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Role of Information Search, Store Benefit and
Shopping Involvement

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Point of Purchase Communication: Role of Information Search, Store Benefit and Shopping Involvement

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Abstract

Point of Purchase (PoP) is the place where a customer is about to buy the product. This is the crucial point where the exchange takes place. It offers us a last chance to remind or attract customers. In spite of a considerable expenditure on point of purchase material by companies, there is a lack of an established method of measuring the effectiveness of communication at the retail outlet. The current study is an attempt to define and measure the extent of usage of PoP by consumers while shopping. It explores the phenomenon with the help of an experimentation using two main variables; level of information search and store benefits sought. It uses shopping involvement as a mediating variable.

During the course of study scales for usage of PoP communication and shopping involvement were developed. In-depth interviews were carried among shoppers to understand their motivations and gratifications with regard to shopping. The interview findings were used to develop scales, which were tested before being used during the experiment. The experiments involved building scenarios specific to shopping situations. Participant observations were carried out at stores with different formats.

The study found that all the three variables were significant in terms of main as well as interaction effects. Based on the findings the authors suggest a framework for enhancing the effectiveness of PoP Communication.

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POP Communications: Role of Information Search, Store Benefit and Shopping Involvement

Retailers perform many functions. Louis P. Bucklin (1966) described them as distribution service outputs and classified them into four main categories: 'decentralisation', 'waiting time', 'lot size' and 'variety'. Retail Communication helps the retailers generate sales by using any one or a mix of these outputs and inform, persuade and remind customers about the retailer and its offers. At a broad level the various elements of retail communication can be segregated into two groups (Sinha and Uniyal, 2007). External or Divergent communication is the aspect of retail communication that the retailer uses to attract customers to the store and generate store traffic by using mass media vehicles such as television, newspapers and radio. It is also used to build and manage the store image so that it becomes a destination for its customers. The internal or convergent communication reinforces the store promise by achieving synchronisation in the mind of the customers. Stores use tools such as visual merchandising, signage and graphics, and other forms of point-of-purchase communication (PoP) to achieve a combined effect of these two sets of communication for an effective strategy (Allenby and Ginter, 1995). It has been found that American retailers, when compared to British retailers, tend to use more of newspaper, flyers, direct mail and television than window displays (Bardy, Mills and Medenhall, 1989).

POP acts as a surrogate salesperson. It has been found that a high level of brand awareness does not always translate into sales. Shoppers do take into consideration the information they acquire in stores, in addition to relying on out of store communication (Underhill P, 1998). Advertising attracts; but the success of all communication efforts in many cases depends on the last 5% of the effort which manifests itself at the POP just before the consumer chooses to buy, rather than the 95% that preceded it (Quelch J and Cannon-Bonventre K, 1983). It has been found that information recall is enhanced when the context in which people attempt to retrieve information is the same as the context in which they originally coded the information (Connolly A and Firth D, 1999). Such information activates consumers' memories pertaining to brand and its features and helps the consumer to make a purchase decision in favour of the displayed brand. POP communication also induces shoppers to stay at the retail outlet for a longer duration leading to increased spending (Donover, Rossiter, Marcollin and Nesdale, 1994). In some cases it is found to lead to patronising the shop (Wakefield and Baker, 1988). A higher

store loyalty is shown by shoppers who perceive congruence between their self-image and the image of the store (Bellenger, Steinberg and Stanton 1976). Shoppers find that displays and layout have a more significant role in high-fashion appeal than in a broad appeal store (Rich S and Portis, 1964). A lifestyle store tends to use POP more extensively (Sinha and Uniyal, 2000). Besides quality and assortment of merchandise and sales persons, store atmosphere helps in building store image (Berry, 1969).

Although very limited, studies indicate that PoP impact purchase and this effect changes when combined with other communication tools (POPAI, 1995a). It is also found that retail communication needs to take into consideration not only the shoppers but also the accompanying person (Anuradha, Sinha and Krishna, 2003). It has been found that the cash counter products account for the highest in-store decisions (POPAI, 1995b). A study in India on the impact of POP from the perspective from consumers, retailers and distributors brought out very mixed results (Sinha and Uniyal, 2000). This study is aimed at understanding the phenomenon and develops a method to measure the usage of PoP communication by consumer while shopping in the store.

Shopping – A Information Search Process

Shopping has been defined as the act of identifying the store and purchasing from it. A shopper goes through a process of 'see-touch-sense-select' in order to buy a product. The degree to which the consumer follows the whole or part of this process varies with brand, product category and other elements of the marketing mix and the shoppers could become 'blinkerer', 'magpie' or 'browser' (Connolly and Firth 1999). Sinha and Uniyal (2005) found that shoppers changed their information search process according to stores, even when the same product and in some cases the same brand was being bought. Shoppers would ask for a brand in a Kirana¹ store and resist a change in many cases. But in a self-service store, they would look at more than one brand before deciding.

Woodruffee, Eccles and Elliot (2002) indicated that the shopper decision process can be analysed from the decision process and the factors affecting the process. Factors that affect the process include shoppers' demographics and lifestyles. This process of decision-making can take the forms of extended problem solving, limited problem solving

¹ Mom-and-Pop serviced stores; where shoppers are generally not allowed inside the store.

or habitual buying (Berman and Evans, 2003). The behaviour of shoppers differed according to the place where they were shopping and also their involvement level with the act of shopping (Berman and Evans, 2003; Sinha, 2003).

Information Search

Information search is considered to be one of the stages of the purchase-decision process and it has been a subject to a great deal of research (Beatty and Smith, 1987; Bloch, Sherrell Ridgway and Nancy, 1986; Brucks, 1985; Newman and Staelin, 1972, Srinivasan and Ratchford, 1991). According to the researchers, consumers try to become perfectly informed. The level at which they stopped searching depended on factors like cost of information search, level of consumer knowledge, type of purchase and the level of consumer involvement with the product and purchase.

According to cue utilisation theory, products consist of a number of cues that can be used as indicators of quality by consumers (Olsen and Jacoby, 1972). Consumers determined the type of cues they rely on based on predictive and confidence values of the cues (Pincus and Waters, 1975). Product cues can be categorised as intrinsic and extrinsic (Olson and Jacoby, 1972). Extrinsic cues are product related attributes that are not part of the physical product, namely price, brand name, warranty and country of origin. On the other hand, intrinsic cues are physical attributes of a product and involve physical composition of the product (Jacoby, Olson and Haddock 1971; Szybillo and Jacoby 1974, Zeithaml, 1988). The effects of extrinsic cues on the consumers' product evaluations (Dodd, Munroe and Grewal 1991; Teas and Agrawal 2000), risk perceptions and perceptions of store brand quality (Richardson, Dick and Jain 1994) had been reported in past studies. It had also been suggested that consumers depended on extrinsic cues more when evaluations of intrinsic cues require more effort and time than the consumer perceives worthwhile (Zeithaml, 1988). Also, the consumers' reliance on extrinsic cues varied with their familiarity with or knowledge about the product (Bettman and Park 1980; Rao and Munroe 1988; Rao and Sieben 1992). Consumers tend to rely more on extrinsic cues than intrinsic product-related attributes (Brucks, Zeithaml and Naylor, 2000; Richardson, Dick and Jain, 1994; Shimp and Bearden, 1982; Teas and Agrawal, 2000).

