

Creating A Seamless User Experience: The Perceived Value Of Wayfinding In Retail Interior Design

by

Itumeleng Mosebi

Student Number: [REDACTED]

BA Interior Design Honours

I , Itumeleng Mosebi, hereby declare that the Research Study submitted for the Module RESE8419 a components of the qualification of BA Interior Design Honours degree to The Independent Institute of Education is my own work and has not previously been submitted to another University or Higher Education Institution for degree purposes.

Supervisor: JD Eksteen

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to explore and describe the impact of the use of wayfinding in retail interior design in regard to the user to create a more seamless experience. This can then help brands to look at creating more conducive retail environments that influence the customers experience. The findings of this study have the ability to expand the knowledge regarding the effects of wayfinding in retail interior design.

The use of constructivist paradigm in this study is intended to gain in depth understanding of the customers' experiences by exploring the impact of using wayfinding in a physical environment. The researcher intends to use qualitative descriptive design as it is known to study human behaviour in everyday or natural setting, and involves continuous interaction with the people being studied in their own language, and on their own understanding. For the purpose of this study the researcher intends to make use 6-10 customers, that include men and women from all ages 19 to 24. The researcher will use a non-probability sampling method, as it does not make use of a random selection of population elements. A purposive sampling will be used, as the researcher wishes to target a younger customer demographic. In this study the data collection method will make use of surveys or questionnaires, that consist of open ended questions. Additionally, a thematic analysis or theming will be the method used to interpret the gathered data.

KEY WORDS: Constructivism, Customers Experience, User Centred Design (UCD), Semiotics Wayfinding, Retail Design

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CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Retail environments are places people can go to relax, complete tasks and purchase anything that is needed. In an age where people can make purchases from anywhere, using online platforms, it becomes challenging for physical retail spaces to keep the customers coming back. People usually avoid physical retail spaces, due to the fact that it is less convenient, especially when you are unfamiliar with a space. Systems such as wayfinding can be used in these physical retail spaces to make it easier for people to engage with a space and complete their tasks seamlessly in order to enhance the customers experience.

The need for this study is to explore and describe how the interiors of retail spaces influences the customers overall experience, which has a significant role in building a good reputation and relationship between the customers and the brand and increasing ones' sales. The researcher intends to also explore the use of wayfinding in retail spaces. The purpose of this research is to explore and describe the impact of the use of wayfinding in retail interior design in regard to the user to create a more seamless experience.

In this paper the problem of designers leaving wayfinding strategies at the end of a project will be discussed. Data will be collected from participants, to allow the researcher to get a deeper understanding of customer experience and how it could be improved. The researcher hopes that the findings of this study can have the ability to expand the knowledge regarding the effects of wayfinding in retail interior design. This can then help different brands look at creating more conducive retail environments that influence the customers experience.

In this chapter, the researcher will clearly introduce the background of the research problem and discuss its significance in retail interior design. The researcher will define and outline the topic of wayfinding and customer experience to give the reader a better understanding of the study. Additionally the relevant research questions and objectives will be listed in order to help guide the development of the research study.

1.2. BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Wayfinding refers to the information systems set in place to guide and navigate the occupants throughout a physical environment (RSMDesign, 2018). Wayfinding at first glance may seem self-explanatory, but unfortunately, due to this, it often becomes designers afterthoughts, as projects are being finalised and budgets have been reached. Since the customers' positive experience is a critical consideration when designing retail environments, it is important to implement effective systems that will guide and navigate the customers seamlessly throughout a physical environment, reducing stress, frustration and therefor, creating a positive experience. Influencing the customers overall experience in a positive manner, will have a significant role in building a good reputation and relationship between the customers and the brand and increasing ones' sales.

1.3. RATIONALE AND RELEVANCE

The need for this study seems evident because of how the interiors of retail spaces influences the customers overall experience, which has a significant role in building a good reputation and relationship between the customers and the brand and increasing ones' sales. There are numerous studies that have been conducted on the importance of the use of semiotics (Yakin and Totu, 2014) and User Centred Design (El Sayad, Farghaly and Hamada, 2017) in retail. However, research information on the effects of wayfinding on retail customer satisfaction is limited. The findings of this study have the ability to expand the knowledge regarding the effects of wayfinding in retail interior design. This can then help brands to look at creating more conducive retail environments that influence the customers experience. This problem is relevant as it plays an important role in interior design, however it is often disregarded until the last minute by designers. People usually avoid physical retail spaces, due to the fact that it is less convenient, especially when you are unfamiliar with a space. Getting lost in these new and unknown environments can often leave a customer feeling disgruntled, which has a significant impact on their overall experience shopping. The researcher will make use of the appropriate individuals that are actually affected by this problem, to get insight about their different experiences. This will make the findings far more suitable.

1.4. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The customers' positive experience is critical in retail interior design, which is why retailers and the designers involved should always design with a human centred approach. Creating a satisfactory experience for customers keeps them coming back. There are common factors that can hinder a positive shopping experience for an individual, which include a bad customer service and an inefficient shopping process. An inefficient shopping process can be caused by a poor layout strategy or lack of legible signages within a space. Individuals end up getting lost in these new and unknown environments, which can often leave them feeling unsatisfied with experience. Properly and effectively implementing wayfinding in retail interior designs can reduce the stress levels of customers, as they complete their needed tasks while seamlessly navigating through the environment. Therefore wayfinding makes it possible for consumers to navigate through a physical space much easier creating a seamless experience.

1.5. PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of this research is to explore and describe the impact of the use of wayfinding in retail interior design in regard to the user to create a more seamless experience. There are many factors that will influence this, such as the design and layout of a space, the efficiency of its use and the even the lighting strategy used inside. The findings of this study have the ability to expand the knowledge regarding the effects of wayfinding in retail interior design. This can then help brands to look at creating more conducive retail environments that influence the customers experience.

1.6. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Main Research Question

- How does the use of wayfinding ensure that customers have an efficient and seamless experience?

Secondary Research Questions

- What factors or strategies in the retail environment can influence the experience of its customers?
- How can a Human Centred approach encourage or enhance the experience of its customers?

1.7. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study are:

- To explore and describe the benefits of the use of wayfinding in retail interior design, and how impacts the customers experience.
- To explore and describe how the factors of retail environment may affect the customers user experience
- To explore and describe a human centred approach in retail interior designs

Essentially, what the researcher intendeds explore is benefits of the use of wayfinding in retail interior design, not only for navigational purposes throughout a space, but also psychologically. An individual being lost in an unknown space can cause stress and negative impacts on the overall well-being. Efficiently walking through a space and completing ones tasks seamlessly can have positive affects on an individual, therefore enhancing the experience had. The researcher wants to focus on the overall experience customers have within a retail space, meaning a consideration of a human centred approach needs to be made.

1.8. OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH DESIGN & METHODOLOGY:

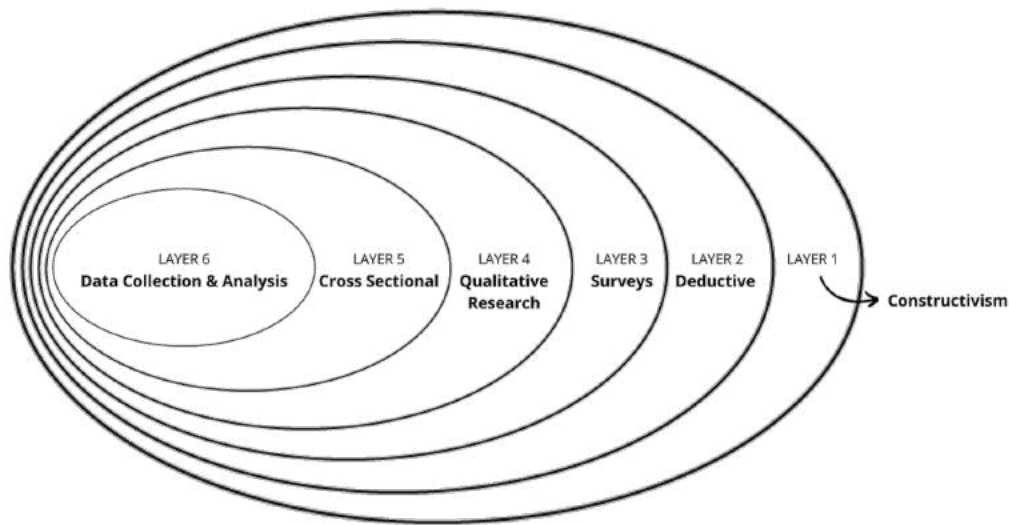


Figure 1 – Saunders Research Onion Diagram (Schwaferts, 2014)

1.8.1. Research Paradigm, Approach, and Design

The researcher intends to use qualitative descriptive design as it is known to study human behaviour in everyday or natural setting, and involves continuous interaction with the people being studied in their own language, and on their own understanding (Polit & Beck 2012:13). A constructivist paradigm will be followed as Polit & Beck (2012:13) explain that the constructivist paradigm is centred on the way in which human beings make sense of their subjective reality and attach meaning to it. The use of constructivist paradigm in this study is intended to gain in depth understanding of the customers' experiences in physical retail spaces.

1.8.2. Population and Sampling

Polit and Beck (2012:738) define population as the entire group of persons or objects that are of interest to the researcher and that are accessible. For the purpose of this study the researcher intends to make use 6-10 customers, that include men and women from all ages 19 to 24. This young demographic have been chosen, as it is a group that frequents retail stores. The researcher will use a non-probability sampling method, as it does not make us of a random selection of population elements. A purposive sampling will be used, as the researcher wishes to target a younger customer demographic .

1.8.3. Data Collection Method

In this study the data collection method will make use of surveys or questionnaires, that consist of open ended questions. These surveys will then be handed to the selected participants to determine the benefits of using way finding in retail interior designs. In order to achieve an in-depth understanding the researcher will make use of open-ended questions to give the participants involved the opportunity to express their own opinions.

