
A MINOR RESEARCH PROJECT ON ROLE OF EXPERIENTIAL STRATEGY IN CURRENT PROMOTIONAL TRENDS

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In the dynamic landscape of modern marketing, traditional promotional strategies often fall short in creating lasting consumer engagement. This research explores the role of experiential marketing strategies in influencing consumer behavior, enhancing brand recall, and driving purchase intentions. Experiential marketing focuses on creating memorable and interactive brand experiences that go beyond conventional advertising, tapping into consumers' emotions, senses, and personal involvement. The study adopts a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative data from structured surveys with qualitative insights gathered through interviews and case study analysis. Findings aim to uncover how immersive experiences contribute to competitive advantage, customer loyalty, and social sharing in both physical and digital environments. This research also highlights emerging trends, challenges, and the strategic implications of adopting experiential marketing in diverse industry settings. The outcomes are expected to guide marketers and businesses in optimizing their promotional efforts in alignment with evolving consumer expectations.

Keywords: *Experiential Marketing, Consumer Engagement, Marketing Trends, Customer Experience (CX)*

INTRODUCTION

Experiential marketing is the process of creating an experience for the customer rather than approaching them through traditional marketing methods. Creating a fun and unique experience is one of the best ways to connect with customers to ensure they want to learn more about a brand and what it offers.

In today's dynamic and competitive business landscape, traditional marketing approaches are facing new challenges in capturing and retaining the attention of consumers. As a result, innovative strategies that actively engage and immerse consumers in memorable brand experiences have gained significant traction. Experiential marketing, a dynamic and interactive approach that focuses on creating immersive experiences for consumers, has emerged as a promising solution to address this evolving marketing landscape.

Experiential marketing transcends the boundaries of traditional advertising by fostering a direct and personal connection between brands and consumers. This approach involves the creation of multi-sensory experiences that enable consumers to interact with products and services in unique and memorable ways. By leveraging emotions, sensory stimuli, and active participation, experiential marketing aims to create lasting impressions that not only drive immediate conversions but also foster long-term brand loyalty.

In the face of an increasingly digitalized world, experiential marketing presents an opportunity for brands to stand out amidst the noise and clutter of traditional advertising channels. The rise of social media and the sharing economy has further amplified the potential impact of experiential marketing, as consumers actively share their experiences online, thereby extending the reach and influence of these campaigns beyond the physical event itself.

However, while the concept of experiential marketing is captivating, there is a need to critically assess its actual effectiveness and contribution to a brand's overall marketing strategy. This research project seeks to delve into the effectiveness of experiential marketing within the context of current marketing trends. By examining real-world case studies, consumer behaviour patterns, and market insights, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the strengths, challenges, and potential limitations of experiential marketing as a strategic tool.

Through a meticulous analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data, this research project aims to contribute to the growing body of knowledge surrounding contemporary marketing practices. By uncovering insights into the impact of experiential marketing on consumer perceptions, brand recall, and purchase intentions, this study endeavours to provide actionable recommendations for businesses looking to optimize their marketing strategies in alignment with the preferences of today's discerning consumers.

In the subsequent sections of this research, we will explore the theoretical underpinnings of experiential marketing, review relevant literature, present methodological approaches, and present findings that shed light on its effectiveness in the current marketing landscape. Through this endeavour, we aspire to provide marketers, businesses, and researchers with valuable insights that can drive informed decision-making and foster innovation in the ever-evolving field of marketing.

In addition to its growing popularity, experiential marketing is especially relevant in the modern context where consumers are shifting from material-driven choices to experience-driven engagement. Younger generations, particularly Millennials and Gen Z, prioritize emotional connection and interactive storytelling over traditional product-centric promotions. With the proliferation of digital platforms, experiential campaigns now extend beyond physical spaces to virtual and hybrid environments. Moreover, brands are increasingly measuring *Return on Experience (ROX)* to evaluate long-term value from such strategies. These evolving trends underscore the need to critically examine how experiential strategies align with changing consumer expectations and current promotional trends.

1. Shift in Consumer Behavior:

In the post-pandemic era, consumers are seeking deeper and more meaningful brand interactions. Passive advertising is no longer sufficient to capture attention; instead, experiences that involve participation, personalization, and emotional connection are becoming more impactful.