Prior Knowledge and Shopping

Prior product knowledge had been defined either in terms of what people perceive they know about a product or product class (subjective knowledge) or in terms of what knowledge an individual has stored in memory (objective knowledge) (Brucks 1985; Rao and Munroe, 1988). Past studies have reported that knowledgeable consumers are more likely to search for new information prior to making a decision (Duncan and Olshavsky, 1982; Johnson and Russo, 1984; Punj and Stalein, 1983). Expert consumers tend to seek a greater amount of information about particular attributes because they are more aware of such attributes (Brucks, 1985) or because they were more capable of formulating specific questions about them (Miyyake and Norman, 1979; Alba and Hutchinson, 1987). On the other hand, less knowledgeable consumers are more likely to rely on extrinsic attributes such as brand name, price (Park and Lessig, 1981) or opinions of others (Brucks, 1985; Furse, Punj, and Stewart, 1984). It has also been found that consumers who were at the low level of knowledge continuum were unable to interpret intrinsic information and hence relied more on extrinsic information. It was also suggested that extremely knowledgeable consumers exhibited increased reliance on such extrinsic information because they had established some sort of relationship between product quality and extrinsic information. On the other hand, moderately knowledgeable consumers were found to rely on intrinsic information to a greater degree (Rao and Munroe, 1988; Rao and Sieben, 1992).

Consumers seek additional information in order to minimise the cost of a mis-purchase. Rational consumers' search would increase when the importance of the purchase increases. However, search activity for information itself has a cost for consumers (Laband, 1991). Perceived cost of information search has been defined as "the consumers' subjective assessment of monetary, time, physical effort and psychological sacrifice that he or she expended while searching for information". When the perceived search costs were increased, motivation to search was found to decrease (Betman, 1979). Studies also show that customers tend to combine the learning about the product and the store format to decide about their purchases (Walter, Sinha, Kenhove and Wulf, 2008). Information accessibility was found to be one of the factors that determined the cost of information search for the consumers. It was the extent to which information was made available and accessible to the consumer in a format that the consumer could use (Betman, 1979).

Shopping Involvement

Economists view shopping as an activity that allows consumers to maximise their utility function (Michelle, Corrine and Jane, 1995). However, for some it is an act of killing boredom, for others it leads to self-gratification and to another category of shoppers it gives a sense of emotional fulfilment (Tauber, 1972). Bellenger and Korgaonkar (1980) also found that people exhibit either 'economic' or 'recreational' shopping behaviour. It has been observed that consumers tend to differ in their behaviour across shopping situation which could be linked with their level of involvement in the process of shopping (Eagly and Manis, 1966; Sinha and Uniyal, 2005).

Involvement has been treated as major socio-psychological variable that explains individual differences (Festinger, 1957; Petty, Cacioppo and Goldman, 1981; Slama, 1985). It is a general construct (Zaichkowski, 1986) and is considered an individual indifference variable (Laurent and Kapferer, 1985). This difference is indicated by the number of attributes used to compare brands, the length of the choice process and the willingness to reach a maximum or a threshold level of satisfaction. It might also be indicated by the extent of information search, receptivity to advertising and the number of cognitive responses generated during exposure (Krugman, 1965, 67). Slama (1981) described a generalised purchasing involvement that referred to individual differences in involvement with purchasing activities and were not restricted to specific purchase situations. Kassarian (1981) found that the differences between individuals were the main reason behind making some people more interested, concerned and involved in the consumer's decision process. It was proposed that the consumer's involvement with purchasing is the main influencer of purchase behaviour. In the previous researches, generalised purchasing involvement was found to correlate with search effort too (Slama and Taschian, 1983).

Initial research on involvement was conducted by Sherif and Cantril (1947). Many researchers in subsequent years reviewed this field of consumer research (Arora, 1982; Assel, 1981; De Bruicker, 1979; Engel and Blackwel, 1982, Ray 1979, and Robertson 1976). The construct of involvement has been an important factor in studying advertising. Studies have applied involvement to TV copy testing Krugman (1965), advertising planning (Hovland, Harvey and Sherif, 1957; Tybjee, 1979) and the learning of non-ego material (Zaichkowsky, 1986).

Relevance has emerged as an important indicator of involvement (Petty and Cacioppo, 1979, 1981). In product class research, the concern is with the 'relevance' of the product to the needs and values of the consumer and hence interest for product information (Engel, James and Roger D, 1982). In purchase-decision research, the concern is that the decision is 'relevant' and hence the consumer will be motivated to make a careful purchase decision (Clarke and Belk, 1978). Although each is a different domain of research, some commonality is found between involvement and personal relevance (Greenwald and Leavitt, 1984).

Product Class Involvement

Howard and Sheth (1968) used the term Product Class Involvement interchangeably with 'importance of purchase'. They defined involvement as product-class specific and included the criteria by which the buyer orders a range of product classes in terms of his needs. These needs were referred as influencing the order of the product classes in a person's life (Slama, 1985, 1987). Researchers refer to this idea as Ego Involvement (Rhine and Severance, 1970; Hupfer and Gardner, 1971; Newman and Dolich, 1979). They found that one product's importance in relation to another product really depended on the individual's personal values and needs at a particular time. Bloch (1981a) has also explored the concept of involvement with product class. Korgaonkar and Moschis (1989) however used factor of differentiation of alternatives as a primary discriminator of high and low-involvement products.

Enduring and Situational Involvement

Havitz and Howard (1995) indicated that enduring Involvement reflected a sustained level of care or concern with an issue, product or activity. It also represented an individual's ongoing attachment with the attitude object (Bloch, 1981b; Heslin and Blair, 2006). Situational Involvement on the other hand reflected a heightened level of involvement prompted by a specific situation. Richins and Bloch (1986) in their experiments noted that the fundamental distinction between these forms of involvement lay in the temporal pattern of their occurrence. It was found that situational Involvement was highest when a shopper is making a high-risk purchase and was discernible at the time of purchase. On the other hand, enduring Involvement remained stable 'subject to

change over long periods of time. Michelle, Corrine and Jane (1995) explored enduring involvement and defined involvement with shopping as a motivational propensity to engage in shopping. Four potential dimensions of involvement, economic, leisure, social and apathetic, were also identified. Bolch and Bruce (1984) have described involvement as leisure behaviour. It has also been found that the concept of involvement with shopping as a uni-dimensional variable is limiting. Thus it was concluded that a person's involvement in shopping is influenced more by psychology than by socio-demographics.

Measurement of Involvement Construct

Involvement with products has been measured using several methods; rank ordering products (Sheth and Venkatesan, 1968), asking how important it is to get a particular brand (Cohen and Goldberg, 1970) and rating a series of products on an eight-point concentric scale as to their importance in the subject's life (Hupfer and Gardner, 1971). On a broader level, involvement has been measured by administering Likert type statements that were thought to tap the underlying concept including statements like, the product means a lot to me, it matters to me, or the product is important to me (Lastovicka and Gardner, 1978; Antil, 1984). However, these methods suffered from the limitation that when conflicting results were obtained, it was difficult to know whether the discrepancy was due to different measures or different behaviours. Also, many scales were single item measures and did not capture the total Involvement concept. The evidence that three factors – physical, personal and situational – influenced consumer's level of involvement or response to products, advertisements and purchase decisions has been found in the literature (Bloch and Richins, 1983; Houston and Rothschild, 1978). Lastovicka and Gardner (1978a) demonstrated that the same product had different involvement levels across people and Clarke and Belk (1978) found that different purchase situations for the same products causes differences in search and evaluation or raise the level of involvement.

Zaichkowsky (1985) defined involvement as a person's perceived relevance of the subject based on inherent needs, values and interests. Kapferer Laurent and (1993) concluded that the state of involvement may stem from five different types of antecedents which include perceived importance of the product (its personal meaning), perceived risk associated with the product purchase involving perceived importance of negative consequences in case of poor choice and perceived probability of making such a mistake (Bauer, 1967),

symbolic or sign value attributed by the consumer to the product, its purchase or its consumption, hedonic value of the product, its emotional appeal, its ability to provide pleasure and affect and Interest is an enduring relationship with the product class. Mittal (1989) argued when involvement is defined as an activated motivational state, all its antecedents can be categorized into two categories of goals: utilitarian and psycho-social. Shimp and Sharma (1983) have also explored different dimensions of involvement. These studies established that involvement can be treated as a multi-dimensional construct.

Antecedent to involvement may be categorized into three factors (Zaichkowsky, 1985), the characteristics of the person, the physical characteristics of the stimulus and the situational involvement which keeps varying. This framework of involvement has conceptual roots in the work by Rothschild (1979). Zaichkowsky (1985) also found that different people perceive the same product differently and have inherently different levels of involvement for the same product (person factor). Other researchers have studied involvement with reference to the relationship between a person and a product (Engel, James and Roger D, 1982) and involvement with purchase decisions or the act of purchase (Belk, 1982). Research in Involvement with shopping process focuses on information search as a critical variable.

PoP Communication – A Conceptual Model

An exploratory study had indicated that customers, on the whole, did not seem to use much POP communication while making purchase decisions at the store (Sinha and Uniyal, 2000). More importantly, the extent of use was found to differ with the familiarity of the store. It was found that with increase in the frequency of visits to the store, the use of POP decreased and frequent buyers did not find POP helpful in their buying decisions. On the other hand, occasional buyers and inquirers found POP helpful. First timers to the store relied more on the sales personnel for their information search. Customers found POP more helpful in case of consumer durable, lifestyle and hi-tech products. A study by POP (1995) indicated that PoP communication seem to influence impulse purchase more as compared to planned purchase. The rate of unplanned purchasing tends to depend on the type of stimulation technique, the product that is being promoted and the customer who selectively exposes himself to, and selectively perceives the promotional stimuli (Kollat and Willet, 1967; Swinyard, 1993). The format and familiarity of the store have

also been found to impact the extent of information search at the store (Sinha and Uniyal, 2005, Walter, Sinha, Kenhove and Wulf, 2008).

It was therefore envisaged that the extent of the use of PoP communication would depend on (a) the extent of information required by the shoppers and (b) the type of store visited. Also this process would be mediated by involvement. Studies on store choice show that the major values sought by shoppers were convenience, merchandise variety, price, service and ambience. It was also found that while setting store perceptions, price was not considered by customers (Sinha, Banerjee and Uniyal, 2002; Sinha and Banerjee, 2004). Hence the stores were classified as convenience, variety and experience. The level of information sought by the shopper was categorised in three classes in line with the three purchase situations indicated by Howard and Sheth (1968), Firth and Connelly (1999) and Berman and Evans (2003). This yielded a 3 X 3 matrix. The authors conceptualised two models for studying the usage of communication as well as involvement with shopping as given in **Figure – 1**. The study was primarily carried out to find out the effects of the level of information search and the store benefit on the usage of PoP communication in the shopping process. It also explored the role of shopping involvement on usage of POP communications.

Research Method

The primary method used for testing the hypotheses was experimentation. A laboratory experiment manipulates one or more independent variables under rigorously specified, operationalised and controlled conditions and by using random assignment (Kerlinger, 1986). By using laboratory experiments “we may demonstrate the power of the phenomenon by showing that it occurs even under unnatural conditions that ought to preclude it” (Mook, 1983).

The experimental study was preceded by first a qualitative study to develop the scenarios for each of the nine cells of the matrix. An in-depth interview was carried to understand the role of involvement as well as developing scales for measuring the two variables. It was found that a new scale would be needed to measure PoP communication usage as well as involvement. In the first case, there was no scale available for measuring information search while shopping. In case of involvement, there were scales that measured situational and purchase involvement, but none involved shopping situation,

especially within the stores. For this study situational involvement was considered since interaction of the shopper with PoP communication would fit the definition. For this purpose depth interviews were conducted for identifying aspects and items of the scale. The scale was then piloted and tested for validity.

Developing the Shopping Situations

The data was collected through observation of 230 shoppers across various retail formats. Participant observation was chosen as it puts the researcher where the action is and experiences the lives of informants (Bernard, 2000:318). The process suggested by Schutt (1999:285) was followed. The intended study tried to bring depth as well as breadth by increasing the sample size and choosing a mix of stores. The text was analysed using a Grounded Theory Approach. It has found its use across social sciences including management (Bernard, 2000:443). It was used in identifying categories and concepts that emerged from the text and linking the concepts into substantive and formal theories. Content analysis was not used as there were no hypotheses to be tested and there was no a priori categorisation of behaviour (Arnould and Wallendorf, 1994). The respondents also indicated the stores that represented those scenarios. Three experts read the transcripts independently to develop themes. Thereafter, discussions were carried among these three experts to resolve differences. Themes that did not get consensus were dropped. A typical scenario is given in **Annexure – 1**. The different shopping situations are given in **Figure – 2**.

