
ROLE OF SENSORY BRANDING ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR IN FMCG PRODUCTS

**Astha Joshi, Research Scholar,
International Institute of Professional Studies
Devi Ahilya University,
E-15 Hari Shankar Puram
Lashkar, Gwalior (M.P)**

**Dr Geeta Nema, Reader in Management
International Institute of Professional Studies
Devi Ahilya University
Indore, MP 452 017, India**

ABSTRACT

Sensory branding is an emerging business discipline that applies analytical techniques to amalgamate the use of sensory stimuli such as scent, sound and texture in order to develop strong brands that are more memorable for customers than conventional visual branding techniques alone. For a brand to be identified, recognized and understood in its values is the core of every strategy, the nagging issue of every marketing manager.

The present study reveals the impact of sensory branding on consumers buying behavior. This study analyses all five senses and impact of each sense on consumer. It was conducted using 128 respondents belonging to different age group, educational background, income and marital status. The data was analyzed by using reliability statistics, frequency distribution, chi-square and regression analysis. The study concluded that sensory branding has a great impact on customers buying behavior while purchasing fast moving consumer goods.

KEYWORDS: Sensory Branding, Buying Behavior, Brand Image, FMCG goods.

INTRODUCTION :

Branding is a key factor in marketing. In the past, most of the companies were using audio-visual stimuli for differentiating their brands from the competitors. Now companies are working hard to achieve some degree of differentiation in their brands from the competitors by using all five senses (taste, smell, sight, touch and sound). This phenomenon is called sensory branding, which helps the company to differentiate their brands products from the competitors. The aim of sensory branding is to use all the five senses at the same time to create a five-dimensional experience for the consumer. Manufacturers have long known about the impact of engaging all the senses.

Sensory branding is based on the idea that consumers are most likely to form, retain and revisit memory when their all five senses are engaged during the process of buying products or services. By going beyond the traditional marketing media of only sight and sound, brands are now taking advantage of all other senses to establish a stronger and longer-lasting emotional connection with consumers. This marketing strategy appeals to multiple senses and the efforts are multiplied, creating powerful brands with lasting consumer connections.

It is a type of marketing that appeal to all the senses in relation to the brand. It uses the senses to relate with customers on an emotional level. Brands can forge emotional associations in the customers' minds by appealing to their senses. A multi-sensory brand experience generates certain beliefs, feelings, thoughts and opinions to create a brand image in the consumer's mind.

Sensory branding is used to relate to the customer in a more personal way than mass marketing. It is a technique that does what traditional forms of advertising cannot. It is used in retail design, magazines, showrooms, trade-fair booths, service centers, and corporate headquarters. A multi-sensory experience occurs when the customer is appealed to by two or more senses. It put the experiences lived by the consumers and his feelings in the process. These experiences have sensorial, emotional, cognitive, behavioral and relational dimensions, not only functional. It aims to create the adequacy of the products with their design and their packaging, and then to valorize them in a commercial environment to make them attractive.

The main use for sensory branding is to appeal to the consumer's senses. It's a kind of promotional tool which can influence customers to buy the product, fast moving consumer goods are sold by a large number of companies providing similar products thus to make their products different from others, companies needs to employ different branding strategies to make their products visible to customers. Also the companies need to understand the emotions and experiences of the consumer when being drawn to purchasing or using the product so as to penetrate and dominate market share, increase profitability and to ensure initial and repeat purchases. Sensory branding is used to create an atmosphere that encourages the customer to pay money and can be influenced by 5 senses which are as follows:

Sight (Visual): Ever since advertising was born, it was oriented on our sight, mainly because that sense is most responsive to the environment. 92.6% of the population puts most importance on visual factors such as color and shape when buying products. We make our first impressions within 90 seconds of the initial viewing, and between 62%-92% of that impression is based on color alone. When talking about on-shelf visibility, 80% color can increase brand recognition. According to research, 42% ads in color are read more than the same ads in black and white. Market researchers have also determined that color affects shopping habits. With our sight we notice and recognize shapes and colors really fast, but we can't experience a brand only by looking at it, at least not at its full potential.

