

Sensory branding and buying behavior in coffee shops: A study on Generation Y

S Dalle Ave

M Venter

B Mhlophe

Student

Lecturer

Student

University of the Witwatersrand

University of the Witwatersrand

University of the Witwatersrand

Marike.venter@wits.ac.za

ABSTRACT

With the rise of globalisation and the infiltration of global brands into emerging markets, retailers are facing challenges to win market share in this competitive landscape. As a result, retailers are reverting to innovative methods such as experiential marketing to influence consumer buying behaviour. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the effectiveness of using experiential marketing as a way of influencing consumers' purchase intentions in coffee shops. The influences of scent and sight as predictors of purchase intention among Generation Y consumers is explored. By means of a quantitative study, 256 self-administered questionnaires were distributed amongst Generation Y individuals in Johannesburg. The data analysis was done by means of structural equation modelling (SEM), with the main focus being placed on path modelling for testing the proposed hypotheses. The findings indicate that both scent and sight are predictors of purchase intention. Although several studies have explored this phenomenon in an array of contexts, few studies have investigated Generation Y within a South African context. This paper is of paramount importance to retailers who seek to gain market share in the competitive landscape by implementing innovative ways in a bid to effectively influence consumer buying behaviour.

Keywords: Experiential Marketing, Generation Y, Purchase Intention, Coffee Shops

The concept of branding has evolved over the past decade and brands have begun creating branding experiences through the use of sensory branding (Wilson, 2012). Although not a completely new phenomenon, the exploitation of sensory branding strategies are becoming more popular as retailers attempt to create unique in-store experiences (Michon, Chebat & Turley, 2005). Multi-sensory branding entails using the five senses to create a unique brand experience to ultimately

influence buying behaviour (Hulten, 2011). In view of this, it has become possible for marketers to create distinctive store environments by modifying various sensory experiences, such as sight, sound, touch, smell, and taste (Michon et al., 2005). This phenomenon is complemented by the current shift in consumer mind-sets, from the rational to the emotional, and is a widely accepted notion in marketing literature (Kim, Koo & Chang, 2009; Turley & Milliman, 2000).

Despite the fact that the contemporary marketing literature is inundated with sensory branding-related studies, few studies have focussed on the impact of scent and sight in coffee shops in South Africa, which is often an overlooked market. Notably, Clarke, Perry, and Denson (2012) found that smell and lighting proved to positively influence shoppers' in-store experience. As a result, shoppers tend to spend more time in the store if they have a positive experience. Other studies have investigated the impact of store-experience on brand attitude and loyalty and found a positive relationship between these two constructs (Vandenbosch & Dawar, 2002; Zarantonello & Schmitt, 2010). Furthermore, it has been found that visual merchandising has a positive influence on both brand attitude and purchase intention (Park, Jeon & Sullivan, 2014). Evidence also exists to support the notion that scent and music positively influence consumer purchasing behaviour (Spangenberg, Grohmann & Spratt, 2005).

The global coffee shop market is growing rapidly, with Africa representing the fastest growing market for retail hot drinks (Euromonitor, 2015). This acceleration is a result of the growing youth market and increase in urbanisation, driving the adoption rate of retail (Euromonitor, 2015). Owing to the expanding importance of this market, it has become worthwhile for marketers to invest in this industry, by developing the in-store experience and by creating a unique coffee shop experience for consumers. Thus, much focus should be placed on creating a pleasurable store atmosphere. Furthermore, the relevance and the likely benefits of using sensory branding within the retail sector may prove to be valuable to marketers and all concerned stakeholders. With the vast amount of global brands entering emerging markets, especially in South Africa, local coffee shops are facing increased pressure to maintain a competitive advantage over their competitors. Accordingly, this paper aims to fill the gap in

academic literature on sight and scent as predictors of purchase intention in local coffee shops among Generation Y consumers. By means of a proposed conceptual model, sight and scent are the predictor variables, with attitude as the mediator, and purchase intention as the outcome variable. Furthermore, the objectives of the present paper are to investigate whether or not there is a positive relationship between scent and sight on brand attitude; and to determine whether or not brand attitude has a positive influence on consumer purchase intention.