Developing the Scales

Despite a number of involvement scales developed over the years, there was a need to develop a new scale. The existing scales related to product involvement measuring situational or enduring product involvement (Lastovicka and Gardner, 1979; Laurent and Kapferer, 1985; Zaichkowsky 1985, 1986). Although Mittal (1989) developed a scale called purchase decision involvement, this scale (PDI) was similar to the situational involvement of Houston and Rothschild (1977). Shopping involvement is defined as self-relevance of shopping activities to the individual and it is treated rather as an enduring involvement (Michell, Corrine and Jane, 1995).

Most of the studies in the past have been done in the western retail context and hence may not have been applicable to Indian shopping behaviour context. Retail formats are still at their nascent stages. Shopping assumes different meaning at different times to the evolving shoppers. Also, there has been no attempt to understand shopping involvement as a construct separately. Involvement has always been measured from the perspective of the purchase of the product, but we know that shopping as an activity goes beyond the final purchase. The retail store or the type of shop is a big influencer in the shopping behaviour (Sinha and Uniyal, 2005). So instead of using or modifying the existing scales, it was felt that a fresh approach is needed to define the construct of shopping involvement and measure it across various different shopping formats/stores in an Indian context. Slama and Taschian (1988) used the same conceptualisation while they were developing their purchasing involvement (PI) scale.

Depth interview using a discussion guide was carried out among 25 working women and housewives to explore their attitude towards PoP communication and their Involvement with shopping process. The respondents were aged between 25-35 years and belonged to SEC A households. Studies had indicated shoppers in this segment were decision makers and bought from all three types of stores (Sinha, 2005). Based on the above study, scales were developed. For each of the constructs the scale consisted 20 items as given in **Figures 3 and 4**. In line with Kapferer, a multi-dimensional scale was developed. A pilot was carried out to refine the scale.

Scale for Measuring Attitude towards PoP Communication

This section of the pilot questionnaire consisted of 19 items. They were rechecked for the face validity among academic colleague who matched the sample profile. A five point Likert Scale (ranging from 1-Strongly Disagree to 5-Strongly Agree) was used in this study. 200 respondents, 100 each of men and women, were intercepted outside various retail stores. The scale showed a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.80. Out of the total valid sample of 174, responses from only 129 respondents were used as others did not rate all the statements. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy indicated a value of 0.91 and was found significant at $p < 0.000$.

After analysing the rotated factor matrix, five main factors emerged with Eigen values more than one and explained 61% of the variance. Statements which did not show factor

loadings of more than 0.5 were removed and factor analysis was run again. The four factor solution explained 72.16% variance. This resulted in an 8-item scale with a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.88.

Scale for Measuring Shopping Involvement

Total sample size was 200 which were equally distributed among men and women. Based on the initial qualitative studies, 20 statements were developed to measure shopping involvement. They were intercepted outside the retail stores and were asked to rate the statements on a 5-point Likert type Scale.

A factor analysis was run on the data in order to convert these statements into main factors. Seven factors emerged from the first level analysis. Statements with factor loadings of less than 0.5 were removed and factor analysis was run again. The five factors solution explained 70% variance. The scale was constructed with the five factors of emotional pleasure, emotional distress, risk, self driven info-search and store driven Info-search. The Cronbach alpha score was found to be 0.78.

Testing the Hypotheses

In this phase respondents were first asked to read a particular scenario and then for that shopping situation they had to give their opinions on the statements defining two scales of Shopping Involvement and PoP Communications. The experiment was designed as a within-sample factorial design. A Sample size of 100, comprising 50 male and 50 female respondents, was chosen based on effect and power (Petersen, 1985; Cook and Donald, 1979). A general rule of thumb is that cell numbers should not be less than 12-14 (Drew and Hardman, 1987). However, they recommended larger sample number with cell sizes of 20-25 for more complex experiments. Hair, Anderson, Thatham and Back (2003) have also stated that sample size must exceed specific thresholds in each cell of analysis and recommended minimum cell size of 20 observations. Respondents belonged to SEC A, had a Monthly Household Income of more than Rs 20, 000, were married and were in the age range of 25-35 years. All the respondents were exposed to the same set of nine different scenarios. They were given the shopping scenarios randomly in the form of a show card. Once they had read the card, they were told to recall the store which came to their mind while reading the scenario. Then they were asked the respond to the two

different scales. Only when they had rated the scales for a particular scenario, another show card was given for another scenario. This process was repeated till they had filled the questionnaires for all the nine distinct scenarios. Care was taken while ensuring that respondents had enough time between filling the nine separate questionnaires for the nine situations. Data was analysed using MANOVA.

Manipulation Checks

Manipulation checks were carried out by conducting the experiment with 5 male and 5 female respondents. Respondents were chosen randomly but fitted the sampling frame. It was found that all respondents understood the shopping scenarios correctly and knew the specific retail formats like hypermarkets or supermarkets. There was consistency in their description of these formats. The responses did not vary with gender. All respondents understood the statements given in two scales and derived similar meaning the statements. There was no bias towards a particular scenario due to randomization of scenarios.

Hypotheses:

a. Shopping Involvement

H1a: Shopping Involvement would vary with the extent of Information Search at the store

H1b: Shopping Involvement would vary with the kind of Benefit offered by the Store

H1c: Information Search and Store Benefit together will have an effect on Shopping Involvement

b. PoP Communication

H2a: POP Communications would vary with extent of Information Search at the store

H2b: POP Communications would vary with the type of Benefit offered by the store

H2c: Information Search and Store Benefit together will have an effect on PoP Communications

c. Involvement and PoP Communication

H3: Usage of POP Communications would vary with Shopping Involvement

Findings and Analysis

The data was analysed to find out the main as well as interaction effects. It also analysed the differences in the levels of each of the variables. The findings are presented in three parts.

Experiment – 1: Shopping Involvement

Based on the Wilk's Lambda and F scores, it was found that the effect of store benefit and information search was found to be significant on shopping involvement. Also there was a significant interaction effect between store benefit and information search. Information Search $F(2, 98) = 59.489$ was significant at $p < .001$. Hence H 1a was supported. Store benefit $F(2, 98) = 55.46$ was significant at $p < .001$, so H 1b was supported. The combined effect of info search * store benefit $F(4, 196) = 16.505$, was also found to be significant at $p < .001$. Hence, H1c was also supported.