Sound (Auditory): Human-beings are naturally sensitive to sounds and their meanings. The first sound we could hear was our mother's heartbeat. What is so great about sound is that it doesn't need our full attention to be noticed. And also it has been proven that sound evokes certain memories and experiences. Then, music has been introduced, in commercials (with the apparition of TV spots) as in the point of sales. Today, there is no point of sales without music in the background, and 99% of advertising is focused on what we see and hear. \

Smell (Olfactory): Humans are able to distinguish over 10,000 that are being transmitted to our olfactory system in the brain where it is closely tied to memory, mood, stress and concentration. Our sense of smell has been proven as most impressionable and responsive of our five senses, while it invokes memories and appeals directly to feelings without being filtered and analysed by the brain (as our other senses work). Smell was used a lot in real estate business, somehow houses sold better if they smelled like vanilla, fresh baked cookies or popcorn (evoking memories of early childhood.

Taste (Gustative): People can sense 5 basic tastes bitter, sour, umami (savory, or meaty), salty and sweet. Taste is the sense that fuses all different senses together to create a holistic brand experience, but is also linked to emotional states, so it can alter mood and brand perception.

Touch (Tactile): Our skin has more than 4,000,000 sensory receptors that can be easily manipulated through materials, weight, softness and comfort of the product. It is a perfect way for getting close to consumer's unconsciousness, their perceptions, feelings and tastes.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

In order to carry on the present work, several earlier studies have been reviewed, some of which are mentioned as under:

Prateek Khanna and Shirish Mishra (2013), have examined the **"The Impact of Sensory branding (five senses) on consumer A Case study on "Coca Cola"**, the study found that in perspective of building brand identity, taste, visual and tactile aspects of Coca Cola have strong impact and on the other hand, smell and auditory aspects have less impact on building brand identity of consumer. In perspective of building brand awareness to the consumer, visual and tactile aspects of Coca Cola have strong impact and taste aspect has moderate impact. On the other hand, smell and auditory aspects have less impact on building brand awareness of consumer.

Nidhi Bhatia & Sunaina Kothari (2012), in their study **"sensory branding"** examined that in today's time sensory branding is gaining its importance as it helps to fulfill the emotive need of consumer and greater numbers of consumers are being driven by experience and retail brands that are able to deliver that experience through fashionable and fresh merchandise, innovative designs of both product and retail, multi sensorial environments, and delightful customer service will be able to build powerful and enduring retail brands. In order to position the products in the minds of the consumers more effectively, marketers must efficiently target the sensory stimuli of the consumers.

Martin Lindstrom through their study **"Broad sensory branding"** conducted in Australia (2005) results revealed that 99 percent of all brand communication currently focuses on only two of the senses – sight and sound. Emotional connections are effectively made with a synergy of all five senses, and as such those brands that are communicating from a multi-sensory brand platform have the greatest likelihood of forming emotional connections between consumers and their product.

Sunil Chaware in his study **"Sensory Branding: Opening Up Senses of Consumers"** (2012) stated that when a product appeals to the sense of customers, chances are more that the product will be sold more than its competitors. Gone are the days when simple advertisements like **"Swad Bhare, Shakti Bhare Parle-G"** used to create market shaking effects. Today markets are buzzing with number of competitors and the conventional advertisements are no more sufficient to make the impact on customer's mind. It is the time to make consumers more intensely *feel* what additional functional and emotional value a product of a company has for customers compared to its competitors. This understanding has given rise to the concept of *Sensory Branding*. Hence a marketer must make use of this marketing technique in the changing environment. It is a challenge for the marketers to create multi-dimensional sensory experiences in the consumers. Achieving this will definitely push the marketer towards the path of success.

OBJECTIVES:

- To study the awareness about sensory branding in FMCG sector among sample respondents.
- To study the variables contributing to the building of sensory branding.
- To study the role of sensory branding in consumer buying decision in FMCG sector.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Research methodology involves the framework of the research. The type of the research design used for the present study involves exploratory research. Exploratory research is designed to provide a background to familiarize and to provide a background to just explore the general subject. It also increases familiarity of the researcher with the subject. The nature of data is primary as it is collected for the first time from the sample respondents using FMCG products.