1.8.4. Data Analysis Method

The collection method used in this study will be questionnaires, meaning the participants' responses will be written down, which then the researcher will take notes to discern what is being written. In this qualitative study, a thematic analysis or theming will be the method used to interpret data. Thematic analysis refers to the grouping or identifying common themes from the different response given by participants to present the findings in a coherent and meaningful manner. According to Nowell, Norris, White and Moulds (2017) an accurate thematic analysis can also produce trustworthy and insightful findings.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

In this research study, the aim is to explore and describe the impacts of using wayfinding in retail interior design through a constructivist research approach. This paper seeks to review and analyze the published literature on wayfinding in retail interior environments, and its impact on customers experience. The following parts of the paper will provide the reader with general insight of the wayfinding problems, as well as the relationship between wayfinding and customer experience throughout a retail environment. These environments also have factors that may have an impact on the overall experience of a customer. The factors / concepts will be discussed in relation to Don Norman and Stephen Draper's (1986) User Centred Design (UCD) and Charles Sanders Peirce's (1867) semiotics, as they will form the theoretical foundation. Theories will be applied to conceptualise the key terms.

The customers positive experience is critical in retail interior design. Retail owners face various challenges when it comes to providing a desirable and satisfactory experience for their customers. This can include not understanding the customers and shifting towards a more user centric approach (Mukundan, 2016). The findings of this study seeks to expand the knowledge regarding the effects of wayfinding in retail interior design. This in return can help brands look at creating more conducive retail environments that influence and promote a more positive customers experience.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

KEY CONCEPTS

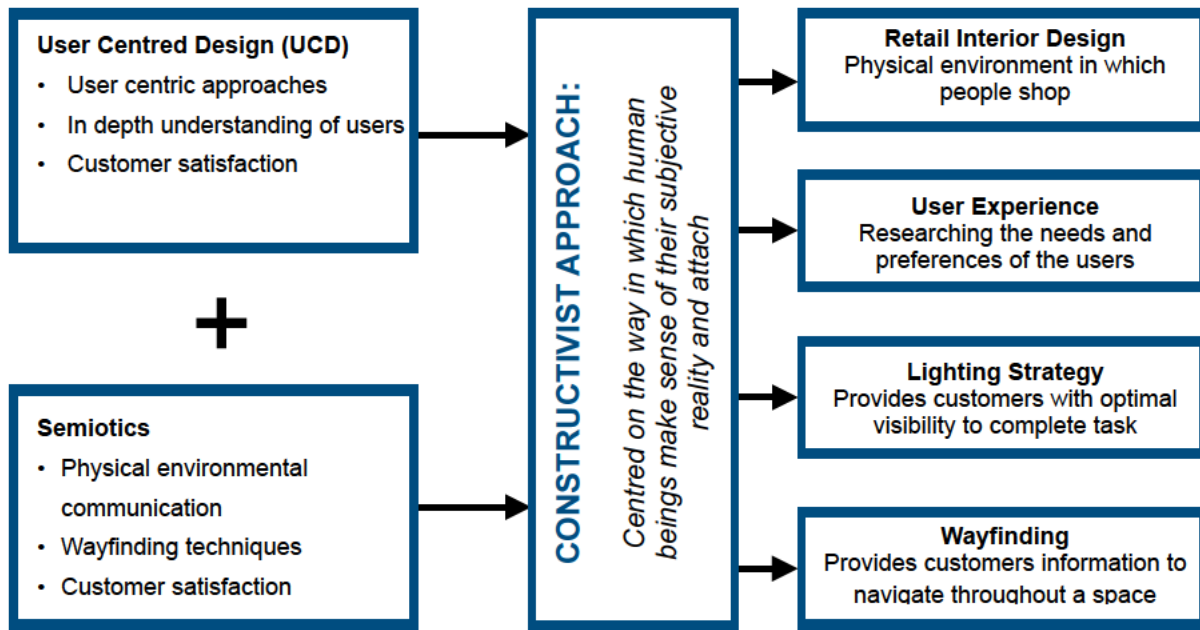


Figure 2 – Literature Review Breakdown

2.2. PARADIGM:

A constructivist paradigm will be followed as Polit & Beck (2012) explain that the constructivist paradigm is centred on the way in which human beings make sense of their subjective reality and attach meaning to it. This view is implemented in education. Mthembu and Mtshali (2013) mention that teaching and learning conceptualises that learners gather the information or knowledge delivered by facilitators differently, as they construct their meaning to it. This is due to human being's individual experiences. People learn from physical environments, whether it be the wayfinding systems set in place or other spatial elements, that provide the occupants with information to navigate throughout a physical space (Kueh, 2006). The use of constructivist paradigm in this study is intended to gain in depth understanding of the customers' experiences by exploring the impact of using wayfinding in a physical environment.

2.1.1. Ontology

Ontology is the first branch of all research, which focuses on what actually exists in the world about which people gather knowledge (Moon and Blackman, 2017). Constructivism is an ontological position. In this study concept of experience is important to the construction of the individuals understanding about the actual environment. Experience is referred to as the knowledge that each person constructs through meaning making processes. A constructivist research approach will assist the researcher in pinpointing the relevant factors which have an impact on the customers experience in a retail interior design.

2.2.2. Epistemology

Epistemology, according to Olssen (1995) presents the core epistemological propositions of this paradigm as knowledge that is actively constructed by an individual, and not passively obtained from a physical environment. In a retail environment, the factors set in place, such as the lighting and colour usage is knowledge that is obtained in an adaptive process through an individuals experience and not a pre-existing element.

Wayfinding requires designers to understand how customers construct meaning and knowledge from the information delivered by wayfinding systems and the actual retail space. Constructivism applied in this study focuses on the meaning and knowledge constructed by people based on he/she's experience and interaction with the space.

2.3. KEY THEORIES AND LITERATURE:

Research indicates that delivering an outstanding customer experience may have a positive impact on the revenue (Hernandez, 2016:2). Customer experience is centred around the consumer and the business. It is described as any interaction the customer might have that will result in a purchase (Hueffner, 2020). Eisenhart (1991:205) cited in Grant & Osanloo (2014) define a theoretical framework as a structure that guides the research by relying on a formal theory, constructed by using a logical explanation of certain phenomena and relationships. They then further explain that theoretical framework serves as a direction on which one supports the study and also provides an organized way on how one will philosophically, methodologically, and analytically approach the study as a whole. The theories that will be used in this study include:

2.3.1. User Centred Design (UCD)

User Centred Design (UCD) is a broad term, that describes how the design process is influenced mainly by users to create the final product (Hudak, 2017). Considering the needs of the intended user in the design process is beneficial to their overall experience. UCD incorporates the users needs, as well as their beliefs and behaviours in order to lessen the user error in the final product (Dukes, 2020). This process was already being used in design and product development before the term ‘User Centred Design’ was first coined by Norman and Draper (1986) in a research lab at the University of California. It later became a widely used term after the publication of the book: *User Centred System Design: New Perspectives on Human-Computer Interaction* (Norman & Draper, 1986). Since then this process has been further developed and used in different disciplines in the design industry.

UCD is an iterative process that includes the following fundamental steps that can be applied in order to achieve the best possible solution for its users.

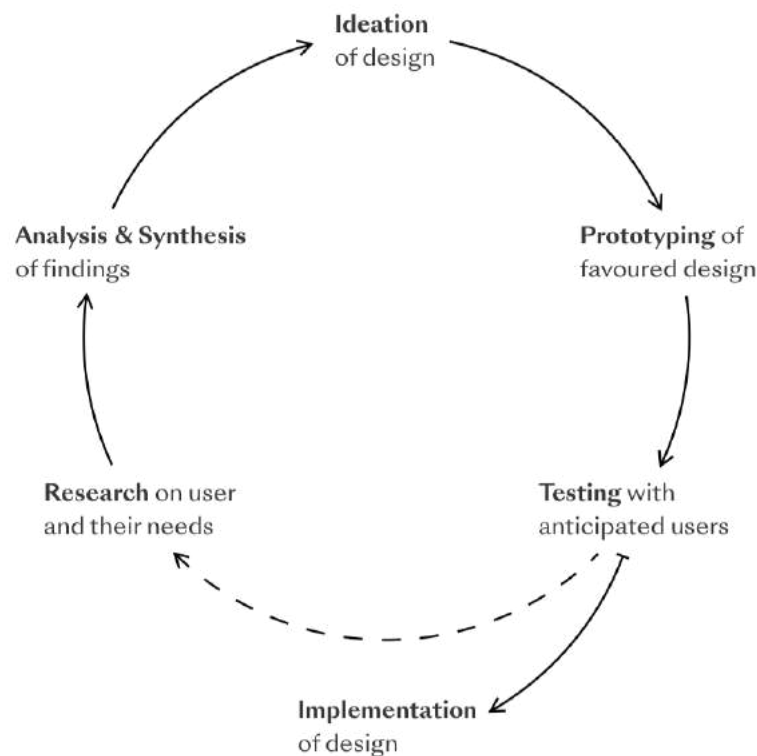


Figure 3: User Centred Design Process (Pacheco, 2019)

This illustration conveys the process of UCD, which begins with the *Research*. This step is when research is conducted on the target audiences behaviours, intentions and needs. The information and knowledge gathered, then goes through a period of *Analysis and Synthesis*. Once that is complete only then can the *Ideation* process be initiated. Multidisciplinary teams collaborate in order to provide different knowledge and perspective. During this period of *Prototyping* it is important to identify the feasibility and restrictions of the design. In addition designers also collaborating or *Testing* the users is also important, as this helps better understanding the users needs and preferences. The knowledge gathered can either be used in *Implementing* a final design or carrying out a few iterations of the process to improve and refine the product or service.

In a retail perspective, creating a positive and seamless customer experience is important and has a significant role in building a good reputation, maintaining customer loyalty and of course promoting well being among the customers (Wereda and Grzybowska, 2016). This study aims to explore the customer experience throughout a retail space. Customers experience is everything related to a physical retail environment that effects the customers perception about it, such as the lighting, spatial layout and overall feel of the space (Hueffner, 2020). A seamless experience can be achieved by implementing the UCD process, by deeper understanding the users which will occupy the space. The knowledge gathered from the research conducted on the user can aid in improving and refining the 'product' which is the retail interior design.

2.3.2. Semiotics

Yakin and Totu (2014) define semiotics as the study of sign language to provide the exchange of messages while communicating. Semiotics deals with signs and their functions in peoples everyday life. People use these signs in order to verbally, non-verbally and visually communicate. Unlike the term 'semiology' that was introduced by the well known Swiss linguistic, which focused on the underlying system of language, semiotics focussed more on the knowledge of the human thinking process. Peirce (1867) cited in Yakin and Totu (2014) states that these signs are allocated in three different types. This includes an index, icon and symbol. An *index* displays evidence of what's being represented. An *icon* has physical similarities to the object being represented. A *symbol* has no resemblance to the object represented but it is culturally and socially learned (Bradley, 2016).