Figure – 5: Results from Experiment for Shopping Involvement (Wilks' Lambda)

Effect	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
Information Search	.452	59.489	2	98	.000
Store Benefit	.469	55.496	2	98	.000
Information Search * Store Benefit	.593	16.505	4	96	.000
Tests of Within-Subjects Effects (Sphericity Assumed)					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Information Search	39.552	2, 198	19.776	88.415	.000
Store Benefit	22.692	2, 198	11.346	61.952	.000
Information Search * Store Benefit	10.829	4, 396	2.707	16.817	.000

*Computed using alpha = .05, *Design: Intercept Within Subjects

Marginal Means

	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Information Search				
Low	3.214	.054	3.107	3.320
Medium	3.459	.047	3.365	3.553
High	3.727	.050	3.629	3.825
Store Benefit				
Convenience	3.242	.051	3.141	3.343
Variety	3.578	.051	3.478	3.678
Experience	3.580	.047	3.487	3.672

Information Search	Store Benefit	Mean	Std. Error	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Low	Convenience	3.145	.064	3.017	3.273
	Variety	3.260	.065	3.130	3.390
	Experience	3.236	.064	3.110	3.362
Medium	Convenience	3.030	.065	2.901	3.159
	Variety	3.702	.055	3.592	3.812
	Experience	3.645	.061	3.524	3.766
High	Convenience	3.551	.060	3.431	3.671
	Variety	3.772	.054	3.665	3.879
	Experience	3.858	.053	3.753	3.963

The tests of with-in subjects effects for information search gave $F(2, 198) = 88.415$ which was found to be significant at $p < .001$. We inferred that shopping involvement differed across three levels of information search (low, medium, high). The tests of with-in subjects effects for store benefit yielded $F(2, 198) = 61.952$ which was found to be significant at $p < .001$. Shopping involvement differed across three levels of type of store benefit (convenience, variety, experience) too. The tests of with-in subjects effects for the interaction effect of information search and store benefit yielded $F(4, 396) = 16.817$ which was found to be significant at $p < .001$. Hence a significant difference was found in shopping involvement across different shopping scenarios formed by a combination of information search (low, medium, high) and store benefit (convenience, variety, experience). The relationship between Store Benefit and Information Search with Shopping Involvement was found to be linear based on the results of within-subject contrast values ($p < .000$).

The post hoc test also indicated that shopping involvement differed for different levels of information search as well as store benefits. It was also found to be significantly different for each of the scenarios.

Figure – 6: Posthoc Results – Shopping Involvement

Information Search	Involvement	Mean	Std. Error	Wilk's Lambda	Significance
Low	Low	3.1450	.6433	0.949	0.078
	Medium	3.2600	.6534		
	High	3.2360	.6354		
Medium	Low	3.0300	.6503	0.476	0.000
	Medium	3.7020	.5525		
	High	3.6450	.6079		
High	Low	3.5510	.6049	0.715	0.000
	Medium	3.7720	.5405		
	High	3.8580	.5269		

Store Benefit	Involvement	Mean	Std. Error	Wilks Lambda	Significance
Convenience	Low	3.1450	.6433	0.630	0.000
	Medium	3.0300	.6503		
	High	3.5510	.6049		
Variety	Low	3.2600	.6534	0.540	0.000
	Medium	3.7020	.5525		
	High	3.7720	.5405		
Experience	Low	3.2360	.6354	0.510	0.000
	Medium	3.6450	.6079		
	High	3.8580	.5269		

Shopping Involvement: Marginal Means across Nine Scenarios

Shopping Scenarios	Mean	Std. Error	Wilks' Lambda	Significance
1	3.1450	.6433	0.284	0.000
2	3.2600	.6534		
3	3.2360	.6354		
4	3.0300	.6503		
5	3.7020	.5525		
6	3.6450	.6079		
7	3.5510	.6049		
8	3.7720	.5405		
9	3.8580	.5269		

Experiment – 2: PoP Communication

In this part the findings regarding the effect of Information Search and Store Benefit on POP Communications has been described. Based on the Wilk's Lambda and F scores, it was found that the effect of store benefit and information search on the usage of Pop communication was significant. Also there was a significant interaction effect between store benefit and information search. Based on the multivariate tests results for information search with $F(2, 98) = 109.974$ the association was found to be significant at $p < .001$. The hypothesis that POP communications changes with information search at the store (H2a) was supported. Similarly, the value for store benefit $F(2, 98) = 71.423$ was found significant at $p < .001$ supporting the hypothesis that the usage POP communications differs across various types of store benefit (H2b) was supported.

The combined effect of Information Search and Store Benefit with $F(4, 96) = 17.907$ was also found to be significant at $p < .001$. Information search and store benefit seem to have a combined effect on POP communications usage (H2c). The mean values of the three

levels of the independent variable of information search for the POP communications scales were found to be different. The tests of with-in subjects effects for information search for sphericity assumed $F(2, 198) = 131.394$ was found to be significant at $p < .001$. We infer that usage of PoP communication actually differed across three levels of information search (low, medium, high). Similarly, the mean values of the three levels of the independent variable of store benefit for usage of PoP communications were found to be different. The tests of with-in subjects effects for store benefit for sphericity assumed $F(2, 198) = 71.254$ was found to be significant at $p < .001$. The usage of POP communications seems to differ across the three levels of store benefit (convenience, variety, experience). The tests of with-in subjects effects for the interaction effect of information search and store benefit combined for sphericity assumed gave $F(4, 396) = 18.380$ which is found to be significant at $p < .001$. Thus a significant difference in usage of PoP communications across various different shopping scenarios was found.

Figure – 7: Multivariate Tests for Usage of PoP Communication (Wilk's Lambda)

Effect	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
Information Search	.308	109.974	2.000	98.000	.000
Store Benefit	.407	71.423	2.000	98.000	.000
Information Search * Store Benefit	.573	17.907	4.000	96.000	.000

a. Computed using alpha = .05; b. Exact statistic

Tests of Within-Subjects Effects for POP (Sphericity Assumed)

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Information Search	92.183	2	46.092	131.394	.000
Store Benefit	45.596	2	22.798	71.254	.000
Information Search * Store Benefit	22.729	4	5.682	18.380	.000

a Computed using alpha = .05

The post hoc test also indicated that the usage of PoP communication differed for different levels of information search as well as store benefits.

Figure – 8: Posthoc Results – Usage of PoP Communication

Information Search	PoP Usage	Mean	Std. Error	Wilk's Lambda	Significance
Low	PU1	2.751	.073	0.872	0.001
	PU2	2.917	.084		
	PU3	3.068	.053		
Medium	PU4	2.717	.072	0.386	0.000
	PU5	3.719	.066		
	PU6	3.574	.065		
High	PU7	3.521	.068	0.820	0.000
	PU8	3.805	.066		
	PU9	3.759	.051		

Store Benefit	PoP Usage	Mean	Std. Error	Wilks Lambda	Significance
Convenience	PU1	2.751	0.073	0.528	0.000
	PU4	2.717	0.072		
	PU7	3.521	0.068		
Variety	PU2	2.917	.084	0.498	0.000
	PU5	3.719	.066		
	PU8	3.805	.066		
Experience	PU3	3.068	.053	0.465	0.000
	PU6	3.574	.065		
	PU9	3.759	.051		

Experiment – 3: Effect of Shopping Involvement on POP Communications

The univariate test results for shopping involvement, $F(18, 81) = 2.994$ indicated a significant relationship between the two constructs at $p < .001$. Hence, the hypothesis (H3) that usage of PoP communications would change with shopping involvement at the store was supported.

