car brands and from mobiles to clothing. The influence of scent on people is wide and varied.

Scent can influence peoples' moods to varying degrees, which can be as simple as relieving the stress of shopping to making them linger in stores for a longer period of time. The effects of scent marketing are varied and can be

applied differently depending upon the situation at hand. It can lead customers to spend more time in a retail outlet or restaurant and encouraging them to spend more when in a positive mood. Therefore, we have suggested certain propositions, which can be explored in future studies in order to add to the knowledge of this rapidly flourishing technique.

Managerial Implications

The present study provides certain implications for managers. As seen from the examples mentioned in the study, there have been several successful cases of scent marketing in today's world. Hence, managers can place a safe bet on this technology in order to provide a suitable environment to the consumers. The study has identified that scent strongly affects moods, which can be quite helpful for managers so that they can provide a pleasant atmosphere to the customers. Lastly, the use of latest technological developments like smell generators or odour diffusers can be made in place of just using the natural smells/fragrances.

Limitations of the Study and Scope for Further Research

The present study has given certain propositions which have not been tested empirically in this paper. Thus, future research can be conducted where these propositions are tested through experimentation or other survey methods. The review has presented certain studies with contrasting results, which can be researched further to establish generalizability. Another upcoming area is online shopping where in order to overcome the lack of smell, several other alternatives like verbal expressions of smell can be tested so that the lack of smell does not present as a hindrance to online retailers.

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