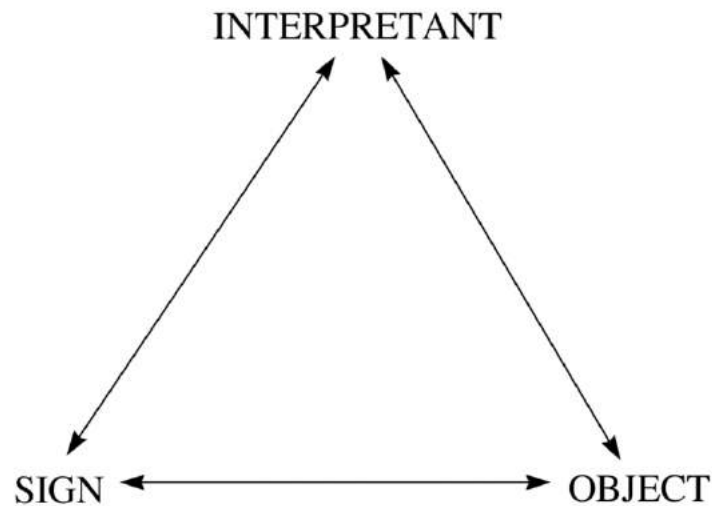


Figure 4: Peirce's Triadic Sign Theory (Mikhail & Wilson, 1998)

This model describes the relationship between the sign, the object and the interpretant. Peirce (1903) cited in Kilstrup (2015) gave definitions in this model as the first one *Sign* being the Representamen. The second being the *Object*, which is the entity or action being represented. Lastly being the *Interpretant*, being the person that perceives and makes sense of the sign. Including an interpretant as part of this model was a distinctive addition to understanding and defining the given signages (Lanir, 2019). When designing and creating a built environment, way finding can serve a part of the design process, to avoid the space becoming too complex for its occupants. According to Zingale (2014) the environments ability to communicate all depends on how it is create and equipped with appropriate orienting systems, such as signages, spatial layout and even lighting. In a retail environment these systems aim to be the “representamen” that is identified by the customers to help them move around the space, without stumbling across any psychological and physical obstacles.

2.4. CONCEPTUALISATION:

The following definitions are provided in order to inform the reader about the key terms, concepts and research variables that will be investigated in this study. The key terms include:

2.4.1. Lighting Strategy

One of the research objectives is to explore and describe specific interior design factors that may have an impact on the customers user experience, this includes the use of lighting. Lighting is known to have the ability of influencing one's mood. This design technique focuses and highlights certain areas in the space to grab the attention of the customer (Alam, 2018). Lighting used in retail settings not only provides customers with optimal visibility to complete task, but it can also convey meaning as well (Schielke, 2018). In retail interior design, the use of lighting not only has a significant role in attracting customers, but also in promoting a positive experience for customers throughout the space. Creating a seamless experience can only be achieved by efficiently communicating to the customers through the physical environment. People gathering and understanding the sensory information can aid in a seamless flow throughout a retail environment, therefore reducing stress and promoting a positive experience (Alptekin and Unver, 2019). In this study the use of lighting will be investigated as a factor that has an impact on the customers experience.

2.4.2. Retail Interior Design

Mitchell (1986) cited in Kent and Petermans (2017) describe retail interior design as an environment in which people shop. The design in these retail environments is a mean of communicating a message to the customers in order for them to carry out their tasks throughout the space. According to Quartier, Claes and Vanrie (2017) retail interior design is becoming more of a distinct field , due to its interdisciplinary knowledge and foundation. In order to achieve a positive experience for the customers, designers collaborate with different fields such as psychologists and sociologists to gain a deeper understanding about the people for whom they are designing. This study mentions the importance of implementing the UCD process, which includes collaboration to provide different perspectives. The retail environment includes factors such as visual merchandising, lighting design, spatial layout and the overall feel of the space (Green Room Birmingham,

2014). Designing while considering these principles as well as the needs and preference of the users supports in creating a seamless experience.

2.4.3. User Experience

Creating a meaningful and relevant experience for users is a process used by design teams when creating products or services (Interaction Design Foundation, 2018). User experience is user centred, in order to achieve a positive experience for users, the needs and preferences should be researched and analysed. This allows researchers to gain an in depth understanding of understanding users and customers who will occupy the space. The objective of this study is to explore factors that may impact the overall customers experience throughout a retail environment.

2.4.4. Wayfinding

Due to the aim of the study, wayfinding will be the main concept and underlying foundation. Exploring and describing the benefits of using this process in retail interior design, in order to create a seamless experience. Wayfinding refers to the information systems set in place to guide and navigate the occupants throughout a physical environment (RSMDesign, 2018). Implementing theses systems enhances peoples understanding and experiences of the space. The term 'wayfinding' was introduced by an urban planner Kevin Lynch (1960). This process is a form of environmental communication. Gachie (2015) refers to environmental communication as information that is implemented in a physical environment, either in the form of physical elements, architectural features and the devices, such as signages, colour separations and lighting design. According to Lynch (1960) cited in Zingale (2014) wayfinding takes place when a user makes sense of environmental images to gather information and knowledge about a physical environment, which applies three coordinated behaviours: orientation, exploration and navigation.

Research shows that in retail environments people face wayfinding problems when they find difficulties in the decision making process (Alan, 2018). This is caused by two reasons. Firstly, being new to the environment and being able to discern the given environmental information. Secondly, not being able to remember or recognise routes that were previously taken for returning customers. This can leave people feeling stress, which causes an undesirable and negative experience. In retail interior designs customers wayfinding experience is a significant factor for designing a functionally efficient shopping

environment. Efficient signage systems, spatial layout and overall legibility of the space navigates customers throughout the physical environment, promoting a positive and seamless experience, which then helps a brand build a good reputation and maintain customer loyalty (Wereda and Grzybowska, 2016).

2.5. LINKING OF RESEARCH PROBLEM

According to Jamshidi, Ensafi & Pati (2020) wayfinding forms a crucial part when creating a built environment, especially complex facilities, that include airports, hospitals and retail interior designs. Finding ones way throughout a building is a requirement for successfully using the building. The problem is inefficiently using the wayfinding systems can lead to increased stress levels among the occupants in the space, which makes their experience undesirable. Navigating throughout a new physical environment can be challenging , especially in stressful situations. Carpmann & Grant (2002) cited in Jamshidi, et al., (2020) associates wayfinding problems with negative psychological and physical effects in customers in retail environments. The customers positive experience should be a priority for retail owners, in order to build and maintain a good reputation. Understanding who you are designing for is important to create a positive user experience. User centric approaches should be used to get an in depth understanding about the people for whom they are designing. The aim of this research study is to explore and describe the impact way finding has on customers in retail environments and how this can create a seamless experience. Customer experience is centred around the consumer and the business. It is described as any interaction the customer might have that will result in a purchase.

In order to enhance the customers experience and improve their satisfaction, other factors need to be considered, such as the spatial layout of the environment. Cluttered environments, in this case retail spaces can be complex, which can lead to confusion and increased stress levels for new occupants. By having distinct zones throughout a retail interior design, the use wayfinding becomes more efficient to implement and identify. Lighting also plays a significant role in both UCD and Semiotics. The use of lighting can have impacts functionally and emotionally on people (Kunduraci, 2018). This provides optimal visibility to move around with no errors and increase comfort levels for the customers to navigate throughout a retail space with a calm manner, thus creating a positive and seamless experience .

2.6. CONCLUSION

Wayfinding in retail interior designs can be seen as the make or break component, that is often is often overlooked and disregarded in some spaces (Jamshidi, *et al.*, 2020). Although strategically planning these retail spaces and implementing comprehensive wayfinding systems, to truly enchant a customer's experience requires variety of tools and collaborative multidisciplinary design teams. This allows researchers and designers to provide different knowledge and perspectives, on how to better understand the users (Pancheo, 2019). The concepts discussed in relation to the UCD processes and Semiotics provides the reader with knowledge on how significant they are in retail environments, however the relationship between these factors and the seamless experience of customers in the space needs to be investigated. It is necessary to explore how the way finding systems in these spaces can lead to a positive and more seamless experience for customers.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

According to Saunders (2007) a research study resembles an onion with multiple layers. The researcher carries out this process by unpacking said layers one by one. In this study the researcher will look into the experience one has within a physical retail environment. There are many factors that will influence this, such as the layout of a space, the efficiency of its use and the even the lighting strategy used.

The overview for this study is to describe and expose the impact of using way finding in retail interior design from a qualitative perspective. Qualitative descriptive design is used in studies that intend to understand human behaviour in everyday or natural setting, and involves continuous interaction with the people being studied in their own language, and on their own understanding (Polit & Beck 2012:13).

A constructivist paradigm will be followed as Polit & Beck (2012:13) explain that the constructivist paradigm is centred on the way in which human beings make sense of their subjective reality and attach meaning to it. The use of constructivist paradigm in this study is intended to gain in depth understanding of the customers' experiences in physical retail spaces. The study will also focus on using a human centred approach for deeper understanding of the human experience in physical environments. The researcher will use a deductive approach from the responses of the participants as well the support of the theoretical foundation of User Centred Design and Semiotics. The data collected from respondents will be at a single point in time, therefore, a cross-sectional study will be applied (Thomas, 2020).

This study will develop a qualitative research design as it will involve collecting and analysing non-numerical data from participants to get an in depth understanding about the concepts, opinions, or experiences (Bhandari, 2020). As mentioned the researcher will make use of willing participants to gather data. The data collection method used will be in form of surveys or questionnaires, that consist of open ended questions, in order to get an in-depth understanding. These questionnaires will then be issued to the selected participants to determine the benefits of using way finding in retail interior designs. Thereafter, the researcher will need to take notes to discern the data given.

A thematic analysis will be the method used to interpret the data. According to Nowell, Norris, White and Moulds (2017) an accurate thematic analysis can also produce trustworthy and insightful findings.