Figure – 9: Test of Within-Subject Univariate table

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Involvement	6.333	18	.352	2.994	.000

a. R Squared= 0.399 (Adjusted R Squared = .266)

Classifying Stores Based on PoP Communication Usage by Shoppers

The study has brought out that the usage of PoP Communication is a function of several variables. Different combinations of these variables create different shopping situation and consumers tend to differ in their information usage behaviour. This leads to classifying stores based on the information requirements of the shopper. The nine such scenarios are described below. The challenges and strategies for each of the shopping scenarios are given in **Figure – 10**.

1. *Low Involvement Shopping at Convenient Stores*

In the proposed Model, the first box depicts a buying situation where the involvement of the shopper is very low and the effort they expend is also low. The shopper comes to the store asking for the product by the category name. The choice of store is based on the convenience of location. The POP communication in such a situation is very helpful in affecting brand switch. Packaging would be the most potent communication tool. A prominent display of the product would give the 'touch and feel' confidence. The retailer would keep the product at eye level and near the counter. Posters, danglers and attractive packaging would be the POP tools to grab the attention of shoppers.

2. *Low Involvement Shopping at Variety Stores*

In this case, although the shopper's involvement is low, the store provides variety. The shopper wants to have more variety and thus looks for a store that provides more options and is also conveniently located. In this situation the shopper asks for a brand but does not mind switching if the preferred brand is not available. The idea is to buy from the same store and not to take the trouble to go to other stores. Only after the brand set is exhausted, would the shopper think of another store. The retailer has to rise above the clutter and stand out among stores selling similar products. Since involvement is low, it is a challenge for the retailer to differentiate sufficiently to attract shopper's attention. Store location, better frontage and glow signboards, kiosks and window dressing play a major role in attracting shoppers and inducing them to come inside the store.

3. Low Involvement Shopping at Experience Stores

In this situation, the shopper is store-loyal and due to low involvement with the product he does not want to exert any extra effort to buy a brand. Such shoppers are more prone to impulse buying and with little persuasion will buy more products. The shoppers in such stores seek benefits such as store association, easy purchase process, familiarity with the place and friendly sales people. The retailer must stimulate shoppers to try more products. The shopper has to be given information about new products through sales people and interactive kiosks to effectively communicate about store brands, new schemes and bargains. The retailer should try to retain the shopper for the longest possible time for increased purchases.

4. Medium Involvement Shopping at Convenient Stores

In this case, the shopper is more involved than in the previous case, but would prefer to buy from a store that is conveniently located. The shopper seeks variety and thus apart from store location, assortment of products also becomes important. The shopper wants optimisation of shopping time and effort. Thus, as a retailer, one has to help the shopper choose a brand through eye-catching posters and attractive packaging. Apart from the convenient location of the store, the retailer must plan the product assortment as per the requirements of local customers.

5. Medium Involvement Shopping at Variety Stores

The shopper has a medium level of involvement in buying and is looking for options in terms of benefits derived from the store. The basic behaviour is variety-seeking. The shopper seeks variety not just in products but also amongst stores. Store location is of importance and so is the external appearance of the store. The retailer must induce the shopper to come inside the store and look around for various options. Apart from that, the retailer has to make sure that the shopper is engaged. The shopper would prefer a brand that offers a better bargain. Since the shopper is in a comparison mode any communication in this line such as leaflets that provide necessary information will be sought. The challenge is to get the mind as well as wallet share by leveraging on tangible benefits such as schemes and price discounts. Category management is an important function in such stores.

6. *Medium Involvement Shopping at Experience Stores*

In this case, the shopper has already decided upon the store and would aim to seek variety within the chosen store. The communication challenge is to provide the required information and reduce dissonance by making the buying process more personal and involving. The shopper will spend more time in the store. Shopping in such cases is a planned process and not just an activity. This provides the retailer an opportunity to push his own retail brands. The strategy here is to offer better service and provide add-on intangible benefits.

7. *High Involvement Shopping at Convenient Stores*

In this type of shopping, the shopper is seeking a particular brand and is also ready to expend effort to buy it. A store that is conveniently located and stocks the required brand will gain the patronage of such shoppers. Stores near or on the way to workplace would often fall in this category. Due to easy availability and high visibility, the communication at the shop reinforces the shopper's belief in the brand and enhances brand salience.

8. *High Involvement Shopping at Variety Stores*

Shoppers visiting such stores have already decided on the brand that they wish to buy. However, they would like to reassure themselves by collecting information about competing brands. Thus the retailer has to provide information for comparison and let the shopper re-evaluate the decision. In this case, if the shopper gets more value for the same price, he will switch; otherwise he will stick to the original brand choice, even when other brands are offering the same features at a lower price. The strategy would be to provide tangible information to project strengths through the salesperson, product demonstrations, information brochures and interactive kiosks. Stores dealing in premium cosmetics, high-end durable goods and lifestyle stores dealing in branded products would come in this category.

9. *High Involvement Shopping at Experience Stores*

Here, both the store and brand are pre-decided and there is high loyalty towards them. The shopper prefers stores that give the best identification with the self-image of the

shopper. Exclusive branded showrooms would fall in this category. Here the retailer has to project the store as a destination. Shopping at such stores has greater entertainment and social value. The communication challenge would be to make shopping more enjoyable and memorable. The retailer should give personal attention to shoppers and should know the likes and dislikes of an individual shopper. Atmospherics, spatial visual and merchandising should be used to induce longer stays by shoppers.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to understand the usage of PoP communications during shopping. While use of a communication tools like PoP communication or advertising has been studied from the perspective of information search, where involvement has been proposed to play a moderating role, the role played by the store was not focused. This study bring it out very strongly that the store adds a new dimension based on the benefit that the shopper seeks in choosing a shop to buy. Based on this, it postulates a new model for understanding the usage of PoP communication (**Figure – 11**).

This paper also proposes shopping as a situational involvement, especially with regard to the usage of PoP communication. Michelle (1995) proposed that shopping should have an enduring involvement, this study considered it as a situational involvement by relating it to the activity of shopping and ‘situations’ created by PoP communication as intervening stimulus. A new scale for measuring involvement as well as usage of PoP was developed in the process.