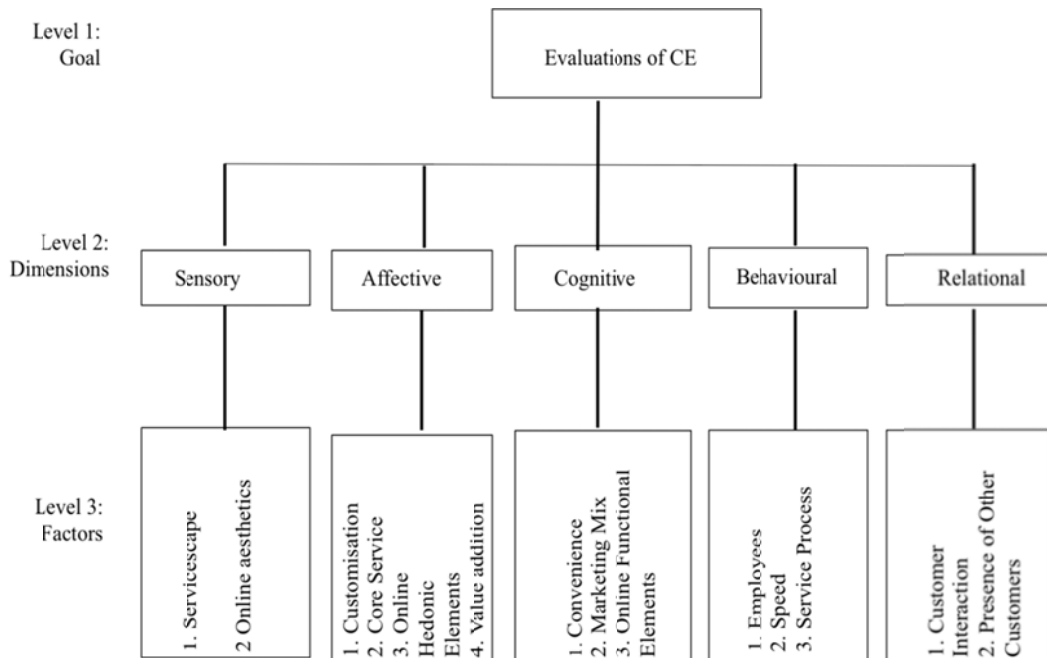
This paper is structured in the following way: firstly an overview of literature is provided, followed by the research problem, conceptual model, and hypotheses development. The research methodology, the data analysis and results, and discussion of the findings is also presented.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of sensory branding

Sensory branding refers to the use of the five senses to create a unique consumer experience and consequently create a competitive advantage for brands (Hulten, Broweus & Van Dijk, 2009; Khanna & Mishra, 2013). This concept further recognises the importance of creating an overall sensory experience while enhancing relationships with customers (Hulten et al., 2009). Furthermore, this notion has evolved over the past few decades and currently plays an important role in branding literature (Wilson, 2012). As a result, marketers have placed much emphasis on targeting consumers' sensory cues in an endeavour to create brand awareness along with brand loyalty (Wilson, 2012). This paper is grounded in two main theoretical frameworks, namely, Schmitt's (1999) experiential branding model and Hulten's (2011) multi-sensory brand experience model.

FIGURE 1
Experiential Branding Model



Source: Schmitt (1999)

Experiential branding model

Schmitt (1999) developed a 5-dimensional model for experiential branding that covered sensory experience, affective experience, intellectual experience, behavioural experience, and social experience. According to Schmitt (1999), these dimensions are evoked by various stimuli, including the brand's design, packaging, environment, and communications. Figure 1 below is an illustration of the experiential branding model

Sensory experience

Schmitt (1999) collapsed the dimensions of Hulten's multi-sensory brand experience model into just one dimension. Sensory experience refers to all visual, auditory, tactile, atmospheric, and gastronomic experiences that a customer has when immersed in the marketing environment (Schmitt, 1999). The

overall level, to which a customer rates each of these aspects positively, where relevant, is considered to measure sensory experience. Schmitt (1999) stated that not all senses are important in particular contexts. As such, it is not advisable to develop a metric based solely on sensory experience. Furthermore, basic sensory experience should be differentiated from deeper experiences for which sensory stimuli may only have served as a gateway stimuli (Schmitt, 1999). Marketing concerns regarding sensory experiences should focus on matters such as whether or not the environment has sufficient lighting, and whether or not the selected colour schemes will appeal to the target market segment, among others (Brakus, Schmitt & Zarantonello, 2009). As a result, the main goal of improving sensory experience is about ensuring that customers are able to successfully experience other dimensions of

the marketing environment, in a pleasant and accurate manner.

Affective experience

The affective experience of the customer relates to the emotions that the marketing environment evokes in the customer. In line with Schmitt (1999), it is critical that the environment makes customers feel welcome. This entails providing customised stimuli that is expected to appeal best to target market segments. It is also of paramount importance that the marketing strategy should encompass and consider what stimuli might seem welcoming to the market segment, and what stimuli might potentially offend members of a particular segment (Brakus et al., 2009). For example, if a fashion boutique seeks to sell plus-sized clothing, it may be critical for the store environment to be customised for plus-sized individuals. This includes elements from the spacing of walkways and doorways, to the kinds of images that are displayed in a store. Moreover, this is where the difference between sensory experience and affective experience lies. A picture of a beautiful woman may generally be appealing, even to plus-sized women, but displaying this picture in a boutique for plus-sized clothing may be affectively inappropriate. When creating an affective experience, it may be worthwhile for developers to empathise with the market segments that the environment is being developed for.

