

What luxury consumers want: interrelation between store atmospherics and salespeople behavioural attributes

Abstract

The aim of the present research is to provide a conceptual framework that connects store atmospherics and salespeople's attributes and behaviours and to assess their relevance in shaping a customer's overall experience in a luxury store. Our findings prove empirically that salespeople's attributes and behaviours are more crucial than atmospherics in determining customer satisfaction.

The empirical results suggest that *Giving advice to customer* and *Closing the sale* are the most influential aspects for the development of an effective customer-centric experience and that empathetic and caring skills are therefore particularly crucial in the selection and training of salespeople. The managerial implications are discussed.

1. Introduction

1.1. The central role of the store for the luxury industry

Even if e-commerce is one of the fastest growing shopping channels for luxury goods (Sanguanpiyapan and Jasper 2010; Bain & Company 2014) and the Internet has “profoundly transformed the industry practices of modern retailing and distribution management” (Liu and Burns 2013; and also Doherty and Ellis-Chadwick 2006; Pentina *et al.* 2011), the retail channel remains the first driver of growth for the luxury industry, as witnessed by the recent “retailization” phenomenon (Bain & Company 2011). Direct control over the distribution chain enables the successful luxury brands to generate higher profit margins, and the mono-brand store is the format firmly leading the way in this industry (52% of the global market) (Bain & Company 2014). Moreover, the physical point of sale also represents a powerful catalyst for other objectives, synergetic and complementary to profit achievement. The store is the “sacred place” where the oneiric component of the luxury brand materializes in a product presented to the “Chosen ones” (i.e., the “Customers”) through an almost religious ritual (Kapferer and Bastien 2009). The global expansion of the luxury market (Chevalier and Gutsatz 2012; Fondazione Altagamma 2015) and the “luxury democratization” (Gardyn 2002; Truong *et al.* 2008, 2009) led to a reduction of true craftsmanship in product manufacturing and to a growth of accessories and fragrances in the portfolio of many prestigious brands, aimed at multiplying the opportunities to meet with an increasing customer population. Therefore, the luxury industry is now struggling even more against the eternal paradox between the need to maximize profits and the inescapable necessity to hold high the banner of its exclusivity, not to disappoint its primary target, the so-called “happy few” (Berry 1994; Okonkwo 2007; Kapferer and Bastien 2009; Radón 2012). The luxury store represents the stage onto which the brand puts up a show of its own aesthetic definition of “beauty”, as it has been sensed by the genius of its charismatic creative director, thereby establishing its legitimacy in the eyes of its customers (Dion and Arnould 2011; Arnold *et al.* 2001). Seeking legitimacy is indeed the first objective of any luxury brand, especially in relation to the small circle of connoisseurs, the

hyper-sophisticated, beauty worshipers, and art lovers, the ones that a luxury firm would never dare to betray (Dubois and Duquesne 2003; Kapferer and Bastien 2009). From this perspective, it becomes easy to understand the recurrent and close intersections between luxury and art, especially contemporary, that has concerned the product (the “Lobster dress” by Elsa Schiaparelli and Salvador Dalí, the “Mondrian day dress” by Yves Saint Laurent, the Murakami bags by Louis Vuitton, etc.), various patronage activities (Chanel Mobile Art Pavilion, Cartier Foundation for Contemporary Art, Gucci Dia Art Foundation, etc.), and also the point of sale. The “M(Art)World” store is in fact a pioneering type of luxury flagship, often conceived by the most renowned architects, where the traditional division between commercial activities and art spaces is overcome in the name of a luxury “that contains art within its very identity” (Joy *et al.* 2014, p. 347) or, at least, that aspires to become art itself (Okonkwo 2007).

The overall shopping experience is certainly related to the “quality” of the physical space, but it also depends on the interaction between retail employees and customers, interaction that is of particular relevance for an industry that offers high involvement products (Martin 1998; Ehbauer and Gresel 2013). Thus, if the luxury store is considered as a sort of “brand cathedral”, its salespersons necessarily become the ambassadors appointed to officiate the rituals and the selling ceremony of the sacralized brand (Cervellon and Coudriet 2013).

This is even more true insofar as the mere concept of in-store purchasing has been increasingly replaced by that of experiential retailing (Lahey 2000; Kim 2001; Shaw and Ivens 2002; Grewal *et al.* 2009; Puccinelli *et al.* 2009; Verhoef *et al.* 2009; De Farias *et al.* 2014; Khan and Rahman 2015).

The luxury store is only partly about transactions. The luxury store has been seen by its selected customers more and more as a place of “experience”, “fun” and “gratification”, a sort of “third space” where not only products but also “good times” are for sale (Allegra Strategies 2005; Anderson *et al.* 2010; Manlow and Nobbs 2013).

1.2. Atmospheric and salespeople behavioural attributes

Starting from Kotler's work (1973), the role of the physical environment in determining a positive customer experience has been widely studied by many scholars who have developed some comprehensive atmospherics classifications (Baker 1986; Bitner 1992; Berman and Evans 1995; Turley and Milliman 2000) and investigated them individually or in their interactions (Mattila and Wirtz 2001; Eroglu *et al.* 2005a; Spangenberg *et al.* 2005; Trivedi 2006; Vaccaro 2009). Similarly, especially since the 2000s, other studies have been carried out to understand the impact of salespersons' attributes and behaviours upon a satisfying overall in-store experience (among others, Walker *et al.* 1977; Weitz 1981; Menon and Dubé 2000; Sharma and Levy 2003). These factors were then separately studied in the literature and recently have begun to be investigated also in their interrelationships (Sherman *et al.* 1997; Baker *et al.* 2002; Hedrick *et al.* 2006; Puccinelli *et al.* 2009; Lin and Liang 2011). However, a framework that evaluates the overall shopping experience, gathering together the atmospherics and the salespeople's attributes and behaviours and validating their distinct relevance, has not yet been developed.

The purpose of our research is to precisely fill this gap in the literature, at least with regard to the buying patterns of a luxury industry whose studies on store atmospherics and salespeople's behavioural attributes are not numerous.

