



## Sensory-Driven Customer Experiences in Modest Fashion Retail: Insights for Marketing Practice, Education, and Sustainable Development

Ery Adam Primaskara\*, Ratih Hurriyati, Tika Annisa Lestari Koeswandi

Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung, Indonesia

\*Correspondence: E-mail: [ery@upi.edu](mailto:ery@upi.edu)

### ABSTRACT

This study examined how multisensory cues influence Memorable Customer Experiences (MCEs) in Indonesia's modest fashion retail sector. The purpose was to explore whether visual, tactile, olfactory, and auditory stimuli significantly shape consumer memory and emotional engagement. A cross-sectional quantitative design was employed using survey data from 400 active modest fashion consumers in Bandung. Simple linear regression analysis revealed that all four sensory cues had statistically significant positive effects on MCEs. These results are important because they show that culturally resonant sensory strategies can enhance affective brand encounters and customer loyalty. The study contributes to sensory marketing theory and supports SDG 4 and SDG 12 by offering an educational case model for marketing curricula and promoting sustainable, experience-focused retail design. The findings encourage fashion retailers to go beyond product-centric models by designing immersive, culturally aligned sensory experiences that foster engagement, learning, and long-term brand value.

© 2025 Kantor Jurnal dan Publikasi UPI

### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article History:

Submitted/Received 18 Mar 2025

First Revised 20 Apr 2025

Accepted 13 Jun 2025

First Available online 14 Jun 2025

Publication Date 01 Sep 2025

#### Keyword:

Customer experience,  
Modest fashion,  
Sensory marketing,  
Sustainable development,  
Teaching case.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Creating memorable customer experiences (MCEs) has become vital to competitive strategy in today's experience-driven economy. This is particularly important in the fashion industry, where products transcend mere functionality to embody personal identity, cultural expression, and emotional resonance (Sharma, 2024). As fashion consumption evolves beyond utilitarian needs, brands must deliver emotionally engaging and culturally resonant experiences to differentiate themselves and cultivate lasting consumer relationships. The pursuit of MCEs is not merely an operational tactic but a strategic imperative that shapes consumer perceptions, loyalty, and brand equity in highly saturated markets (Pine & Gilmore, 1998).

Within this context, the modest fashion sector (characterized by apparel that aligns with specific cultural and religious values) has witnessed significant global growth, