



## THE IMPACT OF SENSORY MARKETING ON CONSUMER PURCHASING PATTERNS IN FOOD OUTLETS IN MOROCCO<sup>1</sup>

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the effect of sensory marketing on customer buying decisions, customer patronage, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in the context of Food Outlets in Morocco. 588 regular customers of 2 famous food outlets in Morocco ( KFC and Mcdonalds) were used as respondent, and a well-structured questionnaire was used to get the answers from the respondents. The five study-proposed hypotheses were tested for significance using multiple regression. The results show that sensory marketing influences the consumer purchasing patterns significantly, and has a positive effect on customer patronage, consumer positive decision making, consumer satisfaction and customer loyalty. Based on these results, it is recommended that marketing efforts and campaigns by food outlets should focus on appealing to all of their customers' senses to maximize the brand image, profits and customer loyalty.

**Keywords :** Sensory Marketing, Consumer Patronage, Customer Loyalty, Customer Satisfaction

## DUYUSAL PAZARLAMANNIN TÜKETİCİ ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİSİ FAS'TAKİ GIDA MAĞAZALARINDA SATIN ALMA ALIŞKANLIĞI

### ÖZET

Bu çalışma, duyuşal pazarlamanın müşteri satın alma kararları, müşteri himayesi, müşteri memnuniyeti ve müşteri sadakati üzerindeki etkisini Fas'taki Yiyecek Satış Noktaları bağlamında incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Fas'taki 2 ünlü gıda satış noktasının (KFC ve Mcdonalds) 588 düzenli müşterisi yanıtlayıcı olarak kullanıldı ve yanıtlayanlardan yanıt almak için iyi yapılandırılmış bir anket kullanıldı. Çalışma tarafından önerilen beş hipotez, çoklu regresyon kullanılarak anlamlılık açısından test edildi. Sonuçlar, duyuşal pazarlamanın tüketici satın alma modellerini önemli ölçüde etkilediğini ve müşteri himayesi, tüketicinin olumlu karar vermesi, tüketici memnuniyeti ve müşteri sadakati üzerinde olumlu bir etkiye sahip olduğunu göstermektedir. Bu sonuçlara dayanarak, gıda satış noktalarının pazarlama çabalarının ve kampanyalarının, marka imajını, karlarını ve müşteri sadakatini en üst düzeye çıkarmak için müşterilerinin tüm duyularına hitap etmeye odaklanması önerilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler : Duyusal Pazarlamanın, Tüketici Patronajı, Müşteri Sadakati, Müşteri Memnuniyeti

<sup>1</sup> This study is derived from the MBA study of " The Impact of Sensory Marketing on Consumer Purchasing Patterns in Food Outlets in Morocco"

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Consumers are the backbone of any business. They not only serve as revenue generators themselves, but also influence other potential customers into buying. Any business that doesn't satisfy and meet their consumer's demands and expectations cannot hope to survive. However, understanding consumers and their purchasing patterns is very complicated (Yakup, Mucahit, & Reyhan 2011; Hsiao Yen, & Li, 2012). Especially, the advent of globalization has made it very difficult to understand and predict any trends in consumer purchasing patterns.

Studies like Natalia & Paul (2014), Latasha, Tooraiven, Monishan, Randhir (2016) and Keller (2008) have shown that traditional marketing practices have lost their effectiveness gradually, and there is a need for marketers to find novel techniques to appeal to consumers. Thus, marketing has now evolved to become a multidimensional effort, is not limited to focusing on customers' logic only, and seeks to appeal to consumers' senses and subconscious minds also (Krishna, 2016). This idea of sensory marketing is the future of marketing and has the potential to create an emotional bond between the product and the consumer, something that was not likely through the use of traditional marketing techniques (Lindstrom, 2005). Marketing managers are recognizing this potential of sensory marketing, and Fortune 500 companies are embedding the elements of sensory marketing in their overall marketing strategies. (Rupini and Nandagopal, 2015).