Intellectual experience

Intellectual or cognitive experience refers to a customer's perceptions of the marketing environment in which he or she is immersed (Schmitt, 1999). An environment that provides a strong cognitive experience is able to effectively communicate messages to the client about different positive elements in relation to visiting and making purchases in the store (Brakus et al., 2009). For example, a client may realise how convenient it is to make purchases in-store because of its streamlined

system of taking and delivering orders made by the client. Similarly, the client may realise, based on the systematic placement of products on the store's shelves, that the store already offers a one-stop-shop for everything that such a customer needs. Store elements may also show the client that the products in the store offer the highest-value for money, or simply convey a message that goods are of superior quality. This may point towards the intellectual dimension that marketing mix considerations are established.

Behavioural experience

While the cognitive dimension may focus on systems in place within the store, the behavioural dimension may be concerned about customers' experiences of the dynamics of the marketing environment (Schmitt, 1999). Accordingly, a store is deemed to provide good behavioural experience to customers when its clients get prompt service from employees, when they are treated cordially and with respect, and when they are fully assisted in aspects relating to their concerns about products offered in-store (Brakus et al., 2009). Unquestionably, proper employee attitudes are indispensable when addressing customers' requests and inquiries. At the same time, it is important for employees to be able to accurately follow directives set in-store so that they can provide the best possible experience for the customers.

Social experience

The social experience or relational dimension of the model has to do with the nature and quality of relationships formed in the store environment, both between customers and employees, and among the different customers within the store (Schmitt, 1999). As explained by Schmitt (1999), social experience goes beyond behavioural experience in that it is more concerned with the product of interaction than the process of interaction. That is, whereas the behavioural dimension is concerned with whether or not employees are

treating customers respectfully and expediting their requests efficiently, social experience is concerned with how customers see employees. More explicitly, when consumers trust the input of employees, they may consider them as valuable advisers during the product's selection process. Likewise, social experience looks into customers' experience with other customers, that is, whether or not they feel that the store is too crowded or whether or not they consider the store to be a good place to interact with like-minded individuals.

Hulten's (2011) multi-sensory brand-experience model

Hulten (2011) developed a multi-sensory brand experience model based on the assertion that stores should make use of diverse sensorial strategies in order to differentiate their brands and connect with their target markets. According to Hulten (2011), the five

senses play important roles in customers' instore experiences. The importance of each of the senses may differ depending on the product or service that is sold at a certain store. (Hulten, 2011; Hulten et al., 2009). On the other hand, Hulten et al. (2009) propose different sensory expressions for which each of the senses may be deemed relevant. Table 2.1 is an illustration of the model on multi-sensory brand experience.

Sight

An individual's main visual dimensions are colour, brightness, size, and shape (Kotler, 1974). The concept of advertising as a method of creating brand awareness was primarily directed to consumers' sight, as sight is regarded as the most responsive of individuals' senses (Zona, 2012). It is estimated that roughly 93% of the population tend to regard visual factors (e.g. colour and shape) as

FIGURE 2
Multi-sensory Brand Experience Model

Sensors	Sensations	Sensory expressions
Smell sensors	Atmospheric	Product congruence and intensity Atmosphere, advertency and theme Scent brand and signature scent
Sound sensors	Auditory	Jingle, voice and music Atmospheric attentiveness and theme Signature sound
Sight sensors	Visual	Design, packaging and style Colour, light and theme Graphic, exterior and interior
Taste sensors	Gastronomic	Interplay, symbiosis, and synergies Name, presentation and environment Knowledge. Lifestyle and delight
Touch sensors	Tactile	Material and surface and weight Form and steadiness

Source: Hulten (2011a)

important aspects that they consider prior to actually buying various products, services, and brands (Zona, 2012).

Smell

Smell is the one of the senses that cannot be turned off and is strongly linked to an individual's memory, as it enables recall (Khanna & Mishra, 2013). It is estimated that 75% of our emotions are influenced by what we smell (Zona, 2012). Our sense of smell has the ability to invoke feelings and memories through the interaction with a specific form of sensory input, whether it be in the form of the smell of coffee or perfume (Zona, 2012). In order to attract and retain consumers, different stores infuse different ambient scents throughout their stores (Khanna & Mishra, 2013). For example, the smell of coffee beans fills the air when consumers enter Vida Cafe.

Taste

Taste is distinguished by special structures in the mouth called taste buds, with different taste areas on our tongue detecting different tastes (Lindstorm, 2005). Taste and smell are closely linked to one another, and consumers tend to like either both the taste and smell, or dislike both the taste and smell (Khanna & Mishra, 2013).

Touch

Skin is the human body's largest organ. It is through touch that one is able to feel and harness pressure, even without one's senses being activated (Khanna & Mishra, 2013). An individual's skin has more than 400 000 sensory receptors that can be activated and manipulated through exposure to various textures and materials of a given product, service, or brand (Zona, 2012). With the advancements in technology, marketers have been able to design touch screens as a method of utilising the sense of touch in their advertising campaigns, so that consumers are able to gain a deeper attachment with a

specific product, service, or brand (Khanna & Mishra, 2013).