3.1. DESIGN / CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

According to Saunders (2007) a research process resembles an onion that includes multiple layers. The researcher will carry out this process by unpacking said layers one by one. This study is subject and focuses more on human beings, and involves collecting and analysing non-numerical data from these individuals to get an in depth understanding about the concepts, their opinions, and experiences (Bhandari, 2020). The researcher intends to use qualitative descriptive design as it is known to study human behaviour in everyday or natural setting, and involves continuous interaction with the people being studied in their own language, and on their own understanding (Polit & Beck 2012:13). A constructivist paradigm will be followed as Polit & Beck (2012:13) explain that the constructivist paradigm is centred on the way in which human beings make sense of their subjective reality and attach meaning to it. The use of constructivist paradigm in this study is intended to gain in depth understanding of the customers' experience in physical retail spaces.

3.2. POPULATION

The following paragraph will mention the population used by the researcher and how it was appropriately targeted. A population in a study or population of interest is the target individuals or objects that the researcher intends to study or obtain data from (Majid, 2018). Polit and Beck (2012:738) define population as the entire group of persons or objects that are of interest to the researcher and that are accessible. In this study the researcher will make use of willing participants in order to get an in-depth understanding of the individuals experience within retail interior designs. Using participants will allow for a wide range of responses and opinions that can lead to much more richer findings about the use of wayfinding. For the purpose of this study the researcher intended to make use of six young customers, that include men and women from the ages 19 to 24. This younger demographic have been chosen, as it is a group that frequents retail stores.

In order to target the appropriate population, the researcher first described the demographic characteristics of the population. Reflecting on these characteristics helps find the ideal research participant that will be beneficial to the study. This was an important

step that assisted in conceptualising the population of interest, the eligibility criteria and the sampling strategy that was used by the researcher.

3.3. SAMPLING

This following paragraph will mention sampling method that was used by the researcher to gather the participants for the study. The population the researcher will make use of individuals who are young retail customers from the ages between 19 and 24. In this population, the sample size will consist of 6 willing participants. Sampling refers to the selection of a reliably representative sample of individuals for a study (Majid, 2018).

A non-probability sampling method will be used, as the study will not make use of a random selection of participants. It will be vulnerable to draw important conclusions about the retail customers experience, without purposefully selecting frequent retail customers. This will help the researcher find the ideal research participants. A purposive sampling method was utilised, as the researcher wished to target more of a younger customer demographic. By purposefully selecting it allowed the data to only be related to the objective the researcher intended to achieve, which did not get influenced by any irrelevant data. This makes the findings much more credible towards the research. This method of purposive sampling is utilised by researchers in qualitative studies. This means that the researcher selects individuals and sites for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study (Cresswell, 2007).

3.4. DATA COLLECTION METHOD

In order to come to a conclusion that answers the research questions formulated, the researcher had to make use of a collection to gather credible data that could support the objectives. In this qualitative study the data collection method will make use of surveys or questionnaires, that consist of open ended questions. These surveys will then be handed to the selected participants to determine the benefits of using way finding in retail interior designs, and to find out how it influences their overall experience. In order to achieve an in-depth understanding the researcher will make use of open-ended questions to give the participants involved the opportunity to express their own opinions. This is appropriate as it presents the researcher with a wide range of answers and new insight on the subject (Hyman and Sierra, 2016). Although it is important to obtain in-depth responses from participant, having a mixer of questions allows for richer qualitative data. Although there

being many benefits of using close-ended questions as well, which include easier and quicker answers from participants, the researcher may not be able to get the opinions of the customers. Therefore the data gathered will not be as detailed for the study.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher made use of questionnaires that were sent out to a group of individuals. There are advantages as well as disadvantages of this type of collection method. These should be thoroughly considered by the researcher before collecting data, as it can affect the validity of the findings. Advantages of using this method is that it is convenient and less expensive. By not interviewing participants face-to-face, the researcher will save time, human and financial resources (Kumar, 2011). Questionnaires also provide great anonymity, as there is no in-person interaction between the researcher and the participants. In questionnaire spontaneous answers cannot be given, which can be seen as a disadvantage. Participants have time to reflect on their answers before responding, which can shift the validity of the findings.

In order for the researcher to reach a conclusion for the study, both primary and secondary data had to be gathered. According to Kabir (2016), primary data refers to the data that has been collected first hand from the researchers population of interest. The secondary data would then refer to the data that was collected from credible published sources used to develop the theoretical foundations and concepts.

In order to gather first hand data, the researcher compiled a questionnaire that consisted of nine open ended question that had already gone through various ethical clearances to ensure that the research would be conducted in a responsible manner and the participants were not compelled to answer harmful or offensive questions. Before any of the questionnaires were sent out, informed consent forms had to be filled out by the six participants to ensure they understood what their role was in the study.

3.5. DATA ANALYSIS METHOD

The following paragraph will highlight the steps that will be followed by the researcher to analyse the data once it is collected. Data in qualitative research is usually in the form of written words, videotapes, audiotapes and photographs (Brink, van Der Walt, & van Rensburg 2012:193). The collection method used in this study will be questionnaires, meaning the participants' responses will be written down, which then the researcher will take notes to discern what is being written. Understanding and making sense of the information gathered from the respondents is a significant step in a research study. The

interpretation of this information will depend on the researcher's theoretical standpoint (Sutton and Austin, 2015). In this qualitative study, a thematic analysis or theming will be the method used to interpret data. Thematic analysis refers to the grouping or identifying common themes from the different response given by participants to present the findings in a coherent and meaningful manner.

Braun and Clarke (2006) set out a six step approach that would be carried out to analyse any data collected in a thematic manner. These phases should be used in relation to the research questions and gathered data.

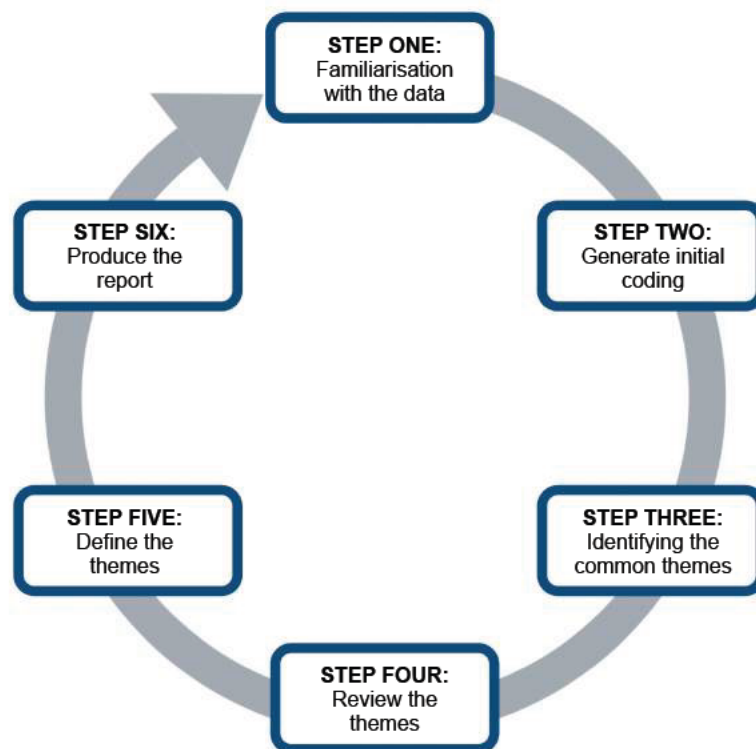


Figure 5: Braun and Clarke (2006) Thematic Analysis Framework

This process is a six step approach that consists of:

1. *The researcher familiarising himself with the gathered data;* qualitative data can be gathered in various forms. This includes recorded observation, focus groups, documents and photographs. In this study, the data was collected by the use of questionnaires emailed out to the participants. Once the data has been collected, the researcher will then read them in an active way searching for meanings and patterns

(Braun & Clark, 2006). Initial ideas from the data should then be noted to assist in coding, which is the following step.

2. *Generating initials codes*; where the researcher will reflect on the data gathered. It is the process of reflection and a way of interacting with and thinking about data. Once the data gathered has been familiarised, the researcher will start identifying preliminary codes. This is a process of reflecting and interacting with the data. It will allow the researcher to smile and focus in specific characteristics of data. Boyatzis (1998) cited in Nowell et al. (2017:6) suggested “that a good code is one that captures the qualitative richness of the phenomenon.”
3. *Searching and identifying any common themes in the responses*; assuming the data gathered has been initially coded and collated, this next step involves sorting and categorising all the potentially relevant data into themes. According to Boyatzis (1998) cited in Nowell et al. (2017) themes can be generated from the primary data gathered from the participants as well as the prior theories that were investigated. A theme should capture something important in relation to the research questions that were formulated.
4. *Reviewing the common themes*; the researchers will then review the coded data for each theme to consider whether they form a well organised pattern. The themes have now been put together. This following step is where the researcher will refine the themes and search for any weak point in the initial coding, which may require changes. By the end of this step the researcher should then have an understanding of the varied themes produced, how they fit and relate to each other, and clearly show how each theme was extracted from collected data.
5. *Defining and naming the themes*; in each individual theme, the researcher will need to conduct and write a detailed analysis, identifying the story that each theme tells. A detailed analysis would be written for each theme, in which the researcher would identify the story the themes tell. At this stage, the researcher would consider how each theme and possible sub-themes fit into this overall story in relation to the formulated research questions. This story would be ordered in a way that will best reflect the collected data.

6. *Producing the report*; the thematic analysis should provide a concise, coherent, and interesting account of the data within and across themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This final stage can only commence once the themes and possible sub-themes have been fully established. This stage is when the researcher would begin the analysis and generate the final report of findings. Thorne (2000) cited in Nowell et al. (2017) encouraged researchers to communicate the processes used to develop the findings clearly in a way that would be comprehensible to readers.

3.6. VALIDITY, RELIABILITY AND/OR TRUSTWORTHINESS

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) cited in Creswell (2007), establishing the trustworthiness and accuracy of findings in a research study, the four terms need to be used as a criteria by researchers. This includes credibility, confirmability, dependability and transferability.