In MENA, the business market is very dynamic and competitive. Thus, businesses have to be agile and flexible in terms of their marketing plans. As discussed earlier, this necessarily means that businesses must adopt sensory marketing as the core of their advertising efforts to be successful. However, sensory marketing approaches and their applicability has not generally been researched in the context of this region, and inadequate testing of models has been done. (Anvar, 2016).

This article aims to test the effectiveness and suitability of using sensory marketing in the context of consumer purchasing behavior in food outlets in Morocco. It makes use of standard data collection and analysis in quantitative techniques to understand the effects of sensory marketing on customer patronage, consumer positive decision making, consumer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Definition of Sensory Marketing**

The American Marketing Association - AMA (2015) defines sensory marketing as " the marketing techniques that aim to seduce the consumer by using senses to influence the consumer's feelings and behaviors towards a particular product or service". The aim of sensory marketing is to make consumers feel a connection between them and the product (Costa, Patricia, Natasha, Jessica, & Maria, 2012). This strong emotional bond with the product influences the purchasing behavior (Isacsson & Alakoski 2009). Consumer engagement can be enhanced and this purchasing behavior be affected in an even better way by using unconscious sensory cues in sensory marketing. (Mojtaba & Shahram, 2015).

### **2.2. Variables of Sensory Marketing**

The sensory marketing variables are visual marketing, auditory marketing, olfactory marketing, tactile marketing, and gustative marketing (Latasha, Tooraiven, Monishan, and Randhir, 2016), (Cannenterre, Mou, Moul, Bernadac, Ghor, 2012), (Ibn-e-Hassan and Jawad, 2016).

#### **2.2.1. Visual Marketing**

According to Rupini and Nandagopal (2015), human beings recognize a brand (logo) visually before the other senses come into play. Vision positively or negatively impacts consumer decisions even without input from other senses (Hultén, 2013). Mehrnaz, Houshang, and Kambiz (2014) estimate that more than 80% of commercials and shopping decisions are carried out visually.



### **2.2.2. Auditory Marketing**

The impacts of sounds like ambient music, jingles and auditory logos, phonetic scripts, and voiceovers on a customer's buying decision are the subject of auditory marketing (Meyers-Levy, Bublitz & Peracchio, 2010). Auditory cues can help businesses to get customers to make more favorable purchase decisions.

### **2.2.3. Olfactory Marketing**

Because smells are so intimately associated with memory and behavior, they are a powerful marketing tool. Human emotions and behavior are closely related to and greatly influenced by our sense of smell (Mahmoudi Ahmadinejad & Nezami 2012).

### **2.2.4. Tactile Marketing**

Tactile marketing refers to both touch and feeling. Feeling can mean something like feeling of coolness on the body because of Air Conditioning during the hot days. Customers tend to judge the products' quality and characteristics through touch, and are more likely to buy a product and trust its quality when they can touch it (Mehrnaz, Houshang & Kambiz 2014).

### **2.2.5. Gustative Marketing**

Taste is a fully immersive sense and is emotionally based, so it can influence mood and brand image (Latasha, Tooraiven, Monishan, & Randhir, 2016). It is considered as the most significant aspect influencing the customer decision to buy foods and beverages, and is a reason why in-store taste-testing can attract customers (Schmidt & Benson. 2009).

## **2.3. Variables Of Consumer Purchasing Pattern**

Variables for measuring consumer purchasing pattern include consumer buying decision, customer patronage, customer loyalty, and customer satisfaction (Kotler and Armstrong, 2014); (Wu, 2003).

### **2.3.1 Consumer Patronage**

It has been defined as "an act of being a regular customer to a shop" (Nwulu & Asiegbu, 2015). Thus, businesses can maintain a competitive edge by focusing on sustained patronage. Patronage forms the basis of an established and increasing market share.

### **2.3.2. Customer Satisfaction**

According to Chaiyasoonthorn and Suksa-ngiam (2011), customer satisfaction is the feelings of contentment or discontentment that customers experience as a result of a comparison between their experience of the product or service after buying it with their expectations before having that experience. It is an overall evaluation made by the customer about the product/service based on the overall experience with it over time (Fornell, Johnson, Anderson, Cha & Bryant, 1996).

### **2.3.3. Customer Loyalty**

In marketing terms, customer loyalty is usually related to a brand. It is a fundamental idea in customer purchase behavior that discourages customers from switching to competing brands (Dick and Basu, 1994). It also affords business some cover from competition and more flexibility in making marketing plans (Kotler and Armstrong, 2014).

### **2.3.4. Consumer Buying Decision**

Kotler and Armstrong (2014) and GilaniNia (2010) have recognized a five stage consumer purchase decision making process. The first step in consumer purchase decision is need awareness, the second one is information search, third is alternative evaluations, fourth is deciding to purchase and final step is post-purchasing behavior.

## **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This section focuses on the purpose and importance of the research paper, the hypothesis, the research model, and the data analysis and findings.



### 3.1 Purpose of Study

This research paper aims to analyze the effect of Sensory marketing (Visual marketing, Auditory marketing, Olfactory marketing, Tactile marketing, and Gustative marketing) on buying patterns of Moroccan consumers

### 3.2 Importance of Study

The importance of this article is multifaceted in providing businesses the required research to utilize multisensory experiences which inspire the right mood in consumers and have a significant impact on product sales.

### 3.3. Hypothesis Development

The following hypothesis were derived from literature and theoretical review -

#### 3.3.1. Null Hypothesis :

H<sub>0</sub>: Sensory Marketing has no impact on purchasing pattern of consumers

#### 3.3.2. Alternative Hypothesis :

H<sub>A</sub>: Sensory Marketing has an impact on purchasing pattern of consumers

##### 3.3.2.1. Sub - Hypothesis (Alternative):

H<sub>A1</sub>: Visual Marketing has an impact on purchasing pattern of consumers

H<sub>A2</sub>: Auditory Marketing has an impact on purchasing pattern of consumers

H<sub>A3</sub>: Olfactory Marketing has an impact on purchasing pattern of consumers

H<sub>A4</sub>: Tactile Marketing has an impact on purchasing pattern of consumers

H<sub>A5</sub>: Gustative Marketing has an impact on purchasing pattern of consumers

### 3.4. Research Model

The author's research model describes the relationship between the different variables of this research. The independent variables are presented by the constituent elements of sensory marketing i.e Visual Marketing, Auditory Marketing, Olfactory Marketing, Tactile Marketing, and Gustative Marketing. The dependent variables are represented by the constituent elements defining buying patterns i.e. Consumer Patronage, Customer purchase decision, Customer Satisfaction, and Customer Loyalty.

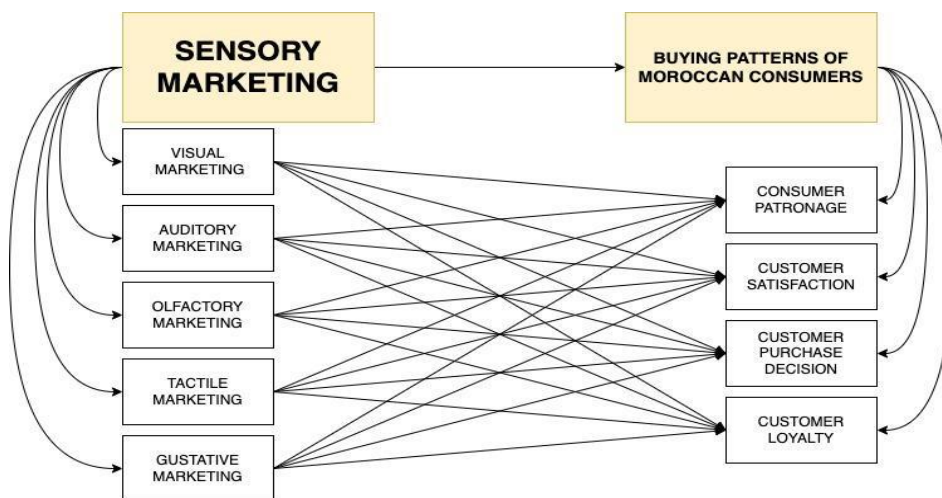


Figure 1. Research Model

### 3.5. Sample and Data Collection



An explanatory research strategy was employed to achieve this paper's objectives, which is focused on analyzing the effect of Sensory marketing (Visual marketing, Auditory marketing, Olfactory marketing, Tactile marketing, and Gustative marketing) on buying patterns of Moroccan consumers.

1. A structured questionnaire was administered online using Google Forms; given that the questionnaire is dedicated to Moroccan consumers, it was conducted in French and English.
2. The participants were asked to express their level of agreement using the Likert scale, which determines respondents' degree of accordance with the statement asked i.e. 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (agree or disagree), 4 (agree), 5 (strongly agree).
3. This research adopts qualitative comparison of respondents and quantitative analysis methods.
4. The data was collected, cleaned, and analyzed electronically using Microsoft Excel.
5. The questionnaire was distributed to 700 randomly selected samples, and 588 responses were reached from various descriptive classifications of data sets.
6. It is necessary to mention that the time deadline has limited the author of this paper to collecting more responses from a larger population. However, the minimum required samples to ensure normal distribution and central tendency have been completely met.

### 3.6. Data Analysis and Findings

The below analysis was performed on 588 respondents of this study. 52% of the respondents are represented by Females and 48% Males. A majority population of the respondents (45% + 34% +12% = 91% i.e Undergraduate + Masters + PhD) have a college education at least. The respondents' age groups seem well distributed for this study i.e on an average of 20 - 25% for each age group below age 51 and 11% for age group 51 & above. Finally, 29% and 26% of the respondents are represented by students and private employees respectively in terms of their occupation classification and the remaining are represented by government employees, entrepreneurs and other occupations.

#### 3.6.1. Internal Consistency (Reliability)

Internal consistency is typically a measure based on the correlations between different items on the same test (or the same subscale on a larger test). It measures whether several items that propose to measure the same general construct produce similar scores. Cronbach's alpha,  $\alpha$  (or coefficient alpha) measures reliability, or internal consistency. 'Reliability' is another name for consistency. The below table shows the results of statistical analysis of Internal Consistency (Cronbach's alpha) between the subscale used to measure the below variables.

<b>INTERNAL CONSISTENCY (RELIABILITY) TABLE</b>		
<b>Serial No.</b>	<b>Variables</b>	<b>Cronbach Alpha Coefficients</b>
1	Visual Marketing	0.891
2	Auditory Marketing	0.872
3	Olfactory Marketing	0.841
4	Tactile Marketing	0.847
5	Gustative Marketing	0.732
6	Consumer Patronage	0.825
7	Customer Decision	0.774
8	Customer Satisfaction	0.867



9	Customer Loyalty	0.851
Source: Author's Fieldwork Computation, 2022		

Table 1. Internal Consistency

**Interpretation:**

Cronbach's Alpha for each of the variables is >0.7 which satisfies the reliability benchmark and hence each variable demonstrates strong Internal Consistency required to proceed with this research analysis.

**3.6.2. Correlation Analysis**

Correlation explains the strength of the relationship between an independent and dependent variable. A correlation coefficient greater than zero indicates a positive relationship while a value less than zero signifies a negative relationship. A value of zero indicates no relationship between the two variables being compared (Investopedia, 2022).

The below table shows the results of statistical analysis of correlation between Purchasing Pattern of Moroccan consumers and the elements of sensory marketing.

Table 2. Correlation Analysis

CORRELATION	PURCHASING PATTERN	VISUAL MARKETING	AUDITORY MARKETING	OLFACTORY MARKETING	TACTILE MARKETING	GUSTATIVE MARKETING
PURCHASING PATTERN	1.000					
VISUAL MARKETING	0.944	1.000				
AUDITORY MARKETING	0.949	0.935	1.000			
OLFACTORY MARKETING	0.943	0.920	0.931	1.000		
TACTILE MARKETING	0.947	0.916	0.932	0.922	1.000	
GUSTATIVE MARKETING	0.888	0.863	0.876	0.867	0.860	1.000

**Interpretation:**



Referring to the above table, we see a correlation of  $>0.90$  for Visual Marketing, Auditory Marketing, Olfactory Marketing, and Tactile Marketing; and  $>0.85$  for Gustative Marketing which signifies a very high strength of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

### 3.6.3. Regression Analysis

Correlation is not causation, and hence Regression Analysis is essential to establish the relationship between the dependent variable and independent variables.

In this research analysis, the regression analysis was performed on the following variables -

**Dependent Variable:** Purchasing patterns of Moroccan consumers

**Independent Variables:** Visual Marketing, Auditory Marketing, Olfactory Marketing, Tactile Marketing, and Gustative Marketing

**Level of Significance** i.e Alpha,  $\alpha = 5\% = 0.05$

The significance level, also denoted as alpha or  $\alpha$ , is the probability of rejecting the null hypothesis when it is true. In simple terms, if the P-Value in the regression analysis is less than the level of significance i.e Alpha,  $\alpha = 5\% = 0.05$  in this case, we reject the Null Hypothesis and accept the Alternate Hypothesis.

**Coefficient of determination or R-squared ( $R^2$ )** is a statistical measure that represents the proportion of the variance for a dependent variable that's explained by an independent variable. For example, if the  $R^2$  of a model is 0.50, then approximately half of the observed variation in the model's outputs can be explained by the model's inputs (Investopedia, 2022). In simple terms, the higher the R-squared, the better the model fits the data.

**The beta coefficient** is the degree of change in the outcome variable for every 1-unit of change in the predictor variable. Beta compares the strength of the effect of each individual independent variable to the dependent variable. In simple terms, the higher the absolute value of the beta coefficient, the stronger the effect.

Using **Ordinary least squares (OLS)** regression method the relationship between each of the independent variables and the dependent variable for Moroccan consumers are demonstrated below and their inferences are explained.

#### 3.6.3.1. Visual Marketing vs Purchasing Patterns

Table 3. Regression Statistics: Visual Marketing

<i>Regression Statistics</i>				
<b>Multiple R</b>	<b>0.944</b>			
<b>R Square</b>	<b>0.891</b>			
	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>
<b>Intercept</b>	<b>0.346</b>	<b>0.057</b>	<b>6.094</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>VISUAL MARKETING</b>	<b>0.925</b>	<b>0.013</b>	<b>69.003</b>	<b>0.000</b>

**Inference:**



Referring to the table and the graph below for Visual Marketing -

1. **R Square = 0.891** tells that 89.1% of variation in the buying patterns of Moroccan Consumers can be explained by the independent variable, i.e. Visual Marketing.
2. **P-Value:** With Level of Significance,  $\alpha = 5\% = 0.05$ , the P-value is less than 0.05 which means the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis can be accepted, i.e.

**H<sub>A1</sub>: Visual Marketing has an impact on purchasing pattern of consumers**

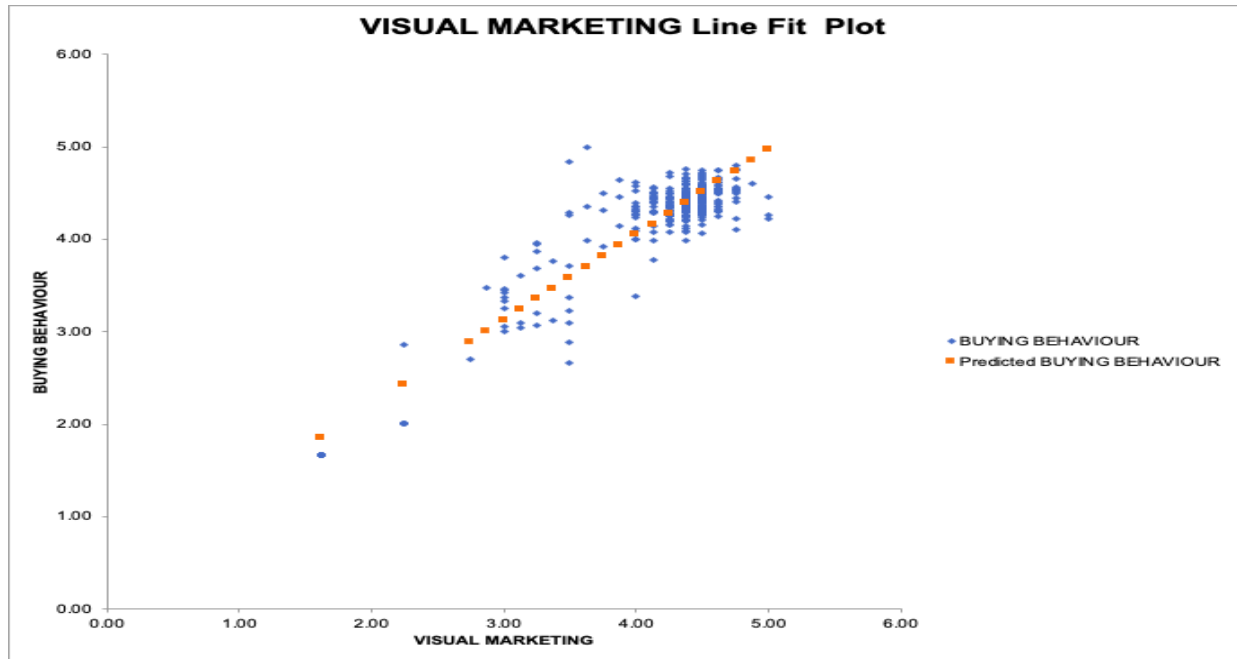


Figure 2. Regression Model

### 3.6.3.2. Auditory Marketing vs Purchasing Patterns

Table 4. Regression Statistics: Auditory Marketing

<i>Regression Statistics</i>				
<b>Multiple R</b>	<b>0.949</b>			
<b>R Square</b>	<b>0.900</b>			
	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>
<b>Intercept</b>	<b>0.572</b>	<b>0.051</b>	<b>11.241</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>AUDITORY MARKETING</b>	<b>0.872</b>	<b>0.012</b>	<b>72.524</b>	<b>0.000</b>

**Inference:**

Referring to the table and the graph below for Auditory Marketing -

1. **R Square = 0.900** tells that 90% of variation in the buying patterns of Moroccan Consumers can be explained by the independent variable, i.e. Auditory Marketing.
2. **P-Value:** With Level of Significance,  $\alpha = 5\% = 0.05$ , the P-value is less than 0.05 which means the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis can be accepted, i.e.

**H<sub>A2</sub>: Auditory Marketing has an impact on purchasing pattern of consumers**





### 3.6.3.3. Olfactory Marketing vs Purchasing Patterns

Table 5. Regression Statistics: Olfactory Marketing

<i>Regression Statistics</i>				
<b>Multiple R</b>	<b>0.943</b>			
<b>R Square</b>	<b>0.890</b>			
	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>
<b>Intercept</b>	<b>0.553</b>	<b>0.054</b>	<b>10.259</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>OLFACTORY MARKETING</b>	<b>0.872</b>	<b>0.013</b>	<b>68.766</b>	<b>0.000</b>

#### **Inference:**

Referring to the table and the graph below for Olfactory Marketing -

1. **R Square = 0.890** tells that 89% of variation in the buying patterns of Moroccan Consumers can be explained by the independent variable, i.e. Olfactory Marketing.
2. **P-Value:** With Level of Significance,  $\alpha = 5\% = 0.05$ , the P-value is less than 0.05 which means the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis can be accepted, i.e.