Type of sampling: Random sampling. Random sampling from a finite population refers to that method of sample selection which gives each possible sample combination an equal probability of being picked up and each item in the entire population to have an equal chance of being included in the sample.

Sample size: 128 respondents belonging to the age group of 15-20 years, 20-35 years, 35-50 years and 50 years and above, having different annual income with the qualification as graduate, post graduate and high school were taken as sample respondents for the study.

Data collection tools: Primary data is collected through Structured Questionnaire which is designed to meet the objective of the study. Questionnaire comprises of two parts, first part deals with the awareness of consumers towards sensory branding and the second part deals with the influence of sensory branding on buying behaviour of a consumer.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

For the purpose of data analysis four tools were used which are reliability test, frequency distribution, chi square test and regression analysis.

Reliability test: The reliability of the instrument is tested by using Chronbach alpha method. The number of items taken in the present study are 24 and their reliability is coming to be 0.7, thus it may be said that the reliability of the instrument used in the research is good and acceptable.

TABLE 1: RELIABILITY STATISTICS**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.701	24

The first part of the questionnaire which is comprised of the demographic variables and the awareness related a question is analysed by using frequency distribution.

THE FINDINGS OF THE ANALYSIS ARE MENTIONED AS UNDER:

1. AGE GROUP

TABLE 2: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION BY AGE

Age Group	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
15-20	48	37.5	37.5
20-35	44	34.4	34.4
Valid 35-50	24	18.8	18.8
Above 50	12	9.4	9.4
Total	128	100.0	100.0

From Table 2 it can be said that the age group of respondent varying from 15-20 years and 20-35 have the highest contribution of 37.5% and 34.4% respectively i.e. the young generation are more aware and responsive towards Sensory branding while purchasing FMCG. The age groups 35-50 years and above 50 years contribute only 18.8% and 9.4% as they might not visit stores very frequently.

2. GENDER

TABLE 3: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION BY GENDER

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Female	76	59.4	59.4
Valid Male	52	40.6	40.6
Total	128	100.0	100.0

From Table 3 it is observed that females contributes more than males of the total respondents. Thus it can be concluded females are more affected by sensory branding while purchasing FMCG products as compared to males as it is said the females have better sense of observation and their senses are stronger than males.

3. INCOME

TABLE 4: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION BY INCOME

Income	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Upto 1 Lakh	16	12.5	12.5
1-3 Lakh	28	21.9	21.9
Valid Above Lakh	32	25.0	25.0
Dependent	52	40.6	40.6
Total	128	100.0	100.0

The above table 4 shows the income of 128 respondents which includes low income group i.e. upto 1 lakh, Medium income group i.e. 1- 3 lakh and high income group i.e. above 3 lakh and dependent group as well, thus it may be concluded that the low income group is least effected by various elements of sensory branding used by companies while they purchase fast moving consumer goods as their purchase decision is based on necessity.

4. QUALIFICATION

TABLE 5: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION BY QUALIFICATION

Qualification	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid Graduate	36	28.1	28.1
Post graduate	52	40.6	40.6
High school	40	31.3	31.3
Total	128	100.0	100.0

The above table 5 denotes the qualification of the respondent among which the graduate segment represents 28.1% of the total respondent, the respondents who have completed their high school represents 31.3% whereas the post graduate segment represents 40.6% of the total population which tells that the highly qualified segment is more aware and responsive towards sensory branding techniques while purchasing FMCG products.

5. MARITAL STATUS

TABLE 6: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION BY MARITAL STATUS

Marital Status	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid Married	60	46.9	46.9
Unmarried	68	53.1	53.1
Total	128	100.0	100.0

Table 6 represents the marital status of the respondent among which the married segment is 46.9% of the total respondent and the unmarried segment represents 53.1% of the total population. Thus it may be interpreted that the bachelors or the unmarried customers are more attracted towards the sensory branding while purchasing FMCG products.

6. OCCUPATION**TABLE 7: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION BY OCCUPATION**

Occupation	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Business	36	28.1	28.1
House wife	24	18.8	18.8
Service	28	21.9	21.9
Student	40	31.3	31.3
Total	128	100.0	100.0

Table no. 7 denotes the occupation of the respondents among which the highest share is contributed by business class and students i.e. 28.1% and 31.3% respectively, respondents falling in service sector contributes 21.9% whereas house wife's represent 18% of the total respondent. Therefore we can say that customers from business and students are the ones who are most aware and responsive towards sensory branding.