Credibility focuses on the consistency of the data gathered by the researcher and how his findings will be believed by a reader (Nieuwenhuis, et al, 2019). This will be ensured by taking on an appropriate research method, and a research design that will align with the research questions and objectives. The credibility of a study can also be strengthened by making use of purposive sampling to gather participants and a well detailed questionnaire that includes a mixture of open-and-closed ended questions, to allow for an in-depth understanding. Confirmability is described as the degree of neutrality (Nieuwenhuis, et al, 2019:145). The researcher will include triangulation, which consist of the participants comments, the critique and input of the supervisors and the theoretical support of the literature review to increase confirmability. This allows for the study to reduce researcher bias. Dependability refers too the reliability of the study (Nieuwenhuis, et al, 2019:145). It is demonstrated through the research design and implementation. The researcher will keep a journal of any decisions changed during the research process. This allows for the reader to see decisions made and how the researcher will arrive at the objective. In this qualitative study, transferability will be the construct used, as it does not involve generalised claims. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) it allows for the reader to make their own connections between the elements of the study and their own experiences (Nieuwenhuis, et al, 2019).

CHAPTER FOUR

INTERPRETATION AND FINDINGS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the analysis, presentation and the description of the study findings will be presented. The data collection and analyses presented in this chapter occurred according to the research methods described in the previous chapter. This study set out to determine effect of the use of wayfinding in retail interior designs and other factors that might be beneficial towards a positive retail experience. The participants were asked a set of questions that involved their own personal experiences within retail stores and the problems they currently face whilst shopping. The chapter begins with a brief summary of data analysis and the study findings, then an interpretation and discussion of the findings collected by the researcher.

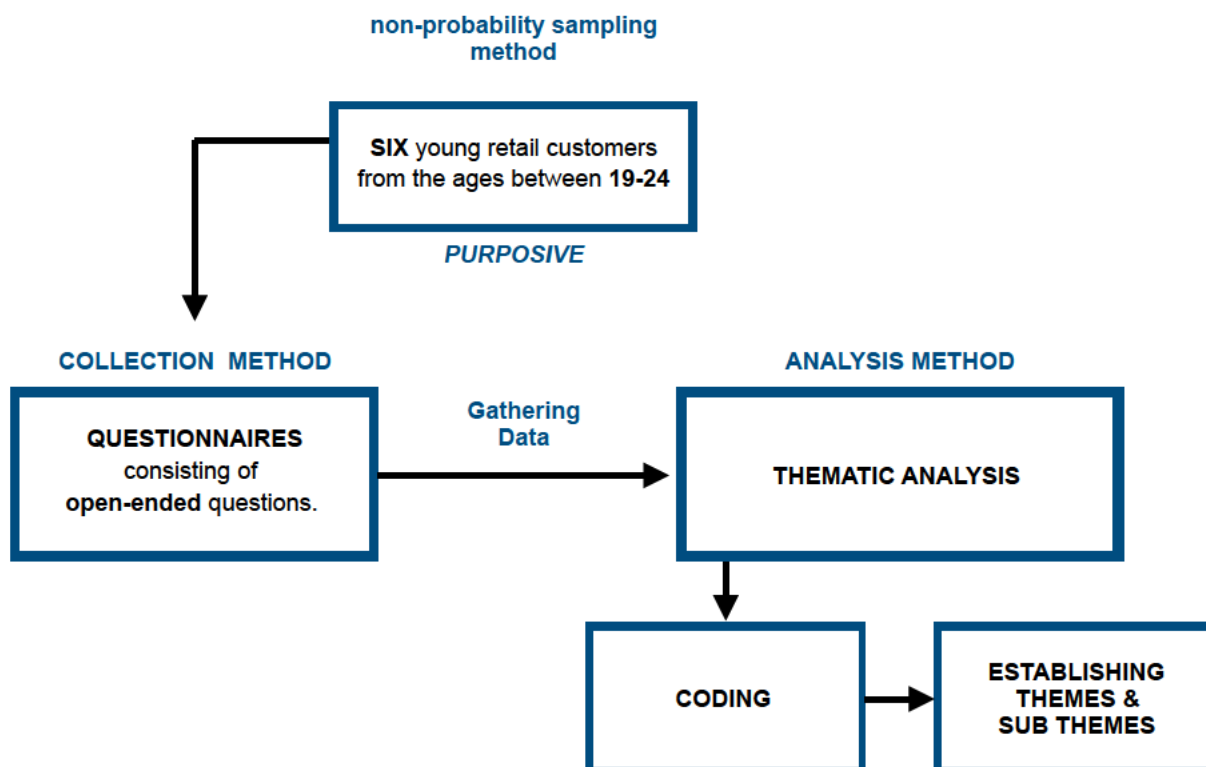


Figure 6 – Interpretation and Findings Breakdown

4.2. DATA ANALYSIS

Data in qualitative research is usually in the form of written words, videotapes, audiotapes and photographs (Brink, van Der Walt, & van Rensburg 2012:193). The researcher developed a questionnaire in order to collect the required data from this study. The participants' responses were all written down, this made it easier for the researcher to take notes and discern what had been answered. Understanding and making sense of the information gathered from the respondents is a significant step in a research study. The interpretation of this information will depend on the researcher's theoretical standpoint (Sutton and Austin, 2015). As indicated in the previous chapter, the researcher followed the model of thematic analysis of Braun and Clarke (2006) as a guiding framework for the analysis in order to provide insightful data that answered the research questions. Thematic analysis refers to grouping or identifying common themes from the different responses given by participants to present the findings in a logical and meaningful manner. Braun and Clarke (2006) set out a six step approach that would be carried out to analyse any data collected in a thematic manner.

4.3. STUDY FINDINGS

The main research question the researcher wished to answer regarding the use of wayfinding in retail interior design was, *"How does the use of wayfinding ensure that customers have an efficient and seamless experience?"*. In order to do so the researcher conducted a questionnaire, in which the participants had to respond to the nine questions, namely;

- In your opinion, how would you define a negative retail experience?
- Is having a positive experience something you find important when shopping? If not, why?
- Can a negative experience keep you from returning to a retail store? Briefly explain
- Entering a new retail store, do you find it difficult to navigate throughout the space?
- Have you ever gotten lost while shopping? If so, how did it make you feel?
- Do you think there is a need for navigational systems in retail environments? Briefly explain.

- Do you ever make use of the existing signages in a retail environment? (If not how do you find what you are looking for)
- In your opinion, what are other methods retail stores could implement to ensure customers have a seamless experience throughout the space?
- In your opinion what are other things that could be done to make your overall retail experience more memorable?

In the following paragraphs, the study findings are discussed, starting with the description of the sample, followed by themes that emerged from the data analysis.

4.4. SAMPLE DESCRIPTION

This paragraph will mention sampling method that was used by the researcher to gather the participants for the study. The population the researcher made use of individuals were young retail customers from the ages between 19 and 24. In this population, the sample size consisted of 6 willing participants. A non-probability sampling method was then used, as the study did not make use of a random selection of participants. It would have been vulnerable to draw important conclusions about the retail customers experience, without purposefully selecting frequent retail customers. This helped the researcher find the ideal research participants. A purposive sampling method was utilised, as the researcher wished to target more of a younger customer demographic. By purposefully selecting it allowed the data to only be related to the objective the researcher intended to achieve, which did not get influenced by any irrelevant data. This made the findings much more credible towards the research.

4.5. THEMES

The use of a thematic analyses of data from the respondents, two main themes and sub-themes respectively had emerged. These themes were identified as the rich and detailed account of the customers perspective of the causes of a negative retail experience as well as the measures that need to be implemented within retail stores to create a seamless experience.

4.5.1. THEME ONE

The first theme that emerged from the analysis was the ineffective interior design strategies. This theme emerged from the data that the respondents had given. The respondents were asked questions for their knowledge on the term wayfinding and its importance. The respondents then raised a few concerns about how the lack of these strategies led to confusion and overall bad retail experiences.

Within this theme two sub-themes, which were optimisation of space and visibility and efficiency of signages emerged. The researchers initial codes are shown in Table 4.5.1.

TABLE 4.5.1.

INITIAL CODES	THEME	SUB-THEMES
• Acknowledgement of the use of Wayfinding • Need for navigational systems • Encouraging Purchasing Behaviours • Reduce an risk of confusion • Prioritizing interior atmosphere (e.g Lighting, Layout, Colour, etc)	<i>ineffective interior design strategies/elements as well as navigation within a retail space</i>	i. <i>Optimisation of space with a well thought out layout reduces confusion</i> ii. <i>Visibility and efficiency of way finding signages</i>

i. Optimisation of space with a well thought out layout reduces confusion

One of the key principles of space optimisation is creating a clear direction throughout the space. The layout of a store is a beneficial part of retail interior design, as it can guide customers seamlessly from the entrance to their chosen items, and at the same time allowing them to view as much of the stores merchandise as possible, resulting in more purchases (Štulec, Petljak and Kukor, 2016).

The first question answered by the respondents was expressing their own opinion on what they thought a negative retail experience entailed. The data revealed that a negative retail experience mostly occurred when the customer could not locate what they were looking

for, ultimately not completing ones task. According to Respondent One, the layout of the store is the most important part in regard to their experience as it can ease their journey to the items they looking for. Respondent Five states that if the layout is not clearly marked or is placed in a haphazard manner, confusion can occur, which is not necessarily favourable towards a positive experience. The study finding is consistent with the study of layouts and Visual merchandising within retail settings. According to Štulec ,et al. (2016) retailers are increasing their attention to visual merchandising techniques, providing a positive mood for consumers and to increase store loyalty and repurchase intention.

ii. Visibility and efficiency of way finding signages

Wayfinding is an important yet often overlooked aspect of interior design. The combination of the unfamiliarity and complexity of new retail spaces create wayfinding problems. Signages are the most used tool in wayfinding. Due to the small sizes, insufficient colours as well as poor positioning this can lead to confusion.

The findings revealed that most customers find it difficult to navigate through a new retail space upon entering. The sample responses include;

- *“Yes, without clear signages, it can be daunting.”*
- *“Yes, dependant on how good the layout is and how well labeled the space is.”*

According to Johanes and Yatmo (2018) visibility is the most critical aspect signage design. Many elements within a store such as walls and product displays can act as visual obstacles, which can create a negative retail experience. The data shows the significance of visible signages within a retail design, and how these tools should be considered in the design process, rather than just an afterthought.

4.5.2. THEME 2

The second theme that emerged was creating memorable customer experiences within a retail space. This theme came to from the questions that had been asked about the different causes of a negative retail experiences and what it gave rise to. Within the theme three sub-themes emerged being employee and customer relationships, customer dissatisfaction as well as reputation damage. The researchers initial codes were as shown in Table 5.2.

TABLE 4.5.2.

