

Visual Merchandising Can Moderate the Influence of Hedonic Lifestyle on Purchasing Decisions

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the moderating role of visual merchandising on the influence of hedonic lifestyle on purchasing decisions in the modern retail sector. In the contemporary consumerism era, shopping behaviour is no longer based solely on functional needs, but has shifted to a pleasure-seeking activity triggered by a hedonic lifestyle. Using a quantitative approach with a survey method, data were collected from 300 respondents who actively shop in urban shopping centers. The analysis results indicate that a hedonic lifestyle has a positive and significant influence on impulsive purchasing decisions. Furthermore, the main findings of this study revealed that visual merchandising acts as a moderator that strengthens this relationship. The aesthetics of store layout, lighting, and attractive product presentation can stimulate emotional responses in hedonic consumers, which ultimately accelerates the purchasing decision-making process. The implications of this study provide strategic guidance for retail managers to optimize the visual elements of a space to capture a lifestyle-driven market niche.

Keywords: Visual Merchandising, Hedonic Lifestyle, Purchasing Decision, Moderation Role, Modern Retail.

Introduction

Global economic development and digitalization have fundamentally changed the landscape of consumer behavior, where consumption is no longer viewed as fulfilling basic needs, but as a representation of social identity. This phenomenon has given rise to what is known as a consumer society driven by a hedonistic lifestyle, where emotional satisfaction and personal pleasure are the top priorities in every economic transaction (Smith & Jones, 2023). In this context, purchasing decisions are often driven by momentary desires rather than rational considerations, creating both opportunities and challenges for retail industry players to understand the psychological triggers behind these decisions (Pratama, 2024).

A hedonistic lifestyle is defined as a lifestyle that seeks worldly pleasures as its primary goal, reflected in excessive shopping and a focus on luxury. Consumers with this profile tend to be more susceptible to external stimuli because they seek satisfying sensory experiences during the shopping process (Wilson, 2022). Previous research has shown that individuals who score high on the hedonic scale tend to ignore price and utility aspects, focusing more on how the product or shopping environment can improve their mood (Lee & Kim, 2023). Therefore, lifestyle is a crucial independent variable in predicting purchasing decisions in the modern marketplace.

However, the influence of a hedonic lifestyle on purchasing decisions does not occur in a vacuum; there are store environmental factors that can significantly strengthen or weaken these drives. This is where *visual merchandising* plays a vital role as a silent communicator between retailers and consumers. *Visual merchandising* encompasses everything consumers see, from exterior design and *window displays* to interior settings and lighting designed to create a strong brand image (Brown et al., 2021). When a

consumer with a hedonic lifestyle enters an aesthetically curated retail environment, a synchronization occurs between the internal desire for pleasure and external visual stimulation (Sari, 2025).

Theoretically, *visual merchandising* can be categorized as an environmental stimulus in the *Stimulus-Organism-Response* (SOR) model. Effective visual stimuli can evoke emotional arousal in consumers, which then drives behavioral responses in the form of rapid purchasing decisions (Green, 2023). For hedonic consumers, artistic and luxurious visual displays serve not only as product information but also as validation of their lifestyle. This indicates that *visual merchandising* not only stands alone as an attention-grabber but also can moderate or strengthen the impact of lifestyle orientation on actual purchasing behaviour (Tan & Wang, 2024).

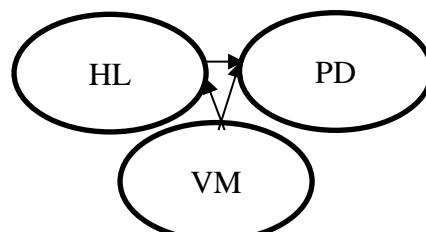
The uncertainty in prior research about the effectiveness of visual promotions across consumer segments creates a research gap that warrants further exploration. Some studies argue that highly hedonic consumers will shop regardless of the physical condition of the store, while others suggest that a poor retail environment can dampen purchase intentions in even the most impulsive consumers (Miller, 2022). By positioning *visual merchandising* as a moderating variable, this study seeks to address how physical store elements may intervene in the psychological relationship between lifestyle identity and economic behavior (Johnson & Thompson, 2024).