2. Literature Review/Theoretical Background

2.1. Store atmospherics

The literature on the manipulation of store environments to influence consumer behaviours dates back to the 1950 and 1960 (Martineau 1958; Cox 1964; Smith and Currow 1966; Kotzan and Evanson 1969), even if the term "atmospherics" was coined only later by Philip Kotler (1973); Kotler defined atmospherics as the "effort to design buying environments to produce specific emotional effects in the buyer that enhance his purchase probability" (p. 50). Building on Kotler's work, Donovan and Rossiter (1982) applied the Mehrabian-Russel model (1974) to retail highlighting the influence of the atmospherics on consumers' emotions and behaviours. Baker (1986) then developed a more exhaustive model entailing three key elements of the store setting

ambience: “non-visual” (i.e., background conditions in the environment); “design” (i.e., functional and aesthetic elements basically visual); and “social” (elements involving the people who are inside the store). Afterwards, Bitner (1992) imagined three dimensions of the store setting (“ambient conditions”, “space/function” and “signs, symbols & artifacts”) and proved in a very convincing way the impact of atmospherics not only on customers but also on the employees of the store (as previously Baker *et al.* 1992). Berman and Evans (1995) split up instead the atmospherics into four categories: “exterior of the store”, “general interior”, “layout and design variables”, and “point-of-purchase and decoration variables”. Despite the existence of these first organizational models, Bitner (1992) could not help remarking on “a lack of empirical research [...] addressing the role of physical surroundings in consumption settings” (p. 57), an observation that later encouraged Turley and Milliman (2000) to consolidate the learning reached until then and create a more consistent and logical classification of the store atmospherics (*ibidem*, p. 194). Turley and Milliman’s work represents a turning point in the atmospherics studies as the two scholars took the decisive step to integrate Berman and Evans’s classification with a fifth category consisting of the so-called “human variables” (similar to the “social elements” of Baker 1986), inclusive of all of the aspects related to the influence of other shoppers and of retail employees’ appearance on shopping behaviours. Additionally, for this reason, the Turley and Milliman classification is still considered, after 15 years, to be the most exhaustive and organized work on store atmospherics (tab. 1).

Tab. 1. Atmospherics classifications from the literature

In addition to these systematic studies, many other papers have shown, in parallel, the relevance of the atmospherics as individual variables or classes of variables on customers’ emotional, cognitive and behavioural responses (among others, Bitner 1990; Donovan *et al.* 1994; Baker *et al.* 1994; Darden and Babin 1994; Sherman *et al.* 1997; Richins 1997; Foxall and Greenly 1999 and 2000; Baker *et al.* 2002; Chebat and Michon 2003; Babin *et al.* 2004; Demoulin 2011; Andersson *et al.* 2012; Correia Loureiro and Roschk 2014; Loureiro and Roschk 2014; Ramlee and Said 2014; Spence *et al.* 2014). Other scholars have focused instead on how store atmospherics are perceived

by customers not as separate identities but in interrelationship (Bitner 1990; Mattila and Wirtz 2001; Morin *et al.* 2007; De Farias 2014) and on how their simultaneous variations have an impact on perceived merchandising value, patronage intention, service quality and store image (Grewal and Baker 1994; Baker *et al.* 2002).

2.2. Salespeople's attributes and behaviours

The role of the retail salespersons has been quite neglected by scholars, especially if compared to the numerous studies dedicated to store atmospherics (Hartline and Jones 1996; Darian *et al.* 2005; Hedrick *et al.* 2006; Gremler and Gwinner 2008). In addition, the focus has typically been more on service quality and sales performance rather than on sales associates' attributes and behaviours (Kim and Kim 2012). Therefore, in the past, only relatively few studies have fully recognized the importance of a solid relationship between salespersons and customers (Walker *et al.* 1977; Weitz 1981; Weitzel *et al.* 1986; Menon and Dubé 2000; Sharma and Levy 2003; Bäckström and Johansson 2006) and the impact this may have on the commitment and loyalty towards the brand (Macintosh and Lockshin 1997; Campbell *et al.* 2006; Gremler and Gwinner 2008), on customer satisfaction (Goodwin 1996; Menon and Dubé 2000), on patronage intentions (Darian *et al.* 2001), and on word-of-mouth communication (LaBahn 1996; Gremler and Gwinner 2000 and 2008; DeWitt and Brady 2003).

More recently, however, the role of salespeople attributes and behaviours has been increasingly seen as critical (Kim and Kim 2010), and many scholars have begun to highlight its key contribution in shaping the customer overall in-store experience, sometimes judging it as even more crucial than that of the atmospherics (see, e.g., Hedrick *et al.* 2006; Fowler *et al.* 2007).

3. Research objectives

The literature presents many studies that investigated the impact of the atmospherics on the retail experience. Several other papers have highlighted the importance of salespeople's attributes and behaviours in determining customer satisfaction. These factors were mainly studied separately and only occasionally together (Sherman *et al.* 1997; Baker *et al.* 2002; Hedrick *et al.* 2006; Puccinelli

et al. 2009; Lin and Liang 2011). Our intent is to empirically analyse the influence and importance of these aspects and of all of their variables on the in-store experience *within a unique conceptual framework*, something that is still missing, at least to our knowledge, in the literature.

More precisely, the questions that we will try to address are the following:

1. Which factor, between atmospherics and salespeople's attributes and behaviours, is more relevant in determining the overall experience in a luxury store?
2. Within these factors, which variables are the main drivers of customer satisfaction?
3. How can the overall in-store experience be improved in the light of our study findings?

5. Conceptual model and hypotheses

5.1. Conceptual model

In an attempt to organize systematically the broad and complex field of studies concerning the atmospherics and the salespeople's behavioural variables, we have summarized them in the 10 steps of an ideal customer's journey, identified on the basis of the relevant literature, from the moment that the client walks into the store until he/she leaves. The steps/variables are as follows: **1. Appearance – 2. Store appeal – 3. Sensory stimuli – 4. Initial greetings – 5. Beginning of the experience – 6. Approach to customer and determining his/her needs – 7. Presenting and proposing products to customer – 8. Giving advice to customer – 9. Closing the sale – 10. Final greetings and end of the shopping experience** (Tab. 2) (Tab. 3).

Tab. 2. Store atmospherics relevant literature

Tab. 3. Salespeople's attributes and behaviours relevant literature

5.2. Hypotheses

A part of the literature has proven the importance of the different atmospherics in shaping the in-store customer experience, whereas other studies have focused instead on the relevance of salespersons' behavioural attributes. Recently, some scholars have suggested that these aspects should be investigated together (Sherman *et al.* 1997; Baker *et al.* 2002; Hedrick *et al.* 2006; *et al.* 2009; Lin and Liang 2011).

Hedrick *et al.* 2006 and Fowler *et al.* 2007 showed through a factorial experimental design and on a qualitative basis, respectively, that salespeople's attributes and behaviours are the most important retail environmental factor. Our intention is precisely to examine together these two factors and empirically validate the findings of the above scholars.