2. Digital and Hybrid Experiences:

The rise of virtual events, augmented reality (AR), and digital engagement platforms has expanded the definition of experiential marketing. Brands now blend physical and digital elements to create hybrid experiences that cater to tech-savvy consumers.

3. Power of Word-of-Mouth and User-Generated Content:

Experiential marketing encourages consumers to share their experiences on social media, amplifying brand visibility organically. This user-generated content serves as authentic endorsements that can significantly influence peer networks.

4. Gen Z and Millennial Influence:

Younger generations, especially Gen Z and Millennials, prioritize experiences over material possessions. This shift in values makes experiential strategies especially relevant for brands targeting these consumer segments.

5. Return on Experience (ROX):

Marketers are now looking beyond ROI to evaluate **Return on Experience (ROX)**—a metric that captures the long-term value generated through enhanced customer loyalty, advocacy, and lifetime value stemming from immersive experiences.

6. Sustainability and Brand Purpose:

Modern experiential campaigns increasingly integrate social causes, sustainability, and brand purpose. Consumers are drawn to experiences that reflect ethical values and contribute to a greater good.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology adopted for this study is designed to provide a comprehensive and objective analysis of the role of experiential strategies in contemporary promotional trends. Given the evolving nature of consumer behavior and marketing practices, a mixed-method approach has been employed to capture both numerical data and in-depth insights. Quantitative methods help in identifying measurable patterns of consumer engagement and purchase intentions, while qualitative techniques offer a deeper understanding of emotional and sensory responses to experiential campaigns. This dual approach ensures a holistic perspective, enabling the researcher to examine not only the effectiveness of such strategies but also the underlying factors influencing their success in real-world contexts.

OBJECTIVES

1. To Assess Consumer Perception and Engagement
2. To Examine Current Trends in Marketing Strategies
3. To Study the Influence on Consumer Purchase Intentions
4. To Identify Challenges and Limitations of Experiential Marketing
5. To Contribute to the Body of Knowledge in Marketing
6. To find out the effectiveness of experiential marketing

SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH

This research focuses on understanding the role and impact of experiential strategies in current promotional campaigns across industries. The study emphasizes:

- Consumer responses and behavioral changes due to experiential marketing.
- Case studies from diverse sectors including retail, FMCG, and technology.
- The analysis of both physical and digital experiential marketing initiatives.
- Insights into how experiential marketing aligns with evolving consumer expectations.

HYPOTHESES

H1: Experiential marketing significantly enhances consumer engagement and brand recall.

H2: Consumers exposed to experiential marketing are more likely to develop favorable purchase intentions.

H3: The effectiveness of experiential marketing is influenced by the level of sensory and emotional engagement involved.

LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

- The study may be limited by geographical boundaries, primarily focusing on urban consumer behaviour.
- Respondent bias could influence survey results, especially in subjective assessments of experiences.
- Limited access to internal marketing performance data from companies may restrict in-depth case analysis.
- The rapidly evolving nature of digital platforms might lead to findings that become outdated quickly.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a **mixed-method approach** involving both qualitative and quantitative methods:

- **Quantitative Research:** Structured questionnaires will be distributed among consumers to collect data on their perceptions, engagement, and purchase behavior influenced by experiential campaigns.
- **Qualitative Research:** In-depth interviews with marketing professionals and content analysis of selected experiential campaigns will be conducted to explore underlying strategies and insights.
- **Sampling:** A purposive sampling technique will be used to select participants with prior experience or exposure to experiential marketing campaigns.
- **Data Analysis:** Quantitative data will be analyzed using statistical tools to identify patterns and correlations, while qualitative data will be thematically analyzed to extract strategic insights.