Sound

The sound that is used in advertising campaigns has also evolved owing to technological improvements. Currently, marketers are able to create and add a sound signature to their relative brands in order to enhance a differential experience for their target markets and consumers (Genuario, 2007). Music can be used to enhance a consumer's experience within a store, and can also help in directing consumers to purchase their desired brand(s) (Khanna & Mishra, 2013).

The Concept of brand attitude

Brand attitude refers to the direction of the perception that consumers have in relation to a brand which could be positive or negative (Yoon & Park, 2012). Yoon and Park (2012) found that sensory advertisements have a tremendous impact on consumers' brand attitudes. In particular, some ads allow consumers to associate with the brand, and therefore view the brand positively. On the other hand, consumers who find some ads offensive tend to transfer these perceptions onto the brand itself which results in a negative brand attitude (Yoon and Park, 2012). Upon examining the impact of multiple endorsers on brand attitude, Rice, Kelting, and Lutz (2012) found that endorsers who represent multiple brands with no clear credibility for such endorsements tend to affect brand attitude negatively. Similarly, the use of multiple endorsers for a single brand affects brand attitude positively, especially with a high involvement product (Rice et al., 2012).

The concept of purchase intention

Purchase intention refers to a consumer's plan to buy a product or make use of a service (Lu, Chang & Chang, 2014). Purchase intention is

influenced by the timing and particular circumstances in which the consumer will buy the item, such as when a certain need or compulsion arises or if the item's price reaches a certain desirable level. Purchase intention may be planned, but it may also be spontaneous. When a consumer acts upon a purchase intention, the item is purchased and the company that sells the item earns revenue from the purchase. (Lu et al., 2014) Following the act of purchase intention, is the possibility of re-purchase intention, a significant buying behaviour aspect that marketers aim to achieve. Consumers' consideration for re-purchasing a specific product or service is often determined by levels of satisfaction, the service attributes, price, and previous purchase behaviour (Ferrand, Robinson & Valette-Florence, 2010).

Coffee shop industry

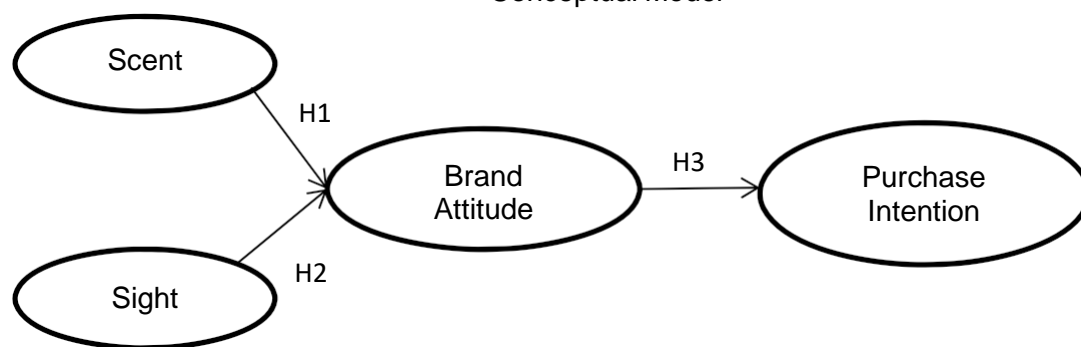
Globally, the coffee shop market is the fastest growing retail sector (Coffee Shops Industry Overview, 2014) and the most successful in the South African economy (Euromonitor International, 2015). This expansion is driven by increased urbanization that has also accelerated the adoption of retail, resulting in new opportunities for hot drinks brands (Euromonitor International, 2015). Although coffee consumers in Africa demonstrate preferences for an established base of low-priced coffee brands, the young population may shift towards preferences for new coffee brands (Euromonitor, 2015). Companies operating within this industry primarily sell coffee drinks (espressos, cappuccinos, café lates), other hot beverages and light meals, either as takeaways or for consumption on the premises (Coffee Shops Industry Overview, 2014). Some coffee shops sell coffee or espresso-making equipment, grinders, mugs, and other accessories. Most coffee shops serve high-quality, premium coffee, known as specialty coffee (Coffee Shops Industry Overview, 2014). Success is driven by consumers' taste and income level, as well as

shop location and atmosphere. Small coffee shops offering first-class service and high-quality products tend to deliver effective competition in a market that continues to grow. (Coffee Shops Industry Overview, 2014). Examples of coffee shops that lead the international market include Costa Coffee, Starbucks, and Café Nero. These remain the UK's leading brands and had a combined share of 56% of the branded chain market by outlet numbers in 2014 (Lunch Business Review, 2014). Although this market is not as established in a local context when compared to the UK market, it is continuing to grow at a steady rate (Ali, Asim & Hasnu, 2012). Examples of local coffee shops are Seattle Co., Vida e Café, Motherland, Father Coffee, and Mugg and Bean, to mention but a few.