Thus, we draw the following hypothesis:

H1 *Salespeople attributes and behaviours are more relevant than the atmospherics in determining customer satisfaction in a luxury store.*

Additionally, the literature is rather extensive on the role that each variable of the atmospherics and the salespeople's attributes and behaviours has in influencing the different moments of the in-store experience (tab. 2) (tab. 3). Now, we want to investigate the relevance of every single variable/step in defining the overall customer experience.

Thus,

H1a *All of the 10 variables/steps in which we split the customer's journey in a luxury store influence the overall evaluation of the shopping experience.*

H1b *All of the 10 variables/steps in which we split the customer's journey within a luxury store have equal influence on customer overall experience.*

6. Research methodology

The study included both an exploratory and a closing phase. In the exploratory phase, we conduct a background study primarily focused on the development of an observation grid. In the closing phase, we use the structured observation grid to collect data.

The structured observation grid entails the possibility of making an assessment of each specific examined variable (**1. Appearance – 2. Store appeal – 3. Sensory stimuli – 4. Initial greetings – 5. Beginning of the experience – 6. Approach to customer and determining his/her needs – 7. Presenting and proposing products to customer – 8. Giving advice to customer – 9. Closing the sale – 10. Final greetings and end of the shopping experience**) on the basis of a four-point Likert scale (*0=very poor, 1=low; 2=good; 3=excellent*). At the end of the grid, we also added the

possibility of expressing an overall evaluation of the experience made in each luxury store (- * **Rate of the overall experience**).

6.1. Sampling

The grids were distributed to 21 students of a post-degree master's program in luxury goods management and used by them to conduct some mystery shopping visits as a part of their exam in a retail course. All of them are junior executives working for important luxury firms, their average age is 32 years, and most of them have a previous academic background in Economics, Communication and Business Administration. All of them are luxury goods buyers. They are a suitable panel because they are, at the same time, consumers, students and young executives and thus endowed with the expertise and the necessary skills to manage a complex task such as the mystery shopping activity. They were instructed to go shopping for jewels and accessories (mainly shoes and bags) in prestigious luxury retail stores (flagship stores and multi-brands point of sales) belonging to 24 luxury brands¹. The students have already been used in other research on luxury consumers (Dubois *et al.* 2005; Godey *et al.* 2013) and their positions as young executives can help us draw useful managerial implications. The stores were selected by locations in the *Triangle d'Or* in Paris, in the *Quadrilatero* in Milan and in top luxury destinations of other visited cities (tab. 4).

Tab. 4. Selected stores and brands

Overall, 107 visits were made and as many questionnaires were filled out. The students were asked to complete the grid right after their visit, based on their impressions of the store (Barret 1997). This procedure for data collection has been successfully used by other scholars (Mulhern and Padgett 1995; Machleit *et al.* 2000). The length of each visit varied from 10 to 65 minutes (with an average of 30 minutes), depending on the size of the store and on the ability of the salesperson to satisfy the requests and answer the questions.

7. Data analysis and hypothesis testing

¹ Armani, Bulgari, Burberry, Bottega Veneta, Cartier, Chanel, Cucinelli, Dior, Ermenegildo Zegna, Fendi, Ferragamo, Gucci, Hermès, Loro Piana, Louis Vuitton, Moschino, Pomellato, Prada, Saint Laurent, Shang Xia, Tiffany, Tod's, Valentino, Versace.

The data collected were subjected to data reduction through an explanatory factor analysis (EFA) with SPSS. A principal components analysis (PCA) was used for the extraction of the factors starting from the original measured variables. The initial unrotated solution was received and subjected to Varimax rotation for further refinements. The rotated solution explains 71.025% of the variance associated with the problem and was composed of two factors. Eventually, a reliability assessment was conducted using Cronbach's coefficient α to ensure that the items for each factor were internally related. The final values show a satisfactory reliability because they are very near 0.7, a common limit for exploratory research (Nunnally and Bernstein 1994) (Tab. 5) (Tab. 6).

Tab. 5. *Total Variance Explained*

Tab. 6. *Tabulated factor output*

The exploratory factor analysis condensed 10 statements into two distinct groups of statements.

We can observe the presence of a first construct measured by the *Appearance, Store appeal and Sensory stimuli* variables and a second one measured by the remaining variables (i.e., *Initial Greetings, Beginning of experience, Approach to customer and determining his/her needs, Presenting and proposing products to customer, Giving advice to customer, Closing the sale, Final greetings and end of the shopping experience*).

The first three variables mentioned represent those elements that the literature has defined as "atmospherics" (hereafter, we will call them "hard" factors), whereas all of the others concern the human aspect of the client-salesperson relationship ("soft" factors).

We used the analysis of variance (ANOVA) technique to assess which of the two factors is the main determinant of customer final evaluation. The ANOVA shows the significance of the proposed model, given the presence of a F with a p-value $< 0,05$. (F 23,31 and p-value 0,000^a).

Additionally, we resorted to the regression analysis to determine the different relevance of the soft and hard factors for the overall evaluation of the shopping experience. The results indicate a greater relevance of the soft factors compared to the hard factors (Tab. 7).

Tab. 7. *Regression analysis*

These findings support H1 because salespeople's attributes and behaviours (soft) turned out to be more relevant than the atmospherics (hard) in determining customer satisfaction in a luxury store.

Finally, we tested the potential correlation between the 10 variables and the overall evaluation of the consumer experience.

The Pearson's correlation coefficient shows how all of the investigated variables, with the exception of the *store appeal*, are positively correlated with the overall evaluation of the shopping experience and how the phases of *giving advice to customer* and *closing the sale* are the most critical for the formulation of the final assessment (Tab. 8).

Tab. 8. *Pearson's correlation coefficient*

Because the *store appeal* variable seems not to be significantly correlated ($r=0,075$ p 0,457), a subsequent Chi-square test was conducted revealing that there is no link between the evaluation expressed in terms of *store appeal* and the final judgment of the customer on the overall experience ($\chi^2=81.885$, p 0.894).

These findings indicate that H1a is partially supported and H1b is not validated.