INITIAL CODES	THEME	SUB-THEMES
• Customer Loyalty • Reputation Damage • In store inefficiencies limiting growth of the brand • Increase in more sales and higher revenue. • Accessible Customer Service leads to satisfied customers	<i>The significance of a memorable customer experience within a retail space</i>	i. <i>Emotional relationships between employees and customers</i> ii. <i>Customer dissatisfaction in retail stores</i> iii. <i>Customer loyalty and reputation damage</i>

i. Emotional relationships between employees and customers

Customer - Employee relationship is the awareness of customers when they interact with employees of a retail store. According to Nguyen and Huynh (2019) this relationship is key to the success of every business, as it can affect business performance as well as potential customers.

With regard to this relationship, the participants found it significant towards their overall experience. The cause of most of their negative retail experience had to do with the lack of in-store assistance from the staff. Four out of the six respondents mentioned that they were either hesitant to ask for assistance themselves or the employees were usually “*standoffish towards the customers, and not willing to help*” (Respondent Five). The data shows that enhancing this emotional relationship between customer and employee can help serve as a secondary navigational tool for customers, which can be beneficial for both the business as well the overall retail experience.

ii. Customer dissatisfaction in retail stores

The minute the customer enters a retail store, whether it be the staff or the products offered, they experience a service encounter (Mattsson, 2009). The main aim of customer service is to offer the customer the satisfaction he/she expects. This should be a long term aim, as customers come from two different groups, namely; new customers and returning customers, which is why it is equally important for customer attraction as well as retention.

Wayfinding is a significant tool to use in retail, because a not finding ones way throughout a space is generally not beneficial for the customer satisfaction.

The participants described the feeling of being lost in a retail space as frustrating, as they do not want to waste any time trying to locate a specific item. Respondent Five described it as being in an “*endless maze*”. With regard to customer satisfaction, the participants recommended a positive service from the staff when they were asked on how to make their experience memorable. Sample responses include;

- *“Friendly customer service, then they’ll receive a lot of customers.”*
- *“Improving the customer service would go a long way.”*
- *“Anything that’ll help me get into and out of the store quickly.”*

The data shows that a positive retail experience is often due to the speed in which it takes the customers to complete their individual tasks. The opinions of the respondents were asked about creating an overall memorable retail experience. 4 out of the 6 respondents mentioned that positive customer service can also help make the space easily accessible and easy to navigate within. Having helpful and approachable employees can help increase the flow of customers in and out of the store as quickly as possible.

iii. Customer loyalty and reputation damage

As stated in the previous paragraph, customer retention’s equally important as attracting new ones, and the key factor to both is customer satisfaction. According to highly satisfied customer can create a positive word of mouth, which ultimately customer loyalty as well as bringing in new customers at a low cost (Nguyen and Huynh, 2019). The opposite of this can in fact turn away customers, which is not profitable for business.

When asked if a positive experience is something they find important when shopping, all of the respondents replied yes, as it made them want to return to the shop. Sample responses include;

- *“A good experience I might want to come back again to the store and might probably tell other people about it.”*
- *“It is what will make me go back to the same establishment.”*
- *“It will aid in the customer returning to that particular store.”*

The other participants stated that negative experience leads to them choosing a different and opposing store. Respondent Five states “they would even go the extra mile to another store, where there is convenience and a user-friendly setup.” The data reveals that poor

retail experience can lead to customers favouring the businesses competitors to locate a product, which damages the company's reputation in the long run

4.6. OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

The findings on the perspective of the customers with regard to the causes that create a negative retail experience were taken into consideration and analysed according to the themes that had emerged. The objectives were to explore and describe the benefits of the use of wayfinding and how it impacted the customers experience. The participants that were involved felt that wayfinding indeed had an effect on their overall experience within a retail space. The measures that needed to be implemented within retail stores to create a seamless experience were consistent with participants findings, which revealed that there was a need for effective strategies to reduce confusion in new surroundings.

The participants suggested that retail stores need to optimise the space within a store to create an inviting and functional layout, that is not cluttered. An inviting space that will help attract customers and a functional layout that will help direct said customers seamlessly within in the space. Evidently, layouts are not sufficient to encourage purchase and create a positive experience. The findings also showed that implementing clear and visible navigational systems would be useful for newer customers who were not yet familiar with a space. Additionally, the participants stressed the fact that it is not always about memorable experience in a store, it is about saving the customers time. The majority of the respondents mentioned that assisting customers in finding items swiftly did more their experience than design of the space.

4.7. CONCLUSION

This study provides more insight into what a positive retail experience means for customers and how the implementation of wayfinding strategies that are customer centred can aid in enhancing their overall experience. The research findings could interest retail owners who are looking to use their spaces to attracting new customers as well as enhancing the relationships they have with their existing customers. The findings of this study could therefore inspire retail owners as well as interior designers to prioritize how customers can functionally make use of retail spaces to create a seamless and memorable experience.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter summarises the findings, presents the conclusions and limitations of the study, as well as making recommendations for designers and research purpose. The purpose of this study was to explore and describe the impact of the use of wayfinding in retail interior design in regard to the user to create a more seamless experience. Additionally this can then help brands to look at creating more conducive retail environments that influence the customers experience.

In order to achieve the purpose, the objectives of the study were to:

- To explore and describe the benefits of the use of wayfinding in retail interior design, and how impacts the customers experience.
- To explore and describe how the factors of retail environment may affect the customers user experience
- To explore and describe a human centred approach in retail interior designs

5.2. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

This study made use of a qualitative research design as it involved collecting and analysing non-numerical data from participants. As previously mentioned, the researcher made use of willing participants to gather the required data. The population the researcher made use of individuals were young retail customers from the ages between 19 and 24. In this population, the sample size consisted of 6 willing participants. A questionnaire that consisted of open ended questions was used as a data collection method in order to get an in-depth understanding. These questionnaires were issued to the selected participants to determine the benefits of using way finding in retail interior designs. The collected data was analysed following the methods described in chapter 4.

5.2. SUMMARY AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

The two themes that emerged from data analysis were *Ineffective interior design strategies/elements as well as navigation within a retail space* and *The significance of a memorable customer experience within a retail space*. The themes were identified as the rich and detailed account of customers' perspective of the causes of negative experiences within retail environments due to the lack of effective wayfinding strategies as well as the correct measures needed to optimise the use of space leading to a decrease in confusion and customer dissatisfaction. The research findings could interest retail owners who are looking to use their spaces to attracting new customers as well as enhancing the relationships they have with their existing customers.

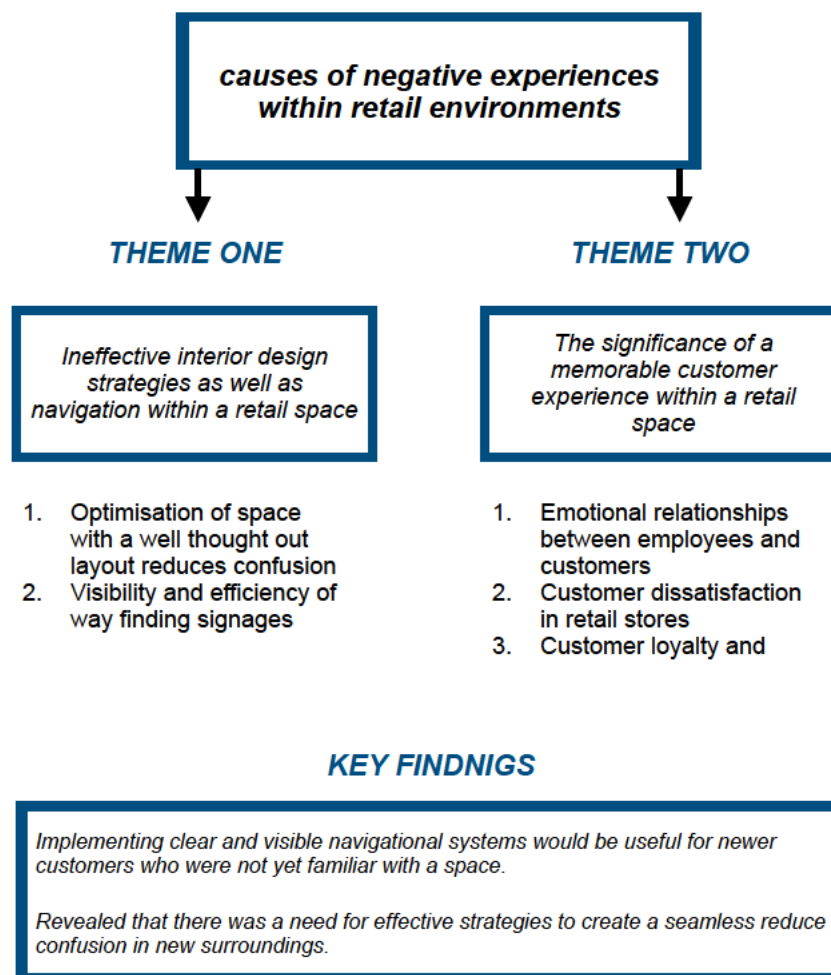


Figure 7: Research Findings Breakdown

5.4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Retail environments play a significant role in impacting a customers experience when shopping, which is why the use of wayfinding is so important. The findings the researcher has gathered from the willing participants of this study can contribute to the limited knowledge of how this concept may affect, not only customers in retail spaces, but also general occupants of any physical environment. The researcher aimed to inform retail brands about implementing these systems in order to create more conducive retail environments that can allow for a more seamless customer experience. Implementing clear and visible navigational systems could prove very useful for newer customers who were not yet familiar with a space and also allow companies achieve an increase in sales through the flow of more positive customers. The data also revealed that there was a need for effective strategies to create a seamless reduce confusion in these new surroundings, driving more customers and seamlessly guiding them throughout the space.

5.5. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are a few ethical considerations that will need to be taken by the researcher. In order for this study to commence, the researcher will need to obtain ethical approval (See Annexure E: Research Request Form) from the institute where he/she is enrolled.

In this qualitative study, the researcher will be make use willing participants to gather data. Brink et al. (2012:32) state that researchers have the right to search for findings in the most accurate way but it should never be at the expense of the rights of any individual. Before gathering any information from participants, consent forms (Annexure J: Consent Form) will need to be issued for them to voluntarily sign. The researcher may not continue without receiving permission from participants. The participants also have the right to withdraw from the study at any time, and should not be pressured by the researcher (Maree, 2019). The researcher should always show the utmost respect and consideration towards the participants involved, and should inform them about what exactly the data will be used for in the study and what will be included. Lastly, anonymity and confidentiality will need to be considered, as a participants have the right to expect that information they provide will be kept in strict confidence (Polit and Beck, 2012:162).