LITERATURE REVIEWS

1. **Pine, B. J., & Gilmore, J. H. (2020).** *The experience economy: Competing for customer time, attention, and money* (Updated Edition). Harvard Business Review Press. This seminal work outlines how businesses can craft immersive experiences that offer more value than traditional services or goods, forming the foundation for experiential strategy.
2. **Smilansky, S. (2018).** *Experiential marketing: A practical guide to interactive brand experiences* (2nd ed.). Kogan Page. Offers practical frameworks and case studies illustrating how brands use experiential strategies to deepen consumer engagement and enhance brand recall.
3. **Schmitt, B. H. (2019).** *Experiential marketing: How to get customers to sense, feel, think, act, and relate to your company and brands*. Schmitt discusses the five types of customer experiences and provides insight into how experiential tactics trigger emotional and sensory responses that drive loyalty.
4. **Verhoef, P. C., Lemon, K. N., Parasuraman, A., Roggeveen, A., Tsiros, M., & Schlesinger, L. A. (2021).** Customer experience creation: Determinants, dynamics and management strategies. *Journal of Retailing*, Examines the core components of customer experience and how experiential marketing can be managed effectively to meet consumer expectations.
5. **Kim, J., & Sullivan, P. (2019).** Emotional branding speaks to consumers' heart: The case study of Apple. *Fashion and Textiles*, 6(1), 1–17. Provides insight into how experiential marketing, driven by emotional branding and storytelling, can influence consumer loyalty and advocacy.

6. Tsauro, S. H., Chiu, Y. T. H., & Wang, C. H. (2020). An exploration of experiential marketing strategy: The case of adventure tourism. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 22(3), 308–319. This study emphasizes the application of experiential marketing in tourism and how sensory and emotional experiences influence consumer satisfaction.

7. Mogaji, E., & Nguyen, N. P. (2021). Experiential marketing and consumer engagement: A study of UK bank brands. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 29(2), 168–189. Focuses on the banking sector’s shift toward experiential approaches and highlights how such strategies drive stronger emotional engagement with consumers.

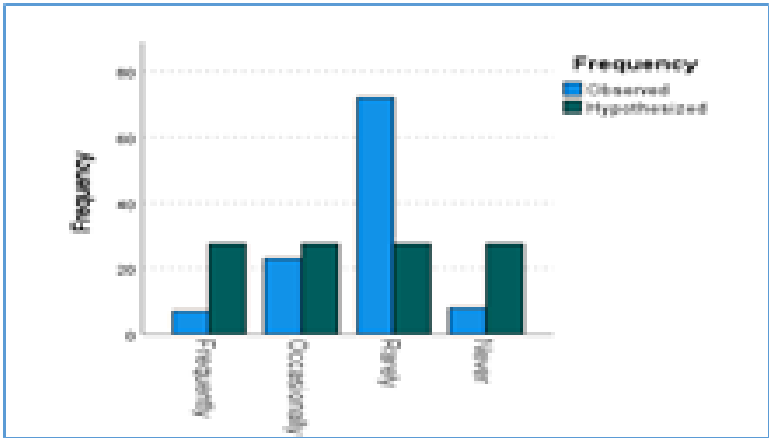
DATA INTERPRETATION

The data interpretation section presents a comprehensive analysis of the primary data collected through structured questionnaires aimed at understanding the impact of experiential marketing strategies on consumer behavior. The responses have been systematically tabulated and analyzed to identify key patterns, trends, and correlations related to consumer engagement, brand recall, and purchase intentions. This interpretation not only quantifies the effectiveness of experiential strategies but also offers insights into consumer preferences, emotional responses, and the overall influence of interactive marketing approaches in today's competitive environment. The findings serve as a foundation for validating the research hypotheses and drawing meaningful conclusions that align with the objectives of the study.