8. Conclusions

The role of the physical point of sale for the luxury industry is still predominant (Dion & Arnould 2011), although retail strategy choices are often implemented based on intuition and not on extensive and continuing research (Dubois & Duquesne 1993; Vigneron & Johnson 1999 and 2004). Our paper is intended to contribute to a better systematization of two factors that are critical for the overall in-store experience: the atmospherics and the salespeople's behaviours and attributes. Our results empirically demonstrate that *the sales staff behavioural attributes are more important than the atmospherics in determining a positive shopping experience*. This result reinforces what has already been established both on a preliminary basis, through a factorial experimental design (Hedrick *et al.* 2006), and qualitatively (Fowler *et al.* 2007) and confirms the opinion of those researchers who consider the overall satisfaction as a primary function of perceived service quality (Parasuraman *et al.* 1988; Cronin and Taylor 1992; Ajao *et al.* 2012). The human factor thus

emerges as the main driver of customer satisfaction and the real competitive edge (Babin *et al.* 1997; Goff *et al.* 1997; Lin and Liang 2011), especially for those stores that offer high involvement goods (Darman *et al.* 2005).

Our results also indicate that *all the different variables/steps of the ideal customer journey are positively correlated with overall evaluation of the shopping experience in a luxury store, with the exception of the “store appeal”*. The fact that this “store appeal” variable (encompassing, as indicated in Tab. 2, “location”, “attractive store windows”, “store design and concept” and “exposure of the good”) is not directly correlated with customer satisfaction is an interesting and partially surprising finding that can lead to some important managerial implications (see Section 8.1.). Actually, the literature gives great importance to the design elements and the location of a luxury store, in particular of the flagship, considered the direct manifestations of the brand identity (Riewoldt 2002; Kent and Brown 2009; Manlow and Nobbs 2013), the means to recreate an allure of uniqueness and exclusivity (Okonkwo 2007; Kapferer and Bastien 2009; Moore *et al.* 2010; Nobbs *et al.* 2012) and ploys to lure the customer in (Carusone and Moscovice 1985; Shapiro 1992; Horvitz 1998; Verplanken and Herabadi 2001; Muruganantham and Kaliyamoorthy 2005). By contrast, the relationship between the aesthetics of the luxury shop and the consumer experience in the store (Manlow and Nobbs 2013) has been less explored, at least empirically. The objective of the present research was also to make a first step in the direction of bridging this gap in the literature.

In addition, we know that making suggestions to clients positively stimulates their emotions (Menon and Dubé 2000) and that the employees’ attitude of giving advice to their customers helps the firm to build a long-term rapport with them (Gremmler and Gwinner 2008). Our findings add to these results the empirical evidence that *giving advice to customers is the most influential variable in determining customer satisfaction*.

Similarly, the ability to “close the sale” is considered by the literature to be one of the most valued skills that a salesperson can own (Marshall *et al.* 2003) because of its connection with sales

performance (Jaramillo and Marshall 2004; Johlke 2006). This translates into a salesperson's ability to reiterate the benefits of the product, reassure the customer of his/her potential choice and help him/her decide (Anderson and Dubinsky 2004; Johnston and Marshall 2006). If the literature has argued that this step is crucial in terms of profitability, we proved empirically that it is also true with regard to customer satisfaction.

8.1. Managerial implications

The relevance of the atmospherics is well established in the literature and basically confirmed by our findings, which, however, suggest that the environmental cues are unlikely to provide sufficient differentiation from competition. This is particularly true for the "store appeal" variable, which does not seem to have a direct impact on customer overall satisfaction. We can reasonably speculate that in a high-end industry such as luxury, the excellence of the location and of the design elements is taken somehow for granted, so that these aspects would only be noticed "in negative", i.e., if they were perceived to be below the expectations of the prestigious goods clients. However, this result leads us to make two considerations worthy of further investigation. The first is that, also based on the previous literature, we could assume that the "store appeal" variable is certainly suitable to convey the core values of a brand as well as to influence consumer's initial behaviour, that is, his/her decision to enter the store, but may be less suitable than the overall shopping experience. The second is that these aesthetic elements, to be more relevant, should be nonetheless enriched with additional, more emotional and experiential dimensions, all the more so if, according to our findings, another important class of store atmospherics, the "sensory stimuli", much more related to a perceptual experience, are instead positively correlated with customer satisfaction. Thus, considering that the outlook for the future of luxury retail is that of reducing the pace of new openings and focusing instead on perimeter expansion/renovation, particularly in mature markets (BGC 2015), the challenge for retail managers will become that of creating a superior customer experience, through the humanization, the socialization, the characterization and even the "theatralization" of their retail spaces (Hollenbeck *et al.* 2008).

Our study also suggests that the retail battle, in a now “democratized” luxury market, will be played more and more in the arena of the relational aspects of the shopping, something that has been long neglected by luxury firms (Ehbauer and Gresel 2013). Some scholars have insisted on this point for some time now (Babin *et al.* 1997; Goff *et al.* 1997; Darian *et al.* 2005; Hedrick *et al.* 2006; Fowler *et al.* 2007; Lin and Liang 2011). The crucial role of salespeople’s attributes and behaviours in luxury retail calls for a sensible and thorough training that takes great care, in particular, of two key steps of the customer in-store journey. The fact that *Giving advice to customer* and *Closing the sale* were found to be critical for any luxury firm that aspires to offer its clients a flawless shopping experience suggests that retail managers should pay particular attention to the emotional/psychological aspects of their salespeople training. By this, we do not question the “cognitive” skills that every sales assistant who works in a luxury store is expected to have. Our findings emphasise, however, the relevance of other qualities of the salesperson, such as sensitiveness and reassurance towards the customer (see also Kapferer and Bastien 2009), which must be nurtured through specific training. Some scholars have already stressed the importance of investing in the empathetic and caring skills of a firm’s sales staff (Sharma and Stafford 2000), but in regard to luxury brands, there is a tendency to assign to the didactic skills of the sales assistant (i.e., the capacity to explain in detail the product features) the greatest merit in connection with the customer satisfaction achievement. Many store managers of prestige goods still have a “product-centric” vision of the shopping experience, whereas according to what emerges from our research, customer satisfaction seems to be driven more by the emotional aspects of the salesperson-customer relationship. Once more, the client, and not the product, should be in the spotlight. In this sense, the investments that luxury operators should undertake concern, in the first place, the *recruitment* and then the *training* of valuable salespeople who are particularly able to empathize with their customers and to offer to each of them a unique and tailor-made buying experience. The “experience”, especially for luxury customers, is even more important than the product itself (Ehbauer and Gresel 2013).