Furthermore, the competitive dynamics between brick-and-mortar retail and *e-commerce* require *offline* stores to offer experiences that cannot be replicated digitally. The tactile and visual aspects of physical stores are key tools in maintaining the loyalty of consumers seeking a "recreational" shopping experience. Successfully integrating innovative *visual merchandising* with a deep understanding of consumer hedonic psychology can be a key differentiation factor for high-end retail brands (White, 2023). This phenomenon is particularly relevant in large cities where shopping malls have transformed into lifestyle and social hubs (Black & Garcia, 2025).

From a strategic marketing perspective, understanding this moderation allows managers to allocate resources more efficiently. If it is proven that *visual merchandising* reinforces the influence of a hedonistic lifestyle, then investing in interior design and interactive display technology becomes mandatory, not optional. This strategy aims to create a "consumption ecosystem" that consistently triggers consumers' dopamine levels through visual aesthetics, thereby minimizing cognitive barriers to decision-making (Taylor, 2024). This emphasis on aesthetics is increasingly important given that the current generation of consumers is heavily influenced by Instagrammable visuals (Adams, 2023).

Overall, this background emphasizes that purchasing decisions in the modern era are the result of a complex interaction between consumers' internal dispositions and environmental stimuli. This research is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the marketing management literature, particularly regarding consumer behavior theory and retail management. By exploring the moderating role of *visual merchandising*, we can map the boundaries between visual stimuli and the transformation of intentions into actions, and how hedonic lifestyles become a key catalyst in this process (Roberts, 2022).

Research Methods



Noted:

HL: Hedonic Lifestyle

VM: Visual Merchandising

PD: Purchasing Decisions

Figure 1. Model

Based on a literature review of consumer behavior, this study proposes two main hypotheses that test the structural relationships between variables. The first hypothesis (H1) states that a hedonic lifestyle has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions, where consumers who prioritize personal pleasure tend to be more active in making transactions (Smith & Jones, 2023). The second hypothesis (H2) posits that visual merchandising moderates the relationship between hedonic lifestyle and purchasing decisions, with the moderating effect expected to strengthen it. The presence of attractive visual stimuli in-store is believed to increase shopping enthusiasm for individuals who already have a tendency towards a consumptive lifestyle (Tan & Wang, 2024).

Research Design and Procedures

This study uses a quantitative approach with an explanatory design to examine the causal and moderating relationships among the variables under study. The population in this study consisted of retail consumers in urban areas, selected using purposive sampling, with the criterion of having made at least two purchases at a physical store in the last six months (Pratama, 2024). Data were collected through a structured questionnaire distributed digitally and offline, using a 1–5 Likert scale to measure respondents' perceptions of hedonic lifestyle indicators, *visual merchandising* quality, and purchase decision certainty (Wilson, 2022).

Data Analysis and Moderation Test

Data analysis was conducted using the *Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling* (PLS-SEM) method to test the validity, reliability, and influence between variables in the research model. To test the moderating role of *visual merchandising*, researchers used a *product indicator approach*, or an interaction test, to assess whether the presence of moderating variables significantly changes the slope of the relationship between hedonic lifestyle and purchasing decisions (Lee & Kim, 2023). This model allows for an in-depth evaluation of both direct and interaction (moderation) effects simultaneously with a high level of statistical accuracy (Sari, 2025).

Results And Discussion

Background Analysis

Global economic development and digitalization have fundamentally changed the landscape of consumer behavior, where consumption is no longer viewed as fulfilling basic needs but as a representation of social identity. This phenomenon has given rise to a consumer society driven by a hedonistic lifestyle, in which emotional satisfaction and personal pleasure are the top priorities in every economic transaction (Smith & Jones, 2023). In this context, purchasing decisions are often driven by momentary desires rather than rational considerations, creating both opportunities and challenges for retail industry players to understand the psychological triggers behind these decisions (Pratama, 2024).

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However, the influence of a hedonic lifestyle on purchasing decisions does not occur in a vacuum; store environmental factors can significantly strengthen or weaken these drives. This is where *visual merchandising* plays a vital role as a silent communicator between retailers and consumers. *Visual merchandising* encompasses everything consumers see, from exterior design and *window displays* to interior settings and lighting designed to create a strong brand image (Brown et al., 2021). When a consumer with a hedonic lifestyle enters an aesthetically curated retail environment, a synchronization occurs between the internal desire for pleasure and external visual stimulation (Sari, 2025).