Generation Y (the millenials)

Generation Y consumers have been raised in a consumption-driven society with high levels of discretionary income at their disposal and are regarded as active participants in the marketplace (Morton, 2002; Noble, Haytko & Phillips, 2009). This generational cohort refers to individuals that were born between 1977 and 1994, and who have tremendous spending power (Sullivan & Heitmeyer, 2008), thus making them an attractive segment to marketers and retailers. Despite the economic potential of the Generation Y segment, not much is known regarding their motivations for consumption. They are characterised by their advanced use of technology, high discretionary income, their willingness to pay a premium price for brands, and they have high levels of social interaction (Sullivan & Heitmeyer, 2008; Lee, 2009). They are regarded as the most culturally diverse and best educated generation in history, with exceeding tolerance and open-mindedness towards different lifestyles (Morton, 2002). Furthermore, they value freedom in terms of consumption experiences and tend to strive for independence from their parents and family (Noble et al., 2009). Considering their buying

FIGURE 3
Conceptual Model



behaviour towards brands, they prefer to engage in and support brands with a similar persona or brand image to themselves (Noble et al., 2009). The Generation Y consumer appears to be very cognizant of fashion trends, and although they portray low levels of brand loyalty, they are indeed brand conscious (Noble et al., 2009).

PROBLEM INVESTIGATED

Several studies have explored aspects of experiential marketing on consumer buying behaviour, however few of them have focussed on the use of scent and sight as predictors of consumer attitudes towards coffee shops. For example, Clarke et al. (2011) found that smell and lighting have a positive influence on consumer experiences. In another study by Sullivan, Kang, and Heitmeyer (2012), the findings indicated that perceived experiential value influenced store patronage. Furthermore, studies conducted by Ali, Asim and Hasnu (2012) and Tendai and Crispen (2009) analysed the impact of in-store shopping environments on consumers' impulse buying. The results proposed that the relationship between these variables was significant. Despite several studies on store environment and its influence on consumers' buying behaviour (Ballantine, Jack & Parsons, 2010; Tong & Hawley, 2009), little research has focused on experiential marketing in South Africa, which, as a developing country, is often overlooked and neglected. Hence, the

paucity of studies in this area highlighted the requisite for this study.

This paper aims to investigate the influence of scent and sight on the buying behaviour of Generation Y consumers in coffee shops. The conceptual model is presented in Figure 3.

The conceptual model above is one-directional and proposes that both scent and sight influence a consumer's attitude toward coffee shops. Therefore, sight and scent act as predictor variables, while attitude is the mediator and purchase intention is the outcome variable.

Hypotheses development

Scent and attitude

The use of scent in retail stores is an important factor to consider. According to Khanna & Mishra (2013), scent is used to attract and retain customers. In Yoon and Park's (2012) study that investigated the effect of sensory appeal on attitude in coffee shops, it was established that there is a positive relationship between the use of scent and customers' attitudes. Furthermore, Spangenberg, Grohmann, and Sprott (2005) found that the use of scent in retail stores results in consumers experiencing a more favourable evaluation of the brand. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₁: There is a positive relationship between scent and brand attitude.

Sight and brand attitude

Product presentation and the impact thereof on consumer's buying behaviour have been researched in several studies. Park, Stoel, and Lennon (2008) found that visual stimulation has a significant influence on mood, attitude, and purchase intention. In the Clarke et al.s (2012) study, findings reveal that it is not only tangible things that can affect a shopper's experience, but store traits such as smell, lighting, and the presence of an owner-manager may also influence a consumer's experience. Derived from the literature, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₂: *There is a positive relationship between sight and brand attitude.*

Brand attitude and purchase intention

Rationally, the relationship between brand attitude and purchase intention is not difficult to consider. Wu and Lo (2009) examined the impact of brand attitude on purchase intentions among Taiwanese consumers and found that brand attitude is a significant predictor of purchase intention. In another study, Jin and Kang (2011) examined the purchase intentions of Chinese consumers of US apparel brands, and found that an increased positive attitude towards US apparel brands greatly explains consumers' preference of such brands, which ultimately leads to purchase intention. Therefore, the third hypothesis proposes the following:

H₃: *There is a positive relationship between brand attitude and purchase intention.*

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

By means of quantitative method, the present study is positioned within the positivist research approach as it investigates the relationship between, and the exploration of the dependent and independent variables. Such research usually starts with a comprehensive investigation of related literature, after which the researcher develops a conceptual model that is tested by means of proposed

hypotheses. The present study undertook the testing of hypotheses and thus falls within a deductive research method. A quantitative approach is followed in which a large number of surveys are distributed among a sample of respondents.

Sampling

The population of interest for the present study is Generation Y individuals in Johannesburg. Derived from such a population, the researcher randomly approached a sample of 280 Wits students on campus and then asked to complete self-administered surveys. Therefore, a non-probability sampling technique was applied. Students were approached in a face-to-face setting during lecture breaks. By approaching the students in person, the researcher was able to minimise potential non-sampling errors by confirming that the respondents fit the required profile. From the 280 distributed surveys, the researcher obtained a 91% response rate, and resultantly had 256 usable questionnaires for data analysis. A possible non-response error was accounted for by selecting a large enough sample to yield reliable results, especially for conducting structural equation modelling, which is sample size sensitive. These unusable surveys were a result of either time pressured students who were unwilling to participate as they were in a rush to attend a lecture, or incomplete surveys.