8.2. Limitations and suggestions for further research

If enhancing consumer physical experience in-store is becoming mandatory over the coming years, the role that digital technology will be playing in this process has to still be investigated. Connecting consumers through state-of-the-art applications, improving their wayfinding performance, facilitating their purchases and transactions outside/inside the store thanks to the innovative beacon technology, and many other opportunities will certainly have an impact on the customer journey that is bound to become fully omni-channel (Abnett 2015). New technologies are definitely spreading in our lives, and they are also catching on in retail environments, for example, with the advent of the web-atmospherics on the physical stores (Dailey 2004; Eroglu *et al.* 2000; 2001; 2003; Poncin and Mimoun 2014). This new digital world is yet to be monitored, and the concerning body of literature is still very deficient. Similarly, most of the stores are not yet digitally well-equipped or ready to make the best use of these new technologies. The main risk we envision for luxury brands in approaching this opportunity is to consider it more as a goal in itself - if not something “nice to have” - than as a valuable tool. Digital technology applied to retail is not a fad but rather a further chance to deepen the understanding of customer needs and to enhance the development of an authentic and individual shopping experience (Pantano and Naccarato 2010). The growing relevance of these themes will probably encourage many scholars to thoroughly investigate the impact of the digital layer on retail environments, especially in relation to the atmospherics and to the dynamics between the salesperson and customer. This is becoming even more critical because it seems that the conjoint consumer interaction with the in-store technology and with the salespeople has a significant impact on the overall service quality perception (Pantano and Viassone 2015). Always with the objective to boost the in-store customer experience, we hope that the increasingly investigated area of the experiential retailing (Lahey 2000; Kim 2001; Shaw & Ivens 2002; Grewal *et al.* 2009; Puccinelli *et al.* 2009; Verhoef *et al.* 2009; De Farias *et al.* 2014; Khan and Rahman 2015) will soon also be focused on the luxury sector, where studies are still very limited.

The present research does not take into account two important aspects of the “human” atmospherics: the influence of demographics (Churchill 1975; Churchill *et al.* 1985; Goolsby *et al.* 1992; Levy and Sharma 1994; Kang and Hillery 1998; Jones *et al.* 1998; Ewing *et al.* 2001; Sharma *et al.* 2007) and of other customers on the appraisal of the shopping experience (see, e.g., Eroglu and Machleit 1990; Grove and Fisk 1997; Harris *et al.* 1997; Brady and Cronin 2001; Argo *et al.* 2005; Söderlund 2010). Although we were aware of the great relevance of these two variables, we decided to exclude them from our research because they would have overtly stretched our scope of work. Finally, we believe that it would be interesting to cross our research findings on the individual stores with other data pertaining to the stores themselves, such as their size, their geographical location, their format, their economic performance (average receipt or income), and above all, the money they invest in personnel training. In this way, we would perhaps be able to further investigate the topics covered in the present study.

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Tables & Figures

Tab. 1. Atmospherics classifications from the literature

SCHOLAR(S)	CLASSIFICATIONS	NOTES
Kotler (1973)	Store atmosphere induces emotional responses which affect purchasing decisions. The store environment is divided into: 1) visual dimensions such as colour, brightness, size and shapes; 2) arousal dimensions such as volume and pitch; 3) olfactory dimensions such as scent and freshness; 4) tactile dimensions such as softness, smoothness and temperature	Still generic definition of "atmospherics", key variables like crowding or salespersons influence missing.
Baker (1986)	Three key elements of the store settings: 1) "Non visual" (i.e. background conditions in the environment, including elements such as temperature, lighting, music and scent) 2) "Design" (i.e. functional and aesthetic elements that are more "visual" in nature than are ambient factors) 3) "Social" (elements involving the people who are within a store's environment)	Introduction of the "social" elements of the shopping, i.e. the influence of the other customers and of the salespersons. To note that salespersons appearance and behaviours are included in the same cluster.
Bitner (1992)	The physical surroundings of a store do have an impact on customers and employees and it can be identified in three specific dimensions: 1) Ambient Conditions (i.e. temperature, air quality, noise, music, odor, etc.) 2) Space/Function (i.e. layout, equipment, furnishings, etc.) 3) Signs, Symbols & Artifacts (i.e. signage, personal artifacts, style of decor, etc.)	Interestingly enough in this study the physical surroundings is considered to have a significant impact not only on the customers but also on the employees of the store. In this model, however, the "social" variables of the shopping are totally missing.
Berman and Evans (1995)	Four are the variables of physical the store settings: 1) External 2) Internal 3) Landscaping 4) Interior Design and Layout	This classification was meant to integrate and complete Bitner's one but once again the "social" or "human" aspects of the shopping experience were totally disregarded.
Turley and Milliman (2000)	Five classes of atmospheric variables: 1) External 2) General Interior 3) Layout and Design 4) Point-of-purchase and decoration 5) Human	Integration and revision of Berman and Evans's classification with the key introduction of the human variables (i.e. the influence of other customers and of the salespersons on shopping behaviours). However, similarly to Baker, the aesthetical and relational characteristics of the salespeople (for instance "uniforms" and "friendliness") end up being quite indistinct and generic.