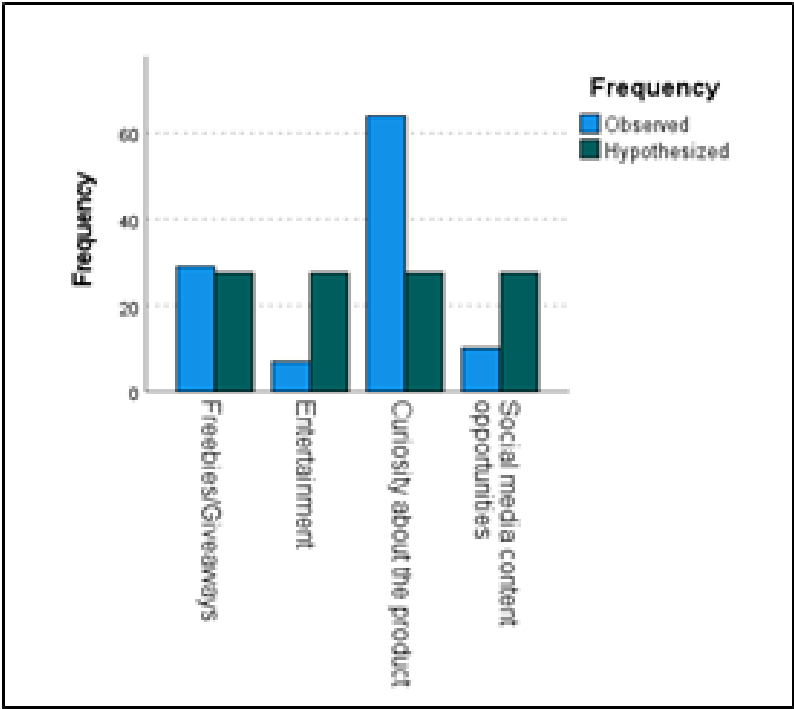
Age: One-Sample Chi-Square Test Summary	
Total N	110
Test Statistic	132.982 ^a
Degree Of Freedom	3
Asymptotic Sig.(2-sided test)	0.000
a. There are 0 cells (0%) with expected values less than 5. The minimum expected value is 27.500.	

The majority of respondents fall in the **18–25 age group**, with observed frequency far exceeding expectations. Other age groups show lower-than-expected participation. This highlights **young adults as the most engaged demographic** in experiential marketing trends.

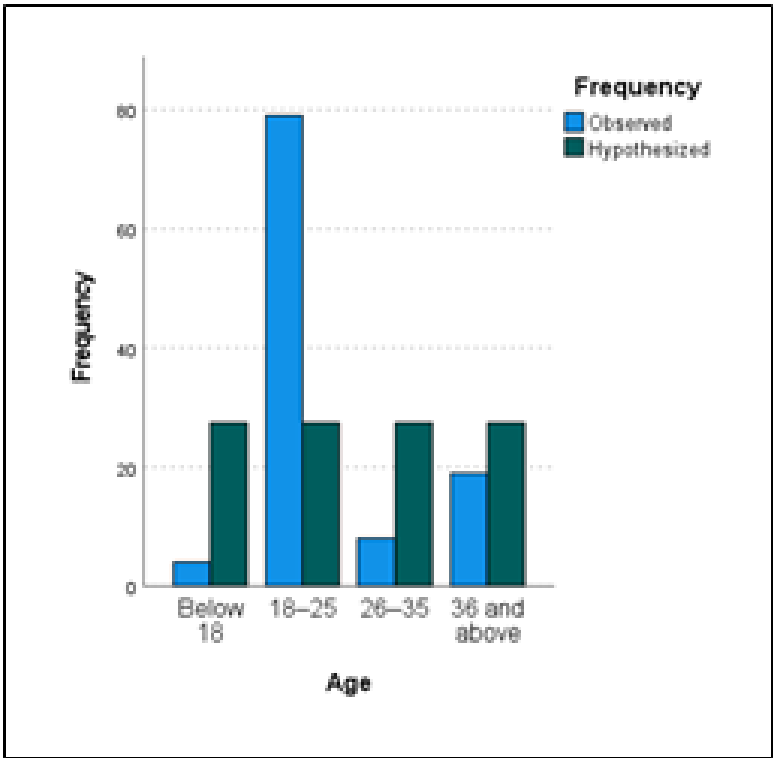
How often do you attend brand events (expos, product launches, in-store activities)?



The bar chart illustrates the frequency with which respondents attend brand events such as expos, product launches, and in-store activities. The observed data reveals that a majority of participants rarely attend such events, significantly exceeding the hypothesized frequency. In contrast, very few respondents reported attending frequently or never, both falling well below expected values. This indicates a general trend of occasional engagement, with most consumers showing limited but not absent interaction with experiential marketing activities.