Ethical considerations

This research underwent a comprehensive ethics procedure, and an ethical clearance certificate was issued as permission to continue with the study.. Questionnaires were anonymous and participation was voluntary. Moreover, respondents were warranted that the data would only be used for academic purposes. Respondents were also advised that they were free to withdraw from the survey at any stage, with no negative repercussions. All

the collected data was treated with confidentiality, and no unauthorised individuals had access to the data.

Measuring instrument development

The questionnaire consisted of two sections. The first section sought to acquire the necessary demographic information, inter alia age and gender, and respondents had to indicate their favourite coffee shop. The second section detailed questions relating to the constructs of the study, namely scent, sight, brand attitude, and purchase intention. All the constructs were measured on a 5-item Likert scale (1 – strongly disagree; 5 - strongly agree). All the scales used for this study were adapted from pre-existing scales, and were ultimately modified to suit the context of this study. The first construct, namely scent, was measured using instruments adapted from Spangenberg, Grohmann and Sprott (2005). It consisted of sub-elements such as pleasantness, intensity, and familiarity regarding scent in a retail setting. They all helped in measuring the variable – scent. Secondly, the items measuring sight were adapted from Fisher's (1994) sight scale. Brand attitude was measured by using items adapted from Baalbaki (2012), and purchase intention was measured using adapted from Dodds, Monroe, and Grewal's (1991) intention to purchase. SPSS 22 statistical software was used for descriptive statistics, while SEM through AMOS was used for inferential statistics. Once the data was captured, coded, and cleaned, the analysis was conducted using SPSS and AMOS.

RESULTS

Descriptive statistics

With regard to the descriptive statistics, it was concluded that almost two thirds (61%) of the sample were female and the remainder were male. With regard to age, the majority (i.e.,

85%) were between the ages of 18 and 23 and the remainder fell in other classifications. Mugg and Bean was the most preferred coffee shop (with a preference score of 24%), Tashas was the second most preferred coffee shop with a preference score of 13%, followed by Seattle (9%), and lastly Vida e'café (6%). Interestingly, almost half of the respondents (48%) chose the 'other' category, which included Motherland Coffee, Nino's, and Father Coffee. The remainder of the questionnaire was based on the respondent's chosen coffee shop. Based on the reliability of the variables, the Cronbach Alpha values for each construct were as follows: sight = 0.69, scent = 0.85, attitude = 0.94, and purchase intention = 0.96. Therefore, all the constructs were deemed to be reliable and met the minimum threshold suggested by Byrne (2012).

Structural equation modelling

Through SEM, Confirmatory Factor Analysis was performed first, and it measured the reliability, validity of instruments, and model fit. All the variables were found to be reliable, with composite reliability scores of above 0.6 (Hair, Money, Samouel & Page, 2007). The same variables were also deemed to be valid, as they had Average Variance Extracted values of above 0.5. This also showed that the constructs converged well with each other (Hair et al., 2007). In terms of model fit, CMIN was below 3 (i.e., 2.753). Goodness of fit reached a marginally acceptable level of 0.848. The other indices are the findings indicated in Figure 3 below, with RMR being way below 1 (RMR=0.039) – which is a further indication of a good model fit. The findings also reflected a CFI of 0.819, which suggested that the model fit was permissible, with the RMSEA (0.073) indicating a marginally acceptable fit since values between 0.06 and 0.08 are desired. A summary of model fit indices is presented in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1
Summary of Model Fit Indices

	Acceptable Threshold	Study Threshold	Acceptable /Unacceptable
Default Model: CMIN	< 3	2.75	Acceptable
Default Model: RMR	< 1	0.03	Acceptable
Default Model: GFI	< 0.9	0.84	Acceptable
(CFI)	> 0.9	0.81	Acceptable
Default Model: RMSEA	Between 0.06 and 0.08	0.07	Acceptable

Path modelling and hypotheses testing

The model fit results under 'path modeling' also confirmed a marginally acceptable fit. After this confirmation, the final stage was to test the proposed hypotheses. It was evident in the path modelling results that all three hypotheses yielded significant and positive results. Table 3 presents the findings from the hypotheses.

H₁: There is a positive relationship between smell and brand attitude.

From the findings, it was evident that there is sufficient evidence to support this hypothesis, and it is therefore confirmed that the smell in a coffee shop positively influences consumer attitude towards a shop. Moreover, this relationship was found to be significant at 0.01.

H₂: There is a positive relationship between sight and brand attitude.

Again, there is sufficient evidence to support the claim that sight positively influences brand attitude. Likewise, this relationship was found to be significant at 0.01. Therefore, this finding indicates that the visual aspects in the coffee shops significantly and positively influence a consumer's attitude towards the store.