Tab. 2. Store atmospherics relevant literature

STEPS		EFFECTION_CUSTOMER	BRAND	STORE	SALES	PRODUCT	TIME	SERVICE	
1. APPEARANCE SALESPERSON(S)	Appearance	Higher levels of satisfaction and purchase intentions Laro and Gholami 2011; Shiu et al. 2012; Schmitt 1988; Lichten and Rapp 1991; Nickerson et al. 2008; Janssen et al. 2012	Visual image evaluation Pillinger 2004	Store image evaluation Kim and Kim 2010					
	Location	Service quality perception Fornell and Larcker 1994 Customer satisfaction Cronin et al. 2007 Fair trade perception Chakrabarty 2007	Brand image perception Fornell and Larcker 1994 Chandrasekhar 2007	Store image perception Moore and Eastbury 2007 Image quality and image 2010 Mehra and Nishka 2013	Product buying Shapiro 1992				
2. STORE APPEAL	Attractive store windows	Impersonal design of store and walking Decision to enter the store Customer behaviors Havice 1996; Sun et al. 2012 Mehra and Chakrabarty 2012	Brand image perception Kumar 1991; Hartman 1996; Kim et al. 2002	Store image perception Kangnam 1999; Park et al. 1996; Conditon et al. 2010	Product buying Saha 2005	Improved knowledge of the goods sold Fletcher 1987; Baskin and Smith 1987; Chomhada 1996; Sun et al. 2007			
	Store design and concept	Customer expectations Munich 1979; Brown and Hines 1982; Baker 1986; Hines 1990; Tans and Everett 1995; Shuman et al. 1995; Makridakis and Baker 1998; You et al. 1998; Baker et al. 2002; Wong 2008; Corwin Loureiro and Reich 2014 Eliciting positive emotional responses Decision to enter the store Harris and Froh 2008; Tang and Nambung 2009; Lin and Luo 2014 Customer buying process Chakrabarty and Bhattacharya 1995 Customer behaviors Mills et al. 1995	Brand image perception Gendron 1998; Revell 2002; Baruch 2005; Kent and Brown 2000; Moore et al. 2010; Manow and Nohria 2011 Brand personality identification Bansipati and Willett 2003	Store of browsing oriented Baker 1992; Spies et al. 1997; Jones 1999 Perceived consistency and differentiation Doyle and Broadbridge 1999	Product buying Vogelstein and Harshbarger 2004 Mitschke 2005; Kollmann and Kollmann 2005; Bueker and Ahmad 2012; Soper et al. 2012		Time spent in the store Wakfield and Baker 1998		
3. SENSORY STIMULI	Exposure to the goods	Stronger affinity with the emotional dimension of shopping Amor and Apat 1990; Babin et al. 1994; Turky and Millman 2000; Cahler et al. 2001; Geuens et al. 2003; Anderson et al. 2012; Kwon 2008 Customer behavioral responses and customer satisfaction Baker, 1992; Doh et al. 1995; Tans and Ratchanas 1999; Turky and Millman 2000; Manita and Waz 2011; Engle et al. 2005; Garbar and Green 2008; Vucurov 2009; Desmet 2011; De Juan 2014 Cognitive, emotional and behavioral dimension of shopping Smith and Curran 1966; Millman 1982; Kollata and Rice 1993; Yach and Spangenberg 2000; Cahler et al. 2001; 2002; Kollata and Ahbach 2002; Engle et al. 2005; Forsyth and Chonko 2008; Patricson and Andrews 2010; Anderson et al. 2012; Kollata et al. 2012; Spence et al. 2014	Strengthening the customer customer brand Lacey 2000; Morrison and Beuchard 2003	Perception of the store Store choice and in store traffic flow Evaluation of the store Eliciting positive associations towards the store Hsu et al. 1997; Geuens et al. 2001; Turky and Millman 2000; Garbar and Green, 2008 Spangenberg et al. 2008 Tansam 2005; Kollata, 2013	Perception of the store Store choice and in store traffic flow Evaluation of the store Eliciting positive associations towards the store Hsu et al. 1997; Geuens et al. 2001; Turky and Millman 2000; Garbar and Green, 2008 Spangenberg et al. 2008 Tansam 2005; Kollata, 2013	Product volume and sales volume Mehra 1982; Saha and Kim 1993; Harrington and Capella 1996; North et al. 1999 and 1999; North et al. 1999; 2000 and 2001; Elliot and Elliot 2000; Manita and Waz 2011; Baker et al. 2005; Babin 2005; Vach et al. 2007; Sun and Bagheri 2011; Kollata et al. 2012; De Juan 2014; Spence and Pappas 2014	Perception and choice of the product Yach and Spangenberg 1996; Acar and Kim 1999; North et al. 1999 and 1999; North et al. 1999; 2000 and 2001; Elliot and Elliot 2000; Manita and Waz 2011; Baker et al. 2005; Babin 2005; Vach et al. 2007; Sun and Bagheri 2011; Kollata et al. 2012; De Juan 2014; Spence and Pappas 2014	Amount of time spent in the store North and Curran 1966; Millman 1982; Harrington and Capella 1996; Wakfield and Baker 1998; Yach and Spangenberg 2000; Morrison and Beuchard 2003; Manita et al. 2007	Perception of the service Hsu et al. 1997; Morrison and Beuchard 2003; Manita et al. 2007
	Color	Customer attitudes and behavior/intentions to enter the store/choice of attention Pruvost 1971; Norman and Scott 1952; Levy 1981; Ratchford 1985; Crowley 1995; Dixon 2002; Loh et al. 2007	Store image perception Fornell and Larcker 1994 Chandrasekhar 2007	Store image perception Moore and Eastbury 2007 Image quality and image 2010 Mehra and Nishka 2013	Product buying Shapiro 1992				
Programs	Impersonal design of walking	Customer's attitudes, intentions and behaviors Chakrabarty and Bhattacharya 2007 Datta 1981; Kanaka 1989; Logman 1990; Gallo and Blach 1993; Fata and Rapp 1998; Bone and Ellen 1996; Manita and Waz 2011; Engle et al. 2005; Vucurov 2009; Dossed and Janssen 2013; Spence et al. 2014	Brand image perception Gendron 1998; Revell 2002; Baruch 2005; Kent and Brown 2000; Moore et al. 2010; Manow and Nohria 2011 Brand personality identification Bansipati and Willett 2003	Store of browsing oriented Baker 1992; Spies et al. 1997; Jones 1999 Perceived consistency and differentiation Doyle and Broadbridge 1999	Product buying Saha 2005				
	Relevance of the cognitive effects	Relevance of affinity with the emotional dimension of shopping Gallo and Blach 1993; Spence et al. 2014 Lava and McInerney 1986; Richardson and Zaccs 1990; Tangy 1989; Baker 1992; Bone and Ellen 1996; Gallo and Blach 1993; Logan and Schmitt 1996; Spangenberg et al. 1996; Manita and Ratchford 2000; Dossed and Janssen 2013	Brand image perception Gendron 1998; Revell 2002; Baruch 2005; Kent and Brown 2000; Moore et al. 2010; Manow and Nohria 2011 Brand personality identification Bansipati and Willett 2003	Store of browsing oriented Baker 1992; Spies et al. 1997; Jones 1999 Perceived consistency and differentiation Doyle and Broadbridge 1999	Product buying Saha 2005				