8. AWARENESS**TABLE 8: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION BY AWARENESS**

Awareness	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Aware	104	81.3	81.3
Unaware	24	18.8	18.8
Total	128	100.0	100.0

From table 8 it is observed that the number of respondents who are aware about sensory branding technique represents 81.3% of the total respondent and the respondents who are unaware represent only 18.8% of the total respondent. Thus most of the customers are aware about sensory branding and use their senses while purchasing FMCG products.

9. SOURCE OF AWARENESS**TABLE 9: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION BY SOURCE OF AWARENESS**

Source Of Awareness	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Through print media	32	25.0	25.0
Through electronic media	36	28.1	28.1
Through family and friends	32	25.0	25.0
Through own Experiences	28	21.9	21.9
Total	128	100.0	100.0

Table no. 9 represents the source of awareness among the sample respondent, it is observed that the highest percentage is of awareness is through electronic media i.e. 28.1% where as the awareness through print media and through family and friends contributes to 25% each and the awareness through own experience have the least contribution of 21%. Thus it can be said that electronic media which includes television, radio, the Internet etc. have major impact on the respondents as it has wide coverage and almost everybody is connected to electronic media in some or the other way.

FMCG companies use various promotional strategies involving the 5 sense (taste, smell, sight, touch and sound) to attract the customers thus to identify the most effective method of sensory branding and the most used method of sensory branding by the companies frequency distribution was used and the result are explained below:

The below chart 1 represents the effective method of Sensory Branding according to 128 respondents among which 60 feels that sight is the best suitable method which includes advertisements, hoardings, billboards, packaging etc. followed by smell and taste which has a support of 24 respondent each where as touch and sound are last on the charts of respondents method of effectiveness.