H₃: There is a positive relationship between brand attitude and purchase intention.

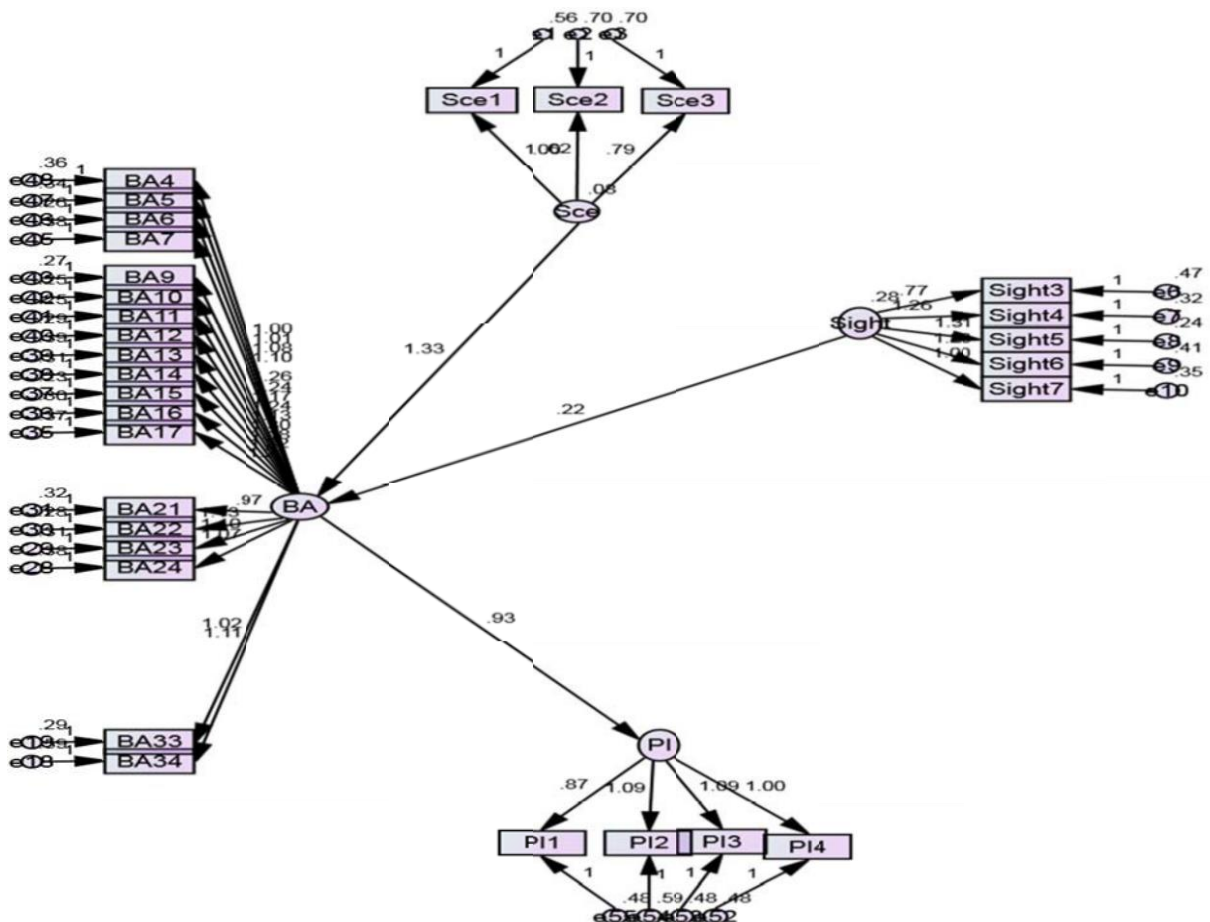
Upon testing the last hypothesis, the findings supported H3 and confirmed that there is a positive relationship between the attitude towards the coffee shop and the consumers' purchase intentions in that store. Interestingly, this relationship also yielded significant results at 0.01 level of significance.

TABLE 2
Summary of Hypotheses Results

Hypothesised Relationship	Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	Test statistic	Decision Supported/Rejected
Smell (Scent) → Brand Attitude (BA)	H1	***	4.25	Supported
Sight (Sight) → Brand Attitude (BA)	H2	***	4.78	Supported
Brand Attitude (BA) → Purchase intention (PI)	H3	***	5.56	Supported

Note: ***0.01 level of significance

FIGURE 3
Structural paths of the hypothesised model



The structural model for the hypothesised relationships is represented in Figure 3.

DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that both scent and sight have a significant positive influence on consumers’ attitudes toward coffee shops, and this in turn leads to a positive consumer purchase intention. Therefore, the more favourable the scent is within a coffee shop, the more likely it is that consumers will have a positive attitude towards the coffee shop, which is bound to lead to an increased likelihood of purchasing from the coffee shop.