Tab. 3. Salespeople's attributes and behaviours relevant literature

Steps	Variables	Effect on:	Author(s)
4. Initial greetings	Available Enthusiastic Discreet Eye contact Smile	Positive emotional contagion Perception of waiting time duration Perception of value Store evaluation Service evaluation Consumer behavioural/buying intentions Customer satisfaction Patronage and word-of-mouth	Hatfield <i>et al.</i> 1994; Tombs and McColl-Kennedy 2003; Barger and Grandey 2006 Baker and Cameron 1996 Naylor and Frank 2000 Ford 1995; Kim and Kim 2010; Kim and Kim 2012 Swinyard 1995; Grove and Fisk 1997; Tsai and Huang 2002; Kelley and Hoffman 2006 Hawes <i>et al.</i> 1993; Sharma and Stafford 2000; Lee and Dubinsky 2003 Biong and Selnes 1997; Naylor and Frank 2000; Darian <i>et al.</i> 2001; Hunt and Price 2002; Barger and Grandey 2006; Henning-Thurau <i>et al.</i> 2006; Gremler and Gwinner 2008 Pugh 2001; Tsai 2001; Tsai and Huang 2002
5. Beginning of the experience	Freedom to move around Freedom to look around but under scrutiny Open approach w/o judgement Reassurance on waiting times	Perception of waiting time duration Impulse buying Customer positive experience Customer satisfaction	Baker and Cameron 1996; Eroglu <i>et al.</i> 2005b; Pan and Siemens 2011; Kim and Kim 2012 Mattila and Wirtz 2008 Jones 1999 Speer 1995; Litvan 1996
6. Approach to customer and determining needs	Through open-ended questions, maintaining discretion Let the customer speak and speaks when necessary Listen carefully to the content Attentive to non-verbal signs Consistency in responding Physical proximity	Customer feeling comfortable (Service) quality perception Service evaluation Customer satisfaction Generating trust Rapport building Patronage intentions	Naylor and Frank 2000; Gremler and Gwinner 2008 Hartline and Jones 1996; Wong and Sohal 2003; Darian <i>et al.</i> 2001; Campbell <i>et al.</i> 2006; McKechnie <i>et al.</i> 2007; Gremler and Gwinner 2008 Weitz <i>et al.</i> 1986; Suja <i>et al.</i> 1988; Spiro and Weitz 1990; Grewal and Sharma 1991; Levy and Sharma 1994; Boorum <i>et al.</i> 1998; Frank and Park 2006; Giacobbe <i>et al.</i> 2006; Puccinelli 2008; Román and Iacobucci 2009; Evanschitzky <i>et al.</i> 2012 Stock and Hoyer 2005 Nickels <i>et al.</i> 1983; Tiekle-Degnen and Rosenthal 1990; Hawes <i>et al.</i> 1993; Bernieri <i>et al.</i> 1996; Darian <i>et al.</i> 2001; Wood 2006 Darian <i>et al.</i> 2001 and 2005
7. Presenting and proposing products to customer	Builds trust Creates interest Uses positive language and is evocative of the brand Is not intrusive Shows creativity in proposing products/cross selling Helps the customer get acquainted with the store Makes the customer feel at the center of the attention Demonstrate knowledge of the product and assortment Gives values and tells the story/originality of the brand Presents the product highlighting the craftsmanship	Customer feeling comfortable Increased customer attention, interest and arousal Perceived credibility/reliability of the salesperson Consumer's consumption behavior Customer satisfaction Purchasing rates Rapport building Beliefs about the product Patronage intentions/store loyalty	Winsted 1997; Hunt and Price 2002; Van Dolen <i>et al.</i> 2002 Winsted 1997; Arnauld <i>et al.</i> 1998; Pine and Gilmore 1999; Clark <i>et al.</i> 2003; Kapferer and Bastien 2009; Dion and Arnauld 2011 Harmon and Coney 1982; Crosby <i>et al.</i> 1990; Sharma 1990; Babin <i>et al.</i> 1994; Hawes <i>et al.</i> 1994; Jones <i>et al.</i> 1998; Sharma and Stafford 2000; Coulter and Coulter 2002; Lee and Dubinsky 2003; Campbell <i>et al.</i> 2006; Gremler and Gwinner 2008 Gilliam <i>et al.</i> 2014 Hawes <i>et al.</i> 2006 Coyles and Gokey 2002; Kamakura <i>et al.</i> 2003; Tuli <i>et al.</i> 2007; Kamakura 2008; Schmitz <i>et al.</i> 2014 Churchill <i>et al.</i> 1975; Crosby <i>et al.</i> 1990; Bendapudi and Berry 1997; Jones <i>et al.</i> 1998; Ewing <i>et al.</i> 2001; Jacobs <i>et al.</i> 2001; Liu and Leach 2001; Hawes <i>et al.</i> 2006; Weitz <i>et al.</i> 2007; Gremler and Gwinner 2008 Williams and Spiro 1985; Grewal and Sharma 1991 Darian <i>et al.</i> 2001; Azim <i>et al.</i> 2013
8. Giving advice to customer	Investigates the desires and reactions of the customers If the client is accompanied also takes into account the other person Makes sure to have properly interpreted the request (calls for feedback) Goes beyond the demands made by the customer (proactive) Responds positively to both objections and doubts	Customer feeling comfortable Perceived credibility/reliability of the salesperson Customer feeling reassured Customer satisfaction Rapport building Patronage intentions	Gremler and Gwinner 2008 Darian <i>et al.</i> 2001; Wong and Sohal 2003; Moncrief and Marshall 2005; McKechnie 2007 Anderson and Dubinsky 2004; Marshall and Johnston 2009 Goff <i>et al.</i> 1997; Menon and Dubé 2000 Bitner <i>et al.</i> 1990; Price <i>et al.</i> 1995; Bettencourt and Brown 1997; Jones 1999 Darian <i>et al.</i> 2001
9. Closing the sale	Helps decide Reminds the customer the positive points of purchase Reassures the client underling the result	Customer feeling reassured Decision-making process Purchasing rates	Johnston and Marshall 2006 Dubinsky 1980-1981; Marshall <i>et al.</i> 2003; Anderson and Dubinsky 2004 Jaramillo and Marshall 2004; Johlke 2006
10. Final greetings and end of the shopping experience	Shows optimism at all stages of the in-store experience Establishes relationship by: a) presenting weekly arrivals, events b) requesting customer details for further contact (CRM) c) requesting the customer to let the store know how he/she felt with	Eliciting positive emotions Enhancing customer persuasion Building rapport/Customer retention	Hawes <i>et al.</i> 1993; Hawes 1994; Pugh 2001 Sharma and Levy 2003 Anderson and Weitz 1989; Webster 1992; Webster 1994; Kalwani and Narayandas 1995; Reichheld 1996; Biong and Selnes 1997; Macintosh and Lockshin 1997; Williams 1998; Weitz and Bradford 1999; Wong and Sohal 2003; Anderson and Dubinsky 2004; Yim <i>et al.</i> 2004; Moncrief and Marshall 2005; Panagopoulos 2005; Tanner <i>et al.</i> 2005; Anderson and Huang 2006