5.6. LIMITATIONS

According to Price and Murnan (2004: 66-67) the limitations of a study are elements of the design or methodology that may have a negative impact on the gathering or interpretation of any findings. They also mention that acknowledging these constraints can also provide the researcher with an opportunity to show that he has critically thought about the research problem, made sense of the relevant literature published about it, and has correctly evaluated the methods chosen for studying the problem. The possible limitations in this study may be the sample size. The number of participants used in a study influence the credibility of the findings (Aguinis and Edwards, 2014). The researcher ensured an appropriate number of participants were involved in gathering the required data to get richer information as well as a deeper understanding about the use of way finding in retail interior design, and how it may affect the customer experience.

5.7. CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed the research design and methods used in this study, presented a summary and interpretation of the research findings and formulated conclusions. The recommendations arising from the findings to improve navigation throughout a retail space as well as creating a positive and seamless experience for customers. The descriptions of the limitations and relevance of the study was also discussed.

In conclusion the researcher's findings suggest that the customers overall experience is mainly influenced by the use of ineffective interior design strategies for navigation within a retail space as well as the overall service customers experience. Interior designers and retail store owners disregarding these factors can lead to confusion and customer dissatisfaction. In order to minimize this, recommendations made by the respondents such as clean and logical store layouts that are easily accessible, colour coding areas into different zones for easier navigation and most importantly having employees that are helpful and approachable. By making use of these can seamlessly navigate customers throughout the space as well as enhancing the experience one has in these settings. The findings of this study could therefore inspire retail owners as well as interior designers to prioritize how customers can functionally make use of retail spaces to create a seamless and memorable experience.

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CONSENT FORM

Explanatory information sheet and consent form for participants
To whom it may concern, My name is Itumeleng Monti Mosebi and I am a student at Vega School Pretoria. I am currently conducting research under the supervision of JD Eksteen about the use of Wayfinding in retail interior design and how it can affect the customer's experience. I hope that this research will enhance our understanding of designing more conducive retail environments for customers and the importance of using wayfinding to achieve that. I would like to invite you to participate in my study. In order to explain to you what your participation in my study will involve, I have formulated questions that I will try to fully answer so that you can make an informed decision about whether or not to participate. If you have any additional questions that you feel are not addressed or explained in this information sheet, please do not hesitate to ask me for more information. Once you have read and understood all the information contained in this sheet and are willing to participate, please complete and sign the consent form below.
What will I be doing if I participate in your study?
I would like to invite you to participate in this research because (insert reason). If you decide to participate in this research, I would like to (explain exactly what participation will involve). You can decide whether or not to participate in this research. If you decide to participate, you can choose to withdraw at any time or to decide not to answer particular interview questions.
Are there any risks/ or discomforts involved in participating in this study?
Whether or not you decide to participate in this research, there will be no negative impact on you. There are no direct risks or benefits to you if you participate in this study. You might, however, indirectly find that it is helpful to talk about your (insert what you are examining). If you find at any stage that you are not comfortable with the line of questioning, you may withdraw or refrain from participating.
Do I have to participate in the study?
• Your inclusion in this study is completely voluntary; • If you do not wish to participate in this study, you have every right not to do so; • Even if you agree to participate in this study, you may withdraw at any time without having to provide an explanation for your decision.
Will my identity be protected?
I promise to protect your identity. I will not use your name in any research summaries to come out of this research and I will also make sure that any other details are disguised so that nobody will be able to identify you. I would like to ask your permission to record the interviews, but only my supervisor, I and possibly a professional transcriber (who will sign a confidentiality agreement) will

have access to these recordings. Nobody else, including anybody at Vega School Pretoria, will have access to your interview information. I would like to use quotes when I discuss the findings of the research, but I will not use any recognisable information in these quotes that can be linked to you.

What will happen to the information that participants provide?

Once I have finished all interviews, I will write summaries to be included in my research report, which is a requirement to complete my BA Honours In Interior Design. You may ask me to send you a summary of the research if you are interested in the final outcome of the study.

What happens if I have more questions about the study?

Please feel free to contact me or my supervisor should you have any questions or concerns about this research, or if there is anything you need to know before you decide whether or not to participate.

You should not agree to participate unless you are completely comfortable with the procedures followed.

My contact details are as follows:

Itumeleng Monti Mosebi

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] contact details of my supervisor are as follows:

JD Eksteen

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Participant or respondent consent

I, _____, agree to participate in the research conducted by Itumeleng Monti Mosebi about the use of Wayfinding in retail interior design and how it can affect the customer's experience.

This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that:

- I agree to be interviewed for this research.
- My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.
- My participation in this research is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw from the research at any time. There will be no repercussions should I choose to withdraw from the research.
- I may choose not to answer any of the questions that are asked during the research interview.
- I may be quoted directly when the research is published, but my identity will be protected.

Signature	Date



ANNEXURE E – RESEARCH REQUEST FORM (IIE007)

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH ON OR ABOUT STUDENTS, STAFF, SITES OF ARTEFACTS OF THE INDEPENDENT INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION (THE IIE)

General instructions:

- This is a non-editable form; only ungreyed fields in the tables can be filled in. Some fields provide spaces for ticks, while others provide spaces for text to be entered or dates to be selected.
- Context-specific instructions appear in some sections.
- Only tick relevant boxes. All relevant dates must be selected by those and only those to which the date selection is relevant. Not all text fields will be relevant to all candidates. Where a text field is not, please mark it with an 'N/A' to indicate that the empty field was not overlooked.
- Text fields, though small in appearance, automatically expand as required by the text. Tables are also adjusted accordingly as a result.
- Headings and contextual delimitation appear in black text in the tables. The text you insert in the applicable fields in the tables will appear in blue. This cannot be changed.

Note for candidates who are not affiliated to The IIE as a student, staff member or contractor:

This form, and all other relevant documentation, should be completed and forwarded electronically to research@iie.ac.za and marked for the attention of the Dean: Research and Postgraduate Studies. Where applicable, you must provide the required accompanying documentation with this form, such as an ethics clearance certificate, a participant or respondent consent form and your measurement instrument.

Note for candidates affiliated to The IIE as a student, staff member or contractor:

Find out who the person responsible for managing research is at your campus. It is their job to send your completed research request form to the office of the Dean: Research and Postgraduate Studies. Where applicable, you must provide the required accompanying documentation with this form, such as an ethics clearance certificate, a participant or respondent consent form and your measurement instrument.

About the researcher												
Title	Prof	☐	Dr	☐	Ms	☐	Mrs	☐	Mr	☒	Mx	☐
First name(s)	Itumeleng Monti											
Last name	Mosebi											
Student number (if applicable)	[REDACTED]											
SA ID number	[REDACTED]											
Passport number (if applicable)	Click or tap here to enter text.											
Home address						Postal address						
[REDACTED]						Tick if same as home address ☐ Click or tap here to enter text.						
Code:	[REDACTED]					Code:	Insert code.					
Telephone number	Click or tap here to enter text.					Cell phone number	[REDACTED]					
Email	[REDACTED]											

About the researcher's affiliations												
<i>Institutional affiliation</i>												
<i>If research forms part of a qualification or institutionally sanctioned research project</i>												
Institution enrolled at		Vega School Pretoria										
Qualification name		BA Honours in Interior Design										
Faculty or area of study		Design										
<i>About the supervisor or promoter</i>												
Title	Prof	☐	Dr	☐	Ms	☐	Mrs	☐	Mr	☒	Mx	☐
First and last names		JD Eksteen										
Email address		[REDACTED]										
<i>Corporate or organisational affiliation</i>												
<i>If the research forms part of a project sanctioned by a company or association or organisation</i>												
Employer		Vega School										
Physical address		34 Ingersol Road, Menlyn, Pretoria.										
		Code	0081									
Contact number		[REDACTED]										
Researcher's position or designation		Honours Student										
<i>About the head of the company, association or organisation</i>												
Title	Prof	☐	Dr	☒	Ms	☐	Mrs	☐	Mr	☐	Mx	☐
First and last names		Ria Van Zyl										
Email address		[REDACTED]										
Researcher's position or designation		Head of Research Committee / Honours Coordinator										

About the research		
Purpose of the proposed research <i>Tick the appropriate option</i>	Undergraduate study	☐
	Postgraduate study	☐
	Private company or agency	☐
	IIE Celebrate Teaching and Learning	☐
	Other (if other, explain below)	☐
	Postgraduate Study	☒
Qualification or output type <i>For example, a Master's degree or a journal article</i>	Honours degree Research study	
Full title of the research	Creating a seamless user experience: The perceived value of wayfinding in retail interior design.	
Value of the research	To explore the impact of using wayfinding in retail interior design in regard to the seamless experience of customers	
Proposed date of completion	2021/11/29	
Proposed date of submission of research findings to The IIE	2021/08/16	

About the methodology					
<i>Indicate by ticking the appropriate block and answering the relevant sections.</i>					
Questionnaire	☒	Interviews	☐	Observations	☐
Existing	☐	Structured	☐	Number of observations	...