Future research in this area may be carried out to compare different cultural context. An SEM approach may also be applied to test the proposed model. A more micro level study may be carried out to test the effectiveness of different PoP communication tools in for each of the scenarios.

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Figure – 1: Conceptualised Models of Usage of PoP Communication

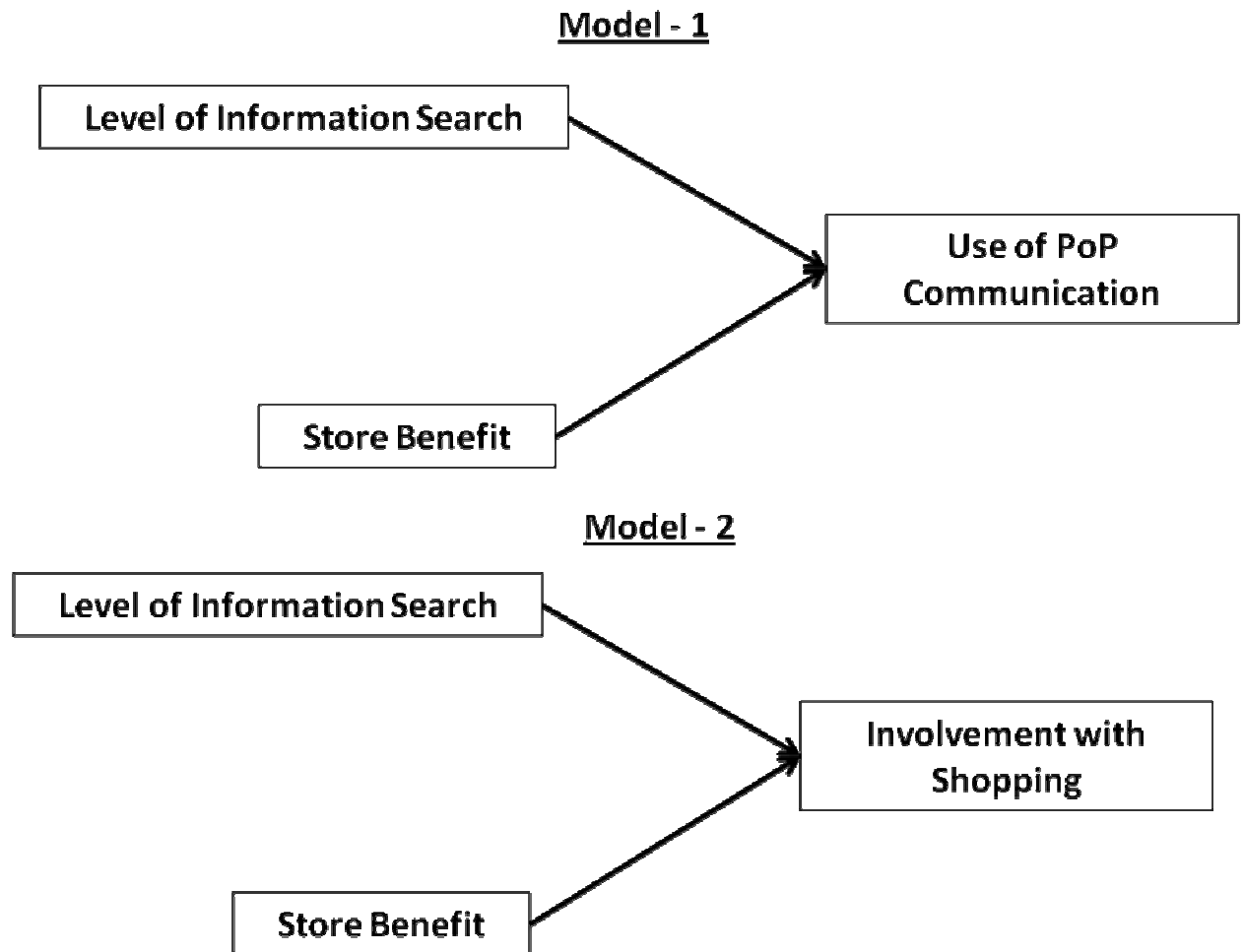


Figure – 2: Shopping Situations

		Store Benefit		
		Convenience	Variety	Experience
Information Search in Shopping	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Least Effort in Shopping Convenient Location <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Corner grocery shops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Least Effort Store Location and appearance <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Stationery stores 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Least Effort Familiarity <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Neighbourhood Store; Cigarettes Shop
	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low Brand Comparison Convenient location Limited Assortment <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Medical stores 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brand Comparison Large Assortment Clear communication of offers and schemes <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Supermarkets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brand Comparison Large assortment Visual merchandising <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Speciality store
	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability of preferred brands Convenient location <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Gifts and cards shop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability of preferred brands Store that gives best bargain for the brand <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Hypermarkets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability of preferred brands Store that best identifies with the self image of the shopper <p>Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Departmental stores

Figure – 3: Scale for Measuring the Usage of PoP Communication*Initial Scale – PoP Communication*

1. POP materials in the store were informative.
2. POP materials in the store attracted my attention.
3. POP materials in the store reminded me of buying
4. The displays were not very well arranged.
5. Displays in the store created clutter.
6. While passing though the aisle I got information about a product.
7. The merchandise display at the store made me feel the benefit of its usage.
8. The in-store display at the store helped me in my final decision.
9. The merchandise display at the store provided me with more choice.
10. In-store display at the store facilitated my decision to buy.
11. I will re-visit the store because it has attractive merchandise displays.
12. The merchandise display at the store has made me buy unnecessary things.
13. The decorative display of the merchandise has made the merchandise expensive.
14. The merchandise display made me switch from one brand to another.
15. The display in the store made me spend more time in the shop.
16. I like to come to this store because of its looks and display.
17. I always check for new information provided by the displays at the shop.
18. I generally buy more quantity of product due to the good display.
19. One of important criteria for selection of shop to buy is its looks and ambience.