Tab. 4. Selected stores and brands

BRAND		LOCATION
ARMANI	MILANO	Montenapoleone
ARMANI	PARIGI	St. Honoré
ARMANI	ATENE	Solonos
ARMANI	TESSALONICCO	Vogatsikou
BOTTEGA VENETA	MILANO	La Rinascente
BOTTEGA VENETA	MILANO	Montenapoleone
BOTTEGA VENETA	MILANO	Sant 'Andrea
BOTTEGA VENETA	PARIGI	Montaigne
BOTTEGA VENETA	ATENE	Kolokotroni
BOTTEGA VENETA	GINEVRA	rue du Rhone
BULGARI	MILANO	Montenapoleone
BULGARI	PARIGI	Georges V
BURBERRY	MILANO	Montenapoleone
BURBERRY	MILANO	Verri
BURBERRY	PARIGI	St. Honoré
CARTIER	MILANO	Montenapoleone
CARTIER	PARIGI	Paix
CARTIER	ATENE	Voukourestiou
CHANEL	MILANO	Sant 'Andrea
CHANEL	PARIGI	Cambon
CHANEL	SINGAPORE	Marina Bay Sands
CUCINELLI	MILANO	Spiga
CUCINELLI	PARIGI	St. Honoré
CUCINELLI	ATENE	Valaoritou & Kriezotou
DIOR	MILANO	Montenapoleone
DIOR	PARIGI	Montaigne
DIOR	ATENE	Voukourestiou
ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA	MILANO	La Rinascente
ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA	MILANO	Montenapoleone
ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA	PARIGI	St. Honoré
ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA	ATENE	Voukourestiou
FENDI	MILANO	Montenapoleone
FENDI	PARIGI	Montaigne
FERRAGAMO	MILANO	La Rinascente
FERRAGAMO	MILANO	Montenapoleone
FERRAGAMO	PARIGI	Montaigne
FERRAGAMO	ATENE	Stadiou
FERRAGAMO	GINEVRA	rue du Rhone
GUCCI	MILANO	La Rinascente
GUCCI	MILANO	Montenapoleone
GUCCI	MILANO	Brera
GUCCI	PARIGI	Royale
GUCCI	ATENE	Kolokotroni,
GUCCI	ATENE	Tsakalof
HERMES	MILANO	Montenapoleone
HERMES	PARIGI	St. Honoré,
HERMES	PARIGI	Sevres
HERMES	ATENE	Voukourestiou
HERMES	BEIJING	China World Shopping Mall
LORO PIANA	MILANO	Montenapoleone
LORO PIANA	PARIGI	Montaigne
LORO PIANA	GINEVRA	rue du Rhone
LOUIS VUITTON	MILANO	La Rinascente
LOUIS VUITTON	MILANO	Montenapoleone
LOUIS VUITTON	MILANO	Vittorio Emanuele
LOUIS VUITTON	PARIGI	Champs Elysées
LOUIS VUITTON	PARIGI	Montaigne
LOUIS VUITTON	ATENE	Voukourestiou
LOUIS VUITTON	TESSALONICCO	Proksenou Koromila
MOSCHINO	MILANO	Sant 'Andrea,
MOSCHINO	MILANO	Spiga
MOSCHINO	PARIGI	Saint Guillaume
POMELLATO	MILANO	Pietro all'orto
POMELLATO	PARIGI	St. Honoré
PRADA	MILANO	Montenapoleone
PRADA	MILANO	Vittorio Emanuele
PRADA	PARIGI	St. Honoré
PRADA	PARIGI	Montaigne
PRADA	ATENE	Voukourestiou
SAINT LAURENT	MILANO	Montaigne
SAINT LAURENT	PARIGI	Gesù
SHANG XIA	PARIGI	Sevres
SHANG XIA	BEIJING	China World Shopping Mall
TIFFANY	MILANO	Spiga,
TIFFANY	MILANO	Excelsior
TIFFANY	PARIGI	Paix
TIFFANY	SINGAPORE	Marina Bay Sands
TOD'S	MILANO	Vittorio Emanuele
TOD'S	MILANO	Spiga,
TOD'S	PARIGI	St. Honoré
TOD'S	ATENE	Voukourestiou
TOD'S	TESSALONICCO	Proksenou Koromila
VALENTINO	MILANO	La Rinascente
VALENTINO	MILANO	Montenapoleone
VALENTINO	PARIGI	Montaigne
VERSACE	MILANO	Montenapoleone
VERSACE	PARIGI	Montaigne

Tab. 5. Total Variance Explained

Total Variance Explained									
Component	Initial Eigenvalue			Unrotated Factor Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of variance	cumulative %	Total	% of variance	cumulative %	Total	% of variance	cumulative %
1	5,6	55,67	55,67	5,57	55,67	55,67	5,13	51,311	51,311
2	1,5	15,355	71,025	1,54	15,355	71,025	1,97	19,713	71,025

Tab. 6. Tabulated factor output

Factor	Factor title	Cronbach's α	Variables included	Loadings
1	<i>hard (atmospherics)</i>	0,681	<i>Appearance</i>	0,728
			<i>Store appeal</i>	0,852
			<i>Sensory stimuli</i>	0,733
2	<i>soft (relational)</i>	0,927	<i>Initial greeting</i>	0,854
			<i>Beginning of experience</i>	0,673
			<i>Approach to customer and determining needs</i>	0,87
			<i>Presenting and proposing products to customer</i>	0,933
			<i>Giving advice to customer</i>	0,906
			<i>Closing the sale</i>	0,856
			<i>Final greeting and end of shopping experience</i>	0,801

Tab. 7 Regression analysis

Model		Coefficients ^a				
		Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.
B	Std.Error	Beta				
1	(Constant)	1,278	0,097		13,245	0
	Soft (relational)	0,601	0,097	0,524	6,211	0
	Hard (atmospherics)	0,273	0,097	0,238	2,828	0,006

Tab. 8 *Pearson's correlation coefficient*

	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Appearance	,341**	0
Store appeal	0,075	0,46
Sensory stimuli	,375**	0
Initial greetings	,388**	0
Beginning of experience	,238*	0,02
Approach to customer and determining needs	,456**	0
Presenting and proposing products to customer	,489**	0
Giving advice to customer	,553**	0
Closing the sale	,547**	0
Final greetings and end of shopping experience	,423**	0
OVERALL RATING OF THE EXPERIENCE	1	

Keywords

Store atmospherics; Salesperson-customer relationship; Luxury shopping experience; Customer satisfaction; Overall in-store experience