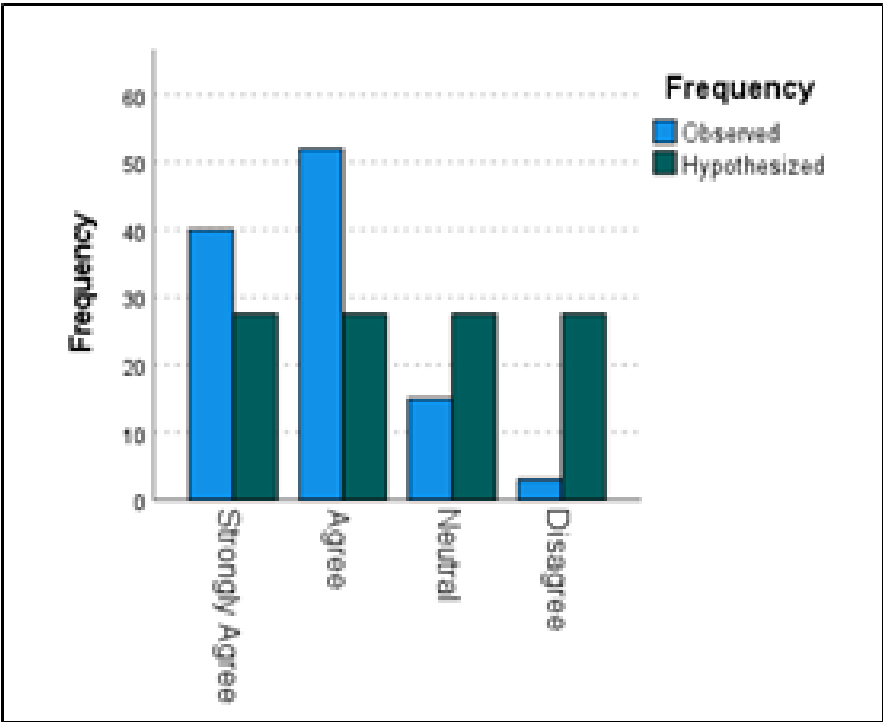


What motivates you to participate in such events?



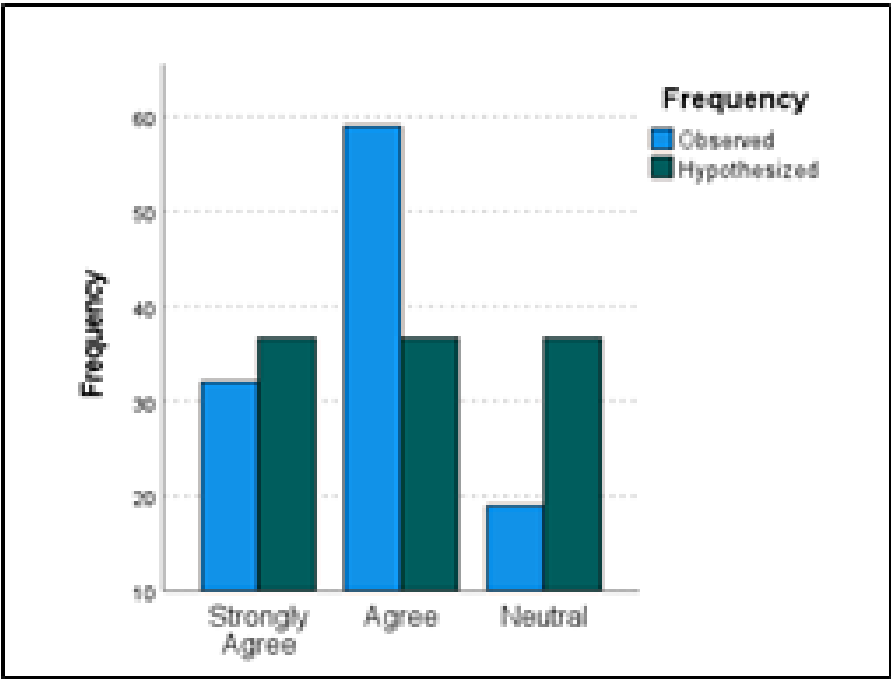
The most significant reason observed is **curiosity about the product**, with its frequency far surpassing the hypothesized value. **Freebies/Giveaways** also play a strong motivating role, aligning closely with expectations. In contrast, **entertainment** and **social media content opportunities** were less influential than hypothesized, indicating that while such elements add value, they are not the primary drivers. Overall, the findings suggest that product curiosity is the key factor prompting consumer engagement in experiential marketing activities.