Chart 1- Effective method of Sensory Branding

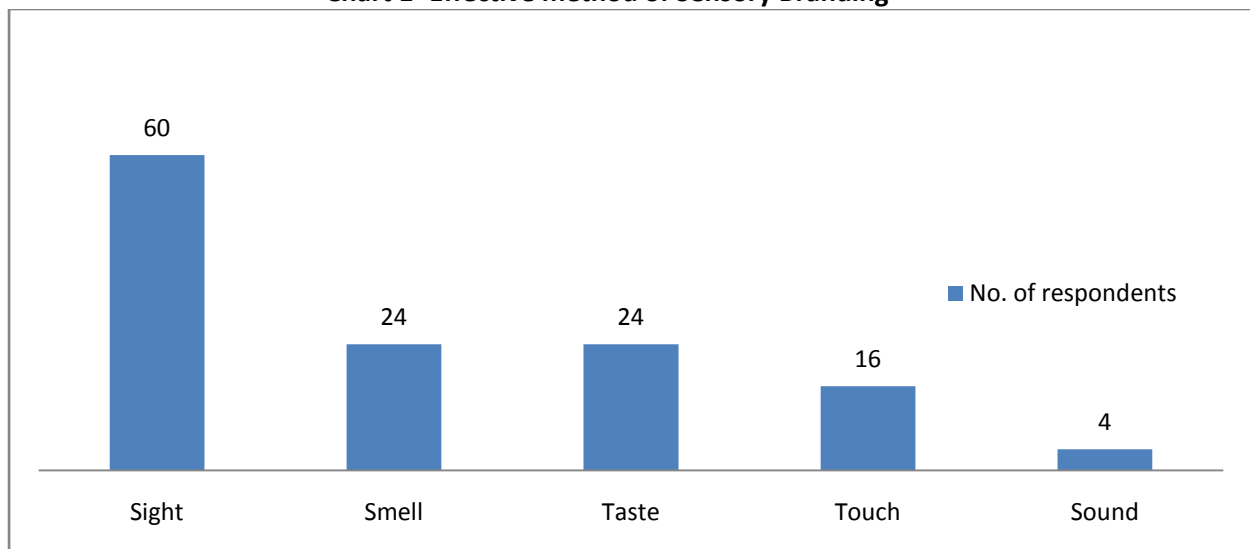
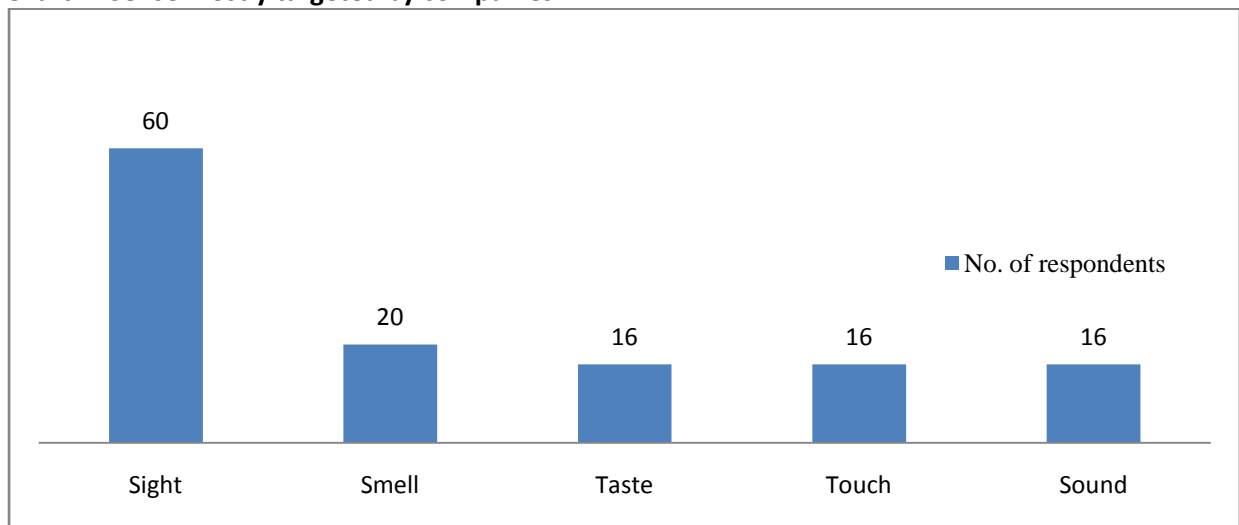


Chart 2- Sense mostly targeted by companies

According to chart 2 FMCG companies mostly target sight as a tool to attract customers, out of 128 respondent 60 feels that sight is important, mainly because it is most responsive to the environment. Colors on the wall, on-shelf visibilities etc. are various tools used by the companies. Smell is also found to be an important method chosen by 20 respondents which includes aroma in the store or product fragrance. The least targeted method were found to be touch, taste and sound scoring 16 respondent each.

To find the relationship between sensory branding and customers buying behavior the following analysis was done:

Hypotheses:

H0: Shopping experience does not influence sensory branding.

H1: Shopping experience influence sensory branding.

Table 10: Chi-Square test statistics

	Influence	Shopping experience
Chi-Square	18.000 ^a	18.000 ^a
df	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000

From the above table, Pearson Chi-Square statistic is 18.0, and $p < 0.00$. Null hypothesis is rejected, since $p < 0.05$. Thus alternative hypotheses is accepted i.e. shopping experience influences the sensory branding. The shopping experience of Fast moving consumer goods can be improved if the customers are influenced towards sensory branding.

Hypotheses:

H0: Buying behavior of a customer is not influenced by various elements sensory branding.

H1: Buying behavior of a customer is influenced by various elements sensory branding.

Table 11- ANOVA^b

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	438.167	7	62.595	34.562	.000 ^a
Residual	217.333	120	1.811		
Total	655.500	127			

Table 12- Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.318	.835		5.175	.000
	Taste	1.287	.289	.235	4.455	.000
	Packaging	2.232	.253	.468	8.835	.000
	Salesman Attitude	1.090	.255	.239	4.268	.000
	Colors used in the store	1.054	.289	.233	3.648	.000
	Offers announced through radio	.856	.333	.189	2.573	.011
	Personal Announcement	.983	.316	.214	3.110	.002
	Billboards	1.175	.298	.259	3.947	.000

From the above table no. 10 it can be concluded that a null hypothesis is rejected where as alternative hypothesis is accepted as value (.000) is less than .05 that means buying behavior of a customer is influenced by various elements of sensory branding that are Taste, Packaging, Salesman Attitude, Colors, Offers announced through radio, Personal Announcement, Billboards which attracts the 5 senses of the customer (taste, smell, sight, touch and sound).