**H<sub>A3</sub>: Olfactory Marketing has an impact on purchasing pattern of consumers**

### 3.6.3.4. Tactile Marketing vs Purchasing Patterns

Table 6. Regression Statistics: Tactile Marketing

<i>Regression Statistics</i>				
<b>Multiple R</b>	<b>0.947</b>			
<b>R Square</b>	<b>0.896</b>			
	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>
<b>Intercept</b>	<b>0.554</b>	<b>0.052</b>	<b>10.624</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>TACTILE MARKETING</b>	<b>0.872</b>	<b>0.012</b>	<b>71.146</b>	<b>0.000</b>

#### **Inference:**

Referring to the table and the graph below for Tactile Marketing -

1. **R Square = 0.896** tells that 89.6% of variation in the buying patterns of Moroccan Consumers can be explained by the independent variable, i.e. Tactile Marketing.
2. **P-Value:** With Level of Significance,  $\alpha = 5\% = 0.05$ , the P-value is less than 0.05 which means the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis can be accepted, i.e.

**H<sub>A4</sub>: Tactile Marketing has an impact on purchasing pattern of consumers**



### 3.6.3.5. Gustative Marketing vs Purchasing Patterns

Table 7. Regression Statistics: Gustative Marketing

<i>Regression Statistics</i>				
<b>Multiple R</b>	<b>0.888</b>			
<b>R Square</b>	<b>0.789</b>			
	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>
<b>Intercept</b>	<b>0.796</b>	<b>0.074</b>	<b>10.761</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>GUSTATIVE MARKETING</b>	<b>0.811</b>	<b>0.017</b>	<b>46.817</b>	<b>0.000</b>

#### **Inference:**

Referring to the table and the graph below for Gustative Marketing -

1. **R Square = 0.789** tells that 78.9% of variation in the buying patterns of Moroccan Consumers can be explained by the independent variable, i.e. Gustative Marketing.
2. **P-Value:** With Level of Significance,  $\alpha = 5\% = 0.05$ , the P-value is less than 0.05 which means the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis can be accepted, i.e.

**H<sub>A5</sub>: Gustative Marketing has an impact on purchasing pattern of consumers**

## **4. CONCLUSION**

The following conclusions were reached after taking into account the findings of this study and other empirical data that was examined. This study extends and replicates earlier studies on sensory marketing. Similar to earlier studies, this one demonstrates how diners' cognitive and emotional responses to restaurant ambiance influence their purchasing pattern.

1. The analysis of the data collected as part of the study shows that sensory marketing significantly affects the consumer purchasing patterns in a positive way.
2. The results of the analysis show that environmental cues have a direct impact on people's emotions, patterns, and cognitive processes.
3. All four factors of purchasing pattern i.e. customer patronage, consumer decision-making, consumer satisfaction and customer loyalty were influenced by sensory marketing variables.
4. The results show that food outlets in Morocco that leveraged sensory marketing have significantly higher chances of influencing a purchase.

### **4.1. Recommendations to Businesses**

A brand's true personality only exists in the minds of its customers. Each person's unique experience shapes how they perceive a brand, and no two impressions are precisely the same. Therefore, marketers can take this opportunity to leverage the positive effects of sensory marketing and design the customer journey to benefit their business.

1. Organizations should leverage sensory marketing as a way to increase customer satisfaction as the concept has a positive impact on perception, which would build a stronger bond between customers and the brand, resulting in a significant increase in customer satisfaction.



2. Marketers need to create sensory marketing policies that support all the elements that make sensory marketing work as planned in order to positively influence customer purchasing decisions about products.

#### 4.2. Limitations to the Study

The limitations of a study allow the reader to better understand the context within which results should be interpreted. The limitations to this study are highlighted below.

1. **Time Constraint** – Due to limited time required to conduct this research. I.e collect the data, analyze the data, and present the results in a short span of time, the results are prone to smaller biases that arise due to this factor.
2. **Data sample** – This study was limited by the sample size and limited to the Moroccan population that has access to the internet and makes use of social media platforms.
3. **Geographic impediment** – This study was only conducted in Morocco. Thus, its generalizability is low. Researchers in the future can collect data from other cities and countries from widening the scope of research.

#### 4.3. Suggestions to Further Studies

With the invention of cutting-edge technologies such as augmented reality and haptic, researchers can consider scenarios that connect these new technologies and their long-term and short-term influence on the human mind using sensory marketing.

It is also recommended to use a larger sample spread over different geographies and across various social and cultural structures, to better understand the effect of sensory marketing on different types of customer segments.

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