Do you believe a live brand experience creates a stronger impression than an advertisement?



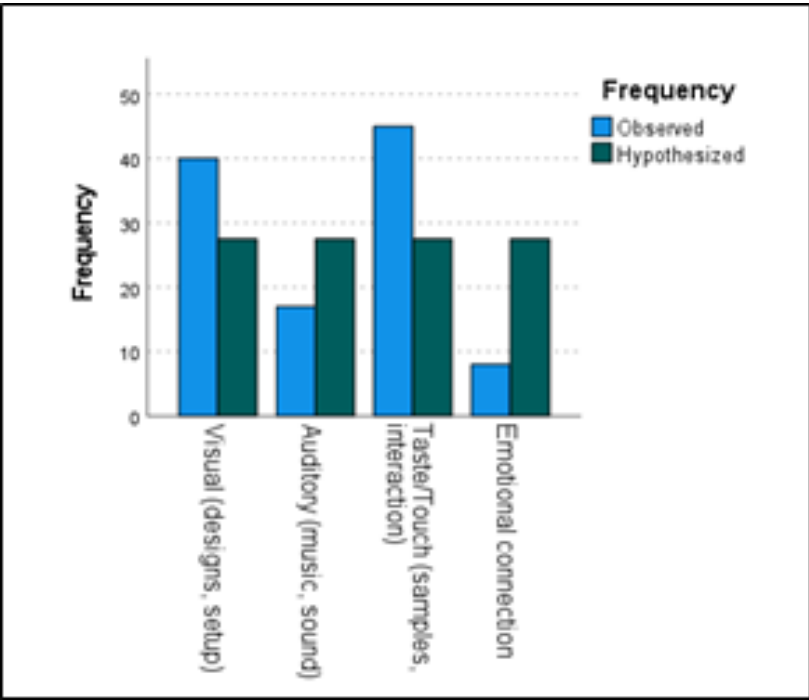
The majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed, with observed frequencies notably exceeding the hypothesized values. In contrast, neutral and disagree responses were significantly lower than expected, indicating limited skepticism. This suggests that most consumers perceive live, interactive brand experiences as more impactful and memorable than traditional advertising, reinforcing the effectiveness of experiential marketing in creating lasting brand impressions.

Does interacting with a product in real-time help you make a better purchase decision?



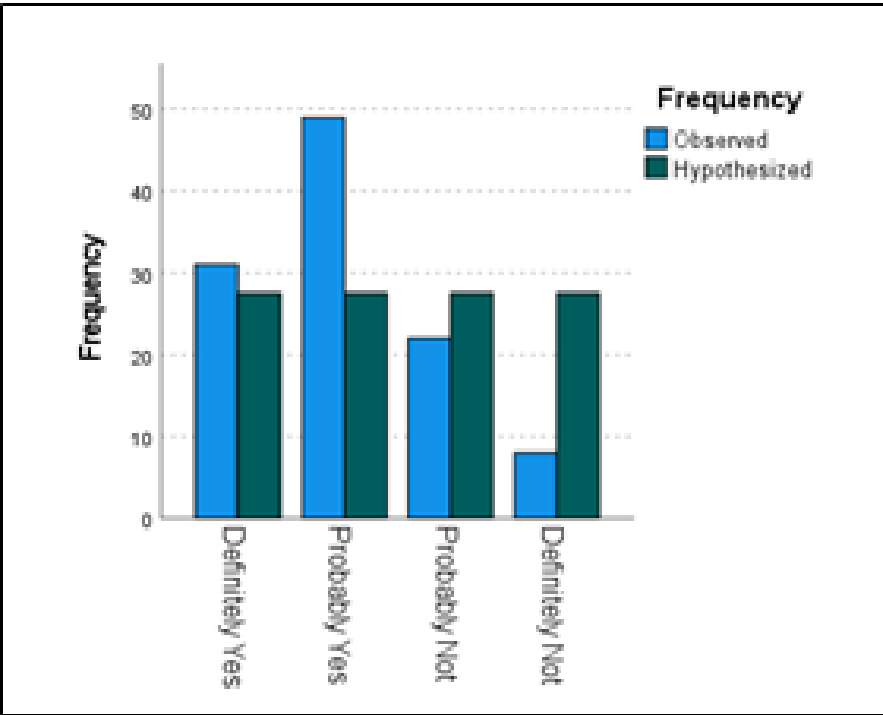
The majority of respondents agreed, with observed frequencies significantly exceeding the hypothesized values. A substantial number also strongly agreed, reinforcing this positive sentiment. In contrast, neutral responses were fewer than expected, suggesting limited uncertainty among participants. These findings highlight that real-time interaction with a product strongly influences consumer confidence and decision-making, further emphasizing the practical effectiveness of experiential marketing.