After further analysis it can be said that amongst the various elements of sensory branding packaging and in store promotional offer through bill boards/ hoarding of a FMCG product mostly influences customers buying behavior i.e. out of the 5 senses sight is the one which affect buying decision the most followed by taste and touch. Whereas Offers announced through radio do not impact the buying behavior which means sound have a little influence over buying behavior.

Thus the marketer of FMCG must primarily focus on those promotional activities which are related to sight aspects of customers such as packaging of the product, promotional offer through bill

boards/ hoarding, placing of products on shelf, using attractive display etc. and less attention should be paid to promotional activates with involve the hearing senses of the customer so that more customers can be attracted by the marketer to purchase Fast moving consumer goods.

CONCLUSION

A growing number of companies are turning to new methods of reaching customers that transcend the traditional tools of brand building. More and more companies are employing stimuli such as scent, sound and texture to build stronger emotional connections with the customer and drive preference for their brands.

Marketers mostly appeal to sight and touch. 99% of all brand communication focuses on sight aspect. However in many instances, sound and smell are more effective than sight when branding a product. Also, visual images are more distinctive when matched with a second sense. The research was conducted to get the impact of sensory branding on consumer buying behavior. The study found that of all five senses impact the consumers and influence them to purchase fast moving consumer goods among the 5 sense sight is found to have major impact followed by smell, taste, touch and sound is found to have least influence on buying behavior.

Amongst the respondent the age group ranging from 15-20 and 20-35 i.e. youths were found to be most influenced by sensory branding where as the population above 50 years were observed to be least influenced by these strategies thus companies need to put more effort to develop strategies which can influence them. Out of 128 respondents 104 were aware about sensory branding and only 24 respondents were unaware, so we can say that most of the customers are aware and influenced by sensory branding technique used by FMCG companies.

Thus Marketing managers must grasp the individual and collective impact of multiple sensory dimensions and use the mode of electronic media to aware the customers as it was found to have awareness in most of the respondents in the study. By using the language of senses FMCG companies can attract a lot of customers and form a brand image of themselves by targeting the right sense for right product.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aaker, D.A. (1991), Managing Brand equity, New York: The Free Press
- Djurovic, V. (2008), Sensorial Branding - The future of brands building, [Online] Available from: <http://ezinearticles.com/?Sensorial-Branding---The-Future-of-Brand-Building&id=1412143> [2011-10-14]
- Peter Dixon, Randall Stone Andjana Zednickova "Engaging Customers through Sensory Branding" a study by Lippincott a leading design and brand strategy consultancy firm.
- Prateek Khanna and Shirish Mishra, "The Impact of Sensory branding (five senses) on consumer A Case study on "Coca Cola" (2013)
- Dr. Vinit Dani and Mrs. Vanishree Pabalkar (2011), "Branding through Sensory Marketing", International journal of scientific research.
- Martin Lindstrom (2005), "Broad sensory branding", Journal of Product & Brand Management.
- Sharafat Hussain (2014), "The Impact of Sensory Branding (Five Senses) on Consumer: A Case Study On Kfc (Kentucky Fried Chicken)" International Journal of Research in Business Management Vol. 2, Issue 5.
- Kotler P. (1973), Atmospherics as a marketing tool - Journal of Retailing, p. 49.
- Krishna, A. (2010). Sensory Marketing: research on the sensuality of products. New York: Taylor and Francis Group.
- Morrin M. (2010), Scent marketing: an overview, In Krishna, Sensory Marketing, New York: Taylor and Francis Group.
- Prateek khanna, (2012) "Power of senses in branding and its impact on consumer" VSRD International Journal of Business and Management Research, Vol. 2 No. 12 December.
- Herz. (2007). "The scent of desire: Discovering our enigmatic sense of smell", New York: Harper Collins publishers.