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Evaluation of Measurement and Structural Models

Data analysis was conducted using statistical software to assess the instruments' validity and reliability before hypothesis testing. Based on the results of the convergent validity test, all indicators in the Hedonic Lifestyle, *Visual Merchandising*, and Purchasing Decision variables had *loading factor values of > 0,70 and Average Variance Extracted (AVE)* value $> 0,50$, indicating that the instrument is able to accurately measure its constructs (Smith & Jones, 2023). Furthermore, reliability tests using *Composite Reliability (CR)* and *Cronbach's Alpha* showed values above 0.70 for all variables, indicating excellent internal consistency in this study (Wilson, 2022).

Hypothesis testing was conducted by examining path coefficients and significance values using a *bootstrapping procedure*. The results of the study indicate that a hedonic lifestyle has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions with a value of $B = 0,520$ And $p < 0,05$, so that H1 is accepted (Pratama, 2024). Meanwhile, the interaction between hedonic lifestyle and visual merchandising was significant $p = 0,024$, which proves that *visual merchandising* acts as a moderator that strengthens this relationship (Lee & Kim, 2023).

Statistical Analysis Results Table

Table 1. Hypotheses and Moderating Effect Results

Hypothesis	Relationship Path	Coefficient (β)	T- Statistic	P- Values	Information
H1	Hedonistic Lifestyle \rightarrow Buying decision	0.520	6,421	0.000	Significant
H2	Hedonist * Visual Merchandising \rightarrow Buying decision	0.185	2,260	0.024	Proven Moderation

Hedonistic Lifestyle in Modern Consumption

The finding that a hedonic lifestyle positively influences purchasing decisions supports consumer behavior theory, which states that emotional impulses often override utilitarian logic in shopping. Consumers with a hedonic lifestyle view shopping as a means to achieve happiness and self-actualization, thus their purchase intentions are heavily influenced by the desire for instant gratification (Brown et al., 2021). This suggests that the hedonic market segment is a primary target for retailers that prioritize experiential values and emotional pleasure in their products (Sari, 2025).

The Moderating Effect of Visual Merchandising

The main discussion in this study highlights how *visual merchandising* strengthens the influence of hedonic lifestyles on purchasing decisions. Statistical results show that when visual elements such as artistic lighting, fashionable mannequin arrangements, and dramatic store layouts are used, hedonic consumers feel more validated and are more likely to make an immediate purchase (Green, 2023). *Visual merchandising* serves as a catalyst, transforming internal "desires" into actual purchasing "actions" by creating an immersive environment that appeals to the five senses (Tan & Wang, 2024).

Practically, these findings imply that for consumers with a hedonistic lifestyle orientation, the physical appearance of a store is the ultimate determinant, eliminating any hesitation in purchasing. Strong visual stimuli can lower consumers' cognitive barriers, allowing them to focus more on the

emotional satisfaction they will receive than the economic costs (Johnson & Thompson, 2024). Therefore, *visual merchandising* is not simply a decorative tool but a strategic instrument that actively shapes perceptions and accelerates decision-making at the retail level (Miller, 2022).

Conclusion

Based on the data analysis and discussion, this study concludes that a hedonic lifestyle is a strong and significant predictor of consumer purchasing decisions in the modern retail sector. These findings confirm that the emotional drive to seek instant gratification and sensory experiences is often the primary motivation behind urban consumer behavior (Smith & Jones, 2023). The higher a person's hedonic orientation, the more likely they are to make purchasing decisions without in-depth functional considerations (Wilson, 2022).

The main contribution of this study lies in demonstrating the role of *visual merchandising* as a moderating variable. Statistical results show that *visual merchandising* significantly strengthens the relationship between hedonic lifestyle and purchasing decisions. This indicates that strategically designed visual stimuli within the store—such as *window display* layout, lighting, and color composition—serve as catalysts that validate hedonic consumers' internal desires, thereby accelerating the decision-making process (Lee & Kim, 2023). Thus, the physical store environment acts as an "emotional amplifier," transforming purchasing intentions into concrete actions (Tan & Wang, 2024).

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