Similarly, the more visually appealing a coffee shop is, the more likely it is that consumers will develop a positive attitude towards the store, which may also translate to a higher likelihood of purchasing from the coffee shop. Adding to the findings from the first two hypotheses, hypothesis 3 further indicates that the more positive an individual’s attitude is towards a certain coffee shop, the more likely that such an individual will purchase from that store. Therefore, consumers’ attitudes towards coffee shops can be significantly and positively influenced through smell and sight, and this might well increase their likelihood to purchase.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The aim of this research was to investigate whether or not scent and sight influences consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions towards coffee shops. The study respondents came from the Wits community. The findings indicate that scent and sight and brand attitude have a noteworthy influence on consumers' buying behaviour. The findings of the research provide a number of implications for marketers and retailers in their endeavour to influence consumers' buying behaviour within the retail coffee sector. Similarly, a number of theoretical implications were derived from this study.

An important implication to practitioners is that retailers must focus on ensuring that there is a favourable scent in coffee shops. For example, the smell of coffee is a drawcard in attracting consumers to a coffee shop. This is often complemented by the smell of freshly baked goods, which appeals to consumers when passing by a coffee shop. Therefore, retailers should pay special attention to the aroma in the retail space, and could even brew their own coffee to compliment the scent. Furthermore, marketers could focus on scent in other aspects of their campaigns in order to arouse consumers' senses, e.g. billboards that focus on the scent of coffee.

With regard to implementing visual stimuli, retailers should prioritise the store design, layout, maintenance, and the colour and décor in the retail space. For example, consistent maintenance should be done and coffee shops' décor must be updated on a regular basis. The use of colour and appealing décor should also be considered. Furthermore, the layout and store design should be appealing and comfortable for consumers, and suitable lighting is important. Signage is another visual aspect that should be taken into consideration.

This includes the signage outside the store, as well as clear interior signage to ensure clear communication with customers.

Thus, creating a pleasurable in-store atmosphere through the use of sensory branding can be beneficial to retailers. Store atmosphere is especially important in the hot beverage sector, because unlike a clothing retail store, customers are more likely to spend a prolonged amount of time in such a setting. A suggested recommendation for coffee shop managers is to constantly offer and create the right ambience setting that can positively affect the consumers' overall experience. For example, a coffee shop can choose a specific theme and create an experience based on the elements that represent the theme. This has been apparent in, for example, Seattle Coffee associates, which has factors that are reminiscent to nightlife in the United States. The first thing that comes to mind is the visual aspect of the city, Seattle. Of course, focusing on scent and sight in isolation is not an effective strategy to influence attitude and purchase intention, but retailers should concurrently focus on cognitive factors such as location, price, quality, and customer service.

Moreover, this study enhances the knowledge of retailers and marketers when influencing consumers' buying behaviour in coffee shops through the use of sensory branding. As one of the fastest growing retail sectors in the world, the coffee shop sector is currently facing increased competition. It is thus imperative that retailers should use innovative methods, such as sensory branding, in order to influence consumer buying behaviour. Therefore, if retailers in the coffee shop sector want to maintain a strong competitive advantage, they should focus on creating an overall store experience that will encourage customers to visit the store again.

On the other hand, this study contributes to academic literature that relates to coffee shops in a number of ways. Frequently, theoretical

contributions and/or ramifications are a prime objective of any academic investigation. Accordingly, this study also contributes to an existing body of academic literature in the fields of retail, sensory branding, and experiential marketing. Contributions to academia can be summarised into the creation of new evidence, or the generation of corroborated insights and refuting or validating a null-hypothesis.

Although this study contributes to literature and practice in a number of ways, there are potential limitations. Firstly, only two of the five senses were investigated. Future studies could focus on the other senses such sound, taste, or touch as motivating factors for purchase intention in the retail coffee sector. Secondly, this study was conducted with a small sample of respondents from the Wits community. The buying behaviour of a different sample could yield different results. Furthermore, this study explored brand attitude as a mediating factor, and although this was considered as important, future research could incorporate other branding variables such as brand loyalty, brand trust, brand satisfaction, and brand experience. Lastly, this study was conducted in South Africa, and although it represents an emerging market, it could be of interest to investigate the use of sensory branding in other developing countries such as India, Brazil, and China.

CONCLUSION

This study underscored the prominence of scent and sight as predictors of purchase intention in coffee shops. This relationship was mediated by the effect of brand attitudes toward coffee shops. Premised on the identified research gap, the purpose of this study was to investigate whether or not scent and sight influences consumers' attitudes towards and purchase intention of products in coffee shops. The three postulated hypotheses were found to yield significant and positive

results on purchase intention among Generation Y respondents at Wits University. The findings of this study are of great importance to retailers and marketers who wish to influence consumers' buying behaviour by means of experiential marketing. By achieving this they may be able to maintain or increase their market share in the currently competitive market. Similarly, academics are expected to benefit from the findings of this study. Unquestionably, this study added knowledge to the scant literature on coffee shops, and it will continue to serve as a useful guide for further in-depth studies.

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