Own	☐	Semi-structured	☐	<i>Note what will be observed.</i> Click or tap here to enter text.	
Open-ended	☒	Number of interviews	...		
Number of respondents	...	Focus group or workshop	☐		
Briefly identify, describe or explain the questionnaire. Click or tap here to enter text.		Participants per focus group	...		
		Number of focus groups	...		
	Briefly expand on the interview, workshop or focus group questions. Click or tap here to enter text.				
Purposive	☒	Random	☐	Snowball	☐
Convenient	☐	Stratified	☐	Census	☐
Other (if so, state)		Click or tap here to enter text.			
Other methods If so, state the method and expand on how it will be used		Click or tap here to enter text.			
List of the student or staff groups, sites or artefacts under study		Click or tap here to enter text.			
Average time participants or respondents will be involved in research activities		15 - 20 minutes			

About the ethics considerations for the research						
Aspects considered	Informed consent	☒	Anonymity	☒	Confidentiality	☒
	Committed to give feedback on the study	☒	Voluntary participation	☒	Vulnerable group involved	☐
	Elaborate on vulnerable groups		Click or tap here to enter text.			
Documentation submitted with proposal* Select the applicable options	Ethics clearance certificate or letter					☒
	Instrument(s) (interview schedule or questionnaire)					☒
	Participant or respondent consent form that includes information sheet for participants or respondents					☒
	Audio-visual consent form (if applicable)					☐

Conditions for conducting research on or about students, staff, sites or artefacts of The Independent Institute of Education	
1.	A copy of the final paper must be submitted electronically to The IIE's Dean for Research and Postgraduate Studies at research@iie.ac.za no later than 30 days post finalisation.
2.	The researcher(s) is not permitted to either refer to The IIE or any of its educational brands or to the name, logo, brand or any other identifiers of The IIE or any of its educational brands in any way, including, but not limited to, in questionnaires, surveys, interviews, proposal or research reports. The IIE or educational brand in question must be referred to in a generic manner, for example, 'A private provider'.
3.	The researcher(s) will need to obtain informed consent in writing from all of the participants in his/ her sample if the study is not anonymous.
4.	If the Learning Management System (LMS) of The IIE is used, the researcher(s) is not permitted to refer to it by name. Learn needs to be referred to in a generic manner, for example "the Learning Management System of a Higher Education provider."
5.	A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the relevant person(s) at the brand or The IIE that would be involved in the study.

6.	Research must be conducted in such a way that the normal programme and operations of the site/ offices is not interrupted.
7.	The principal/ manager of a site must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher(s) may carry out the research at the site.
8.	The researcher(s) may only use this data for these research purposes and in no other way.
9.	Should the researcher(s) wish to publish this research or in any way make the results public, for example by publishing the results on a social media platform, this committee will need to approve a request to this end first.
10.	No names or identifying information of participants may be used within the research and the research must be voluntary.
11.	Photographs of human subjects may only be taken if relevant to the research and informed consent from the participants or respondents was obtained, and, even with informed consent, the photographs may not be published.
12.	The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/ her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
13.	If any of The IIE reports or policies are used as part of the research, all identifying information needs to be removed.
14.	Please make it clear that the information will not be used punitively in any way and participants may in no way be counselled or advised based on this.
15.	The reference number of the permission letter, if permission is granted, must appear, in one format or another, on all research documentation distributed amongst IIE staff or students.

Declaration by the researcher	
1.	I declare that all statements made by myself in this application are true and accurate; and
2.	I accept the conditions associated with the granting of approval to conduct research and undertake to abide by them.
X	2021/06/17
Signature of the researcher	Date

Declaration by the supervisor/promoter/lecturer	
I declare that	
1.	the above researcher is enrolled at the institution/ employed by the organisation to which the undersigned is attached;
2.	and that the research proposal and or study has been approved by the Ethics Committee of The Independent Institute of Education; and
3.	and that the questionnaires/structured interviews/tests meet the criteria of: • Educational accountability; • Proper research design; • Sensitivity towards participants; • Correct content and terminology; • Acceptable grammar; and • Absence of non-essential/superfluous items.
X	2021/06/17
Signature of the supervisor/promoter/lecturer	Date

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Creating A Seamless User Experience: The Perceived Value of Wayfinding in Retail Interior Design

Wayfinding refers to the information systems set in place to guide and navigate occupants throughout a physical environment. Physical retail spaces are often avoided, due to the fact that it is less convenient, especially when you are unfamiliar with a space. Systems such as wayfinding can be used in retail interior designs to make it easier for people to engage with a space and complete their tasks seamlessly and efficiently in order to enhance the customers experience.

By completing this questionnaire, you agree to be interviewed for this research. You understand that your confidentiality will be ensured and that your name and personal details will be kept private. You understand that your participation in this research is voluntary and that you have the right to withdraw from the research at any time. You may choose not to answer any of the questions that are asked during the research interview.

Questionnaire:

1. In your opinion, how would you define a bad retail experience?

2. Is having a good experience something you find important when shopping? If not, why?

3. Can a bad experience keep you from returning to a retail store? Briefly explain

4. Entering a new retail store, do you find it difficult to navigate throughout the space?

5. Have you ever gotten lost while shopping? If so, how did it make you feel?

6. Do you think there is a need for navigational systems in retail environments? Briefly explain.

7. Do you ever make use of the existing signages in a retail environment? (If not how do you find what you are looking for)

8. In your opinion, what are other methods retail stores could implement to ensure customers have a seamless experience throughout the space?

9. In your opinion what are other things that could be done to make your overall retail experience more memorable?

**Thank you for taking your time to complete this
questionnaire!**

Vega Ethics checklist: RESE8419/p/w

Student Details												
Title	Prof	☐	Dr	☐	Ms	☐	Mrs	☐	Mr	☒	Mx	☐
First name(s)	Itumeleng Monti											
Last name(s)	Mosebi											
Title of study	Creating a seamless user experience: The perceived value of wayfinding in retail interior design.											
Qualification	BA Honours in Interior Design											

Supervisor Details												
Title	Prof	☐	Dr	☐	Ms	☐	Mrs	☐	Mr	☒	Mx	☐
First and last names	JD Eksteen											
Co-supervisor Details (if applicable)												
Title	Prof	☐	Dr	☐	Ms	☐	Mrs	☐	Mr	☒	Mx	☐
First and last names	Armand Meyer											

Explaining your research process						
Philosophical paradigm	Positivism	☐	Interpretivism	☐	Constructivism	☒
	Realism	☐	Objectivism	☐	Pragmatism	☐
	Functionalism	☐	Subjectivism	☐	Humanist	☐
	Other:					
Research design:	Interview	☐	Questionnaire (self administered)	☒	Focus group	☐
	Ethnography/ Observation	☐	Artefact analysis/website/ social media analysis	☐	Action Research	☐
	Case Study	☐	Design Research (Practice based)	☐		☐
	Other (if so, state)		☐	Click or tap here to enter text.		
Brief explanation of the population and number of participants/items	8 – 10 retail customers between the ages of 19 and 24					
Target group sampling methods/artefact (No under 18's or vulnerable groups allowed)	Purposive	☒	Random	☐	Snowball	☐
	Convenient	☐	Stratified	☐	Census	...
	Explain selection process		Click or tap here to enter text.			

Ethics		
Documentation submitted with proposal	Gatekeeper's letter (institutional consent)	☐
	Completed Annexure E if you conduct research on IIE sites/students/staff	☒
	Instrument(s) (interview schedule or questionnaire)	☒
	Participant or respondent consent form	☒
	Audio-visual consent form (if applicable)	☐

Campus ethics committee recommendation	
Proposal has been reviewed by the supervisor and necessary ethics considerations have been included.	
☒ Accepted as is and provide letter	
☒ Accepted with provisions: Nature of provision (The proposed questionnaire will need to be signed off by the supervisors before continuing)	
☒ Major issues: Student should not continue with fieldwork. Actions to be taken: Click or tap here to enter text.	
Supervisor signature	
	2021/06/17
Co-supervisor/Campus ethics panel member signature	
	2021/06/17

Appendix 6: Final Research Report Summary Document Template

Research Purpose/Objective	Primary Research Question	Research Rationale	Seminal Authors/Sources	Literature Review – Conceptual Framework	Paradigm	Approach	Data Collection Method(s)	Ethics	Key Findings	Recommendations
To find out how retail stores and designers can create a seamless experience for customers. To find out exactly what it is that makes customers enjoy the shopping experience	How does the use of wayfinding ensure that customers have an efficient and seamless experience?	Satisfied customers always come back, which will increase the company's revenue and reputation. Has ability of expanding the knowledge regarding of wayfinding in retail spaces, which can help brands look at creating more conducive retail environments	Braun & Clarke, (2006) Wereda and Grzybowska, (2016) Yakin and Totu (2014) Zingale (2014)	THEME 1: ineffective interior design strategies/elements as well as navigation within a retail space SUB-THEME 1a: Optimisation of space with a well thought out layout reduces confusion SUB-THEME 1b: Visibility and efficiency of way finding signages	Constructivism Centred on the way in which human beings make sense of their subjective reality and attach meaning to it. Intended to gain in depth understanding of the customers experiences by exploring the impact of using wayfinding in a physical environment.	Qualitative research will be used in this study Population Population that will be utilized is customers, that include men and women from the ages 19-24	Open Ended Questionnaires	Informed Consent Obtaining Permission Confidentiality Right to Withdraw Obtaining approval from the institution Consent Forms Keep the names of the participants confidential	Revealed that there was a need for effective strategies to reduce confusion in new surroundings. implementing clear and visible navigational systems would be useful for newer customers who were not yet familiar with a space.	Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3(2), 77-101. Wereda, W and Grzybowska, M (2016). "Customer Experience - Does it Matter?". Yakin, H & Totu, A (2014). The Semiotic Perspectives of Peirce and Saussure: A Brief Comparative Study. [Online] Available at: https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042814057139.
Research Problem	Secondary Questions/Hypotheses/Objectives	Key Concepts	Key Theories	THEME 2: Significance of a memorable customer experience within a retail space. SUB-THEME 2a: Emotional relationships between employees and customers SUB-THEME 2b: Customer dissatisfaction in retail stores SUB-THEME 2c: Customer loyalty and reputation damage		Sampling	Data Analysis Method(s)	Limitations	Key Contribution	Zingale, S (2014). Wayfinding for All. The Contribution Of Semiotics. [Online] Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/
Leaving customers unsatisfied, due to lack of way finding strategies within a space creates a negative experience. To solve this the research will be on how to create that seamless experience for them, leaving them with a positive experience.	To explore and describe the benefits of the use of wayfinding in retail interior design, and how impacts the customers experience. To explore and describe how the factors of retail environment may affect the customers user experience.	Lighting Retail Interior Design User Experience WayFinding	User Centred Design (UCD) Semiotics			A Non Probability Purposive Sampling of 6 -10 willing participants	The researcher will analyse the respondents answers and notes will be taken. Thematic Analysis will then be used. (Braun & Clarke, 2006)	The sample size. The number of participants used in a study influence the credibility of the findings. The researcher ensured an appropriate number of participants were involved in gathering the required data to get richer information as well as a deeper understanding	Expand the knowledge regarding the effects of wayfinding in retail interior design & also helping brands create more conducive retail environments that influence the customers experience.	