Final Scale:

- POP display made me buy more quantity of product
- POP display and ambience made me select this shop
- POP display in the store was informative.
- POP display in the store attracted my attention
- POP display in the store reminded me of buying something I did not plan
- POP display at the store made me feel the benefit of a product's usage.
- POP display at the store has made me buy unnecessary things
- POP display of has made the merchandise look expensive

- POP display made me switch from one brand to another.
- POP display made me aware of a particular product while passing through the aisle

Figure – 4: Scale for Measuring Shopping Involvement*Initial Scale - Shopping Involvement*

1. I do not think much when it comes to routine purchases
2. I am ready to pay more if I feel that I have earned in terms of time saved
3. I buy from a specific place when I am buying monthly grocery shopping
4. I look for more information and references in case of high price products
5. I seek information on the price, alternatives available, after sales service, cost of usage
6. My information search at the store depends on how the things are displayed in the store
7. If I don't find something I m looking for I will probably ask the staff out there
8. I do not seek help from fellow shoppers
9. I take risks when the shopping is related to products wherein trial and error is possible
10. I don't take chances by just getting my hands on anything of any kind
11. I take risks either when it is a low unit value purchase
12. Most of the times when I buy a wrong product I go through financial and psychological turmoil
13. I am quite careful and generally brand loyal
14. I would not take risk in any category
15. I feel upset if I take a poor shopping decision
16. I derive the pleasure of spending some time for myself
17. I feel happy and contented after every time I shop
18. Shopping fulfils need, there is no specific emotion attached
19. I can find out about a person by the way he/she shops
20. Shopping reflects my personality

Final Scale: Shopping Involvement

1. I look for more information and references
2. I seek information on various aspects like prices, alternatives available, after sales service, cost of usage etc.
3. I search information based on how merchandise is displayed

4. If I do not find something myself only then I will ask the staff
5. I take risks only in products where trial and error is possible
6. I take risks only when it is a low-value purchase
7. I go through distress when I buy a wrong product
8. I feel upset if I make a poor shopping decision
9. I derive the pleasure of spending some time for myself
10. I feel happy and contented after I shop

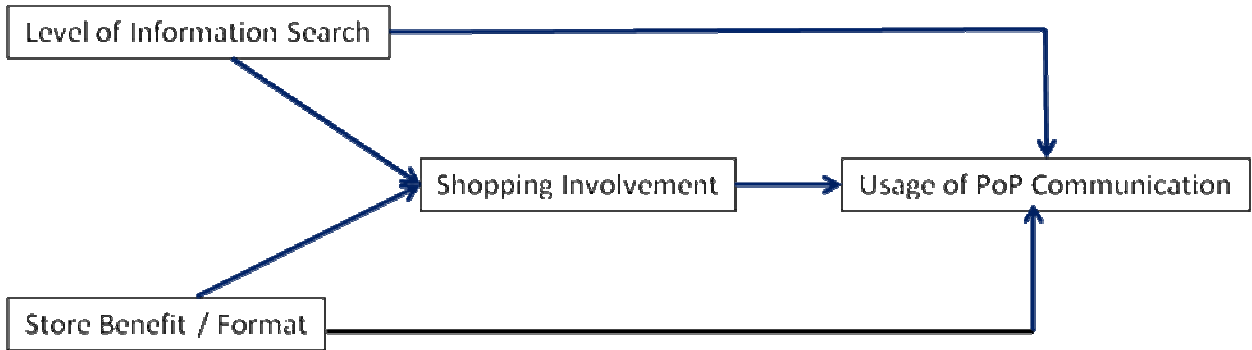
Figure – 10: POP Communication: Purpose, Challenges, Strategies and Tools

		Store Benefit		
		Convenience	Variety	Experience
Information Search	Low	<p>Purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimise transaction time <p>Communication Challenge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grabbing attention <p>Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immediate sighting Touch and feel <p>Tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eye catching Posters and danglers Attractive packaging Display at eye level or on the counter 	<p>Purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimise store search <p>Communication Challenge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attract shopper to the store <p>Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Differentiate from similar stores. <p>Tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better frontage Glow sign boards Better lighting inside the store Kiosks 	<p>Purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reinforce store loyalty <p>Communication Challenge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To build one to one relationship with the shopper <p>Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personalised attention Induce unplanned purchase <p>Tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Friendly and suggestive sales person Display near the waiting line Interactive kiosks

		Store Benefit		
		Convenience	Variety	Experience
Information Search	Medium	<p><u>Purpose:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimization of time and effort <p>Communication Challenge: _Help choose a brand</p> <p><u>Strategy:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information about various brands • Touch and feel <p>Tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eye-catching posters and danglers • Attractive packaging • Display at eye level or on the counter • Testing samples 	<p><u>Purpose:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide limited choices <p>Communication Challenge: _How to get shopper's mind as well as wallet share</p> <p><u>Strategy:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage on own strengths • Stress on functional and rational purchase • Offer schemes • Bundle offers <p>Tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide comparison leaflets highlighting product features prominently • Price discounts • Posters/banners offering schemes 	<p><u>Purpose:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Induce shopper to indulge <p>Communication Challenge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make buying more personal and involving <p><u>Strategy:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer better services • Provide intangible benefits <p>Tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better show room management • Put impulse products near cash counters • Put seating near waiting line • Special attention to ladies and children • TV for engaging shoppers

		Store Benefit		
		Convenience	Variety	Experience
Information Search	High	<p><i>Purpose</i> Enhance Brand Salience</p> <p>Communication Challenge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforce Brand Image <p>Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate with main communication <p>Tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large and creative displays • Attractive packaging • Window Displays 	<p><i>Purpose</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Allow Comparison</i> <p>Communication Challenge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Score Over Competition <p>Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide tangible information to project strengths <p>Tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the salesperson • Product Demonstrations • Information brochures • Interactive Kiosks • Shop-in-Shop 	<p><i>Purpose</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Make the shop as a Destination</i> <p>Communication Challenge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making shopping enjoyable and memorable <p>Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personalised Attention • Inducing longer stay <p>Tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atmospherics • Spatial • Visual Merchandising • Interactive Kiosks

Figure – 11: Proposed Model for PoP Communication



Annexure – 1

Scenario 1

Neighbourhood Kirana Shop

This store can be classified as a convenience store and the effort here is to minimize the transaction time for the customer. The shoppers come to this shop usually had a shopping list ready at hand and the transaction involved the shopkeeper fetching the required items and billing which usually concluded within a short span of time.

Shop Location

The shop is located in a building complex facing the main road at a residential location. It is flanked by a petrol pump on the left and a string of small shops on the left. The building complex has one other Kirana store, a dairy parlour, a gift shop and a CD DVD parlour. There is some parking space in front of the shop.

Shopping behaviour:

A majority of the people who came to this Kirana store came by foot or two wheelers. Most of them spoke in local language. Customers were generally aware of the brands of their purchase and some insisted on buying 'standard' brands only. The average time spent in the shop was less than ten minutes. Most of the customers were either housewives or domestic helps/servants.

Shop Description

It is a small shop of roughly 400 sq.ft. The shopkeeper stood behind the main counter and roamed around in the store. The main counter had all the glass bottles which the children were attracted to. The display counters were utilized to keep fast selling items at eye-level. On entering the shop an arch of the ceiling over the counter had a bright orange sticker of a detergent. The next thing which got the attention is the wide assortment of colourful mélange of shampoo sachets dangling at a point above the eye level. Utility items like floor brushes and scrubbers were hanging from the right hand corner of the ceiling.

Shop Front



Counter



Shelf Display



Payment Counter/weighing scale