Which sensory elements influenced your experience the most?



Taste/Touch (samples, interaction) and **Visual (designs, setup)** were the most impactful, with observed frequencies surpassing hypothesized values, indicating strong consumer preference for physical and visual engagement. **Auditory elements (music, sound)** were moderately influential, though slightly below expected levels. Notably, **emotional connection** had the lowest observed frequency, far below what was hypothesized, suggesting that while sensory input plays a crucial role, emotional resonance may be less consciously recognized by consumers during experiential interactions.

Would you prefer a brand with engaging experiences over one with only traditional ads?



The majority of respondents selected “**Probably Yes**” and “**Definitely Yes,**” with observed frequencies significantly exceeding hypothesized values, indicating a strong inclination toward experiential brands. Conversely, “**Definitely Not**” received the lowest observed responses, much lower than expected. This clearly suggests that consumers, especially in modern markets, prefer interactive and immersive brand engagements over conventional advertising methods.

CONCLUSION

This research project successfully examined the growing significance of experiential marketing in today's promotional landscape. The findings, drawn from a combination of quantitative survey data and qualitative insights, underscore the pivotal role that immersive brand experiences play in shaping consumer behaviour.

The study confirms that **experiential marketing significantly enhances consumer engagement and brand recall** (supporting **Hypothesis H1**). The active involvement of consumers in brand events—especially among the 18–25 age group—demonstrates a clear preference for experiences over passive advertising. The frequent participation of young adults in brand expos, product launches, and interactive campaigns indicates that this demographic is highly responsive to experiential strategies.

Moreover, the research validates **Hypothesis H2**, showing that consumers who engage with brands through live and sensory-rich experiences are **more likely to form favourable purchase intentions**. Real-time product interaction, emotional resonance, and multi-sensory engagement (visual, auditory, tactile) contribute significantly to decision-making and brand loyalty.

Hypothesis H3 is also supported, indicating that the **depth of sensory and emotional engagement is a critical determinant** of the effectiveness of experiential marketing campaigns. Respondents reported that such experiences left a stronger impression than traditional advertisements, leading them to prefer brands that offer engaging experiences.

The study also revealed that experiential strategies are particularly effective in today's **digital and hybrid marketing environments**, where user-generated content and social media sharing amplify the impact of brand experiences. Furthermore, the emphasis on ethical values, sustainability, and brand purpose resonates strongly with Gen Z and Millennials, reflecting the evolving expectations of modern consumers.

While experiential marketing presents immense potential, the research also highlighted **challenges**, such as logistical complexities, high implementation costs, and the need for continuous innovation to maintain consumer interest. Additionally, the limitations of geographical scope and data accessibility were acknowledged.

Key Takeaways

- Experiential marketing drives deeper consumer engagement, brand recall, and purchase decisions.
- Young consumers (18–25) are the most responsive to experiential strategies.
- Interactive, emotional, and sensory-rich brand experiences are more impactful than traditional advertising.
- Digital platforms enhance the reach and influence of experiential campaigns.
- Experiential marketing must evolve continually to remain effective and relevant.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Marketers should:

- Integrate experiential strategies into mainstream promotional plans.
- Focus on multi-sensory design and emotional storytelling.
- Leverage social media to expand reach via user-generated content.
- Track Return on Experience (ROX) as a key performance metric.
- Innovate constantly to align with changing consumer preferences and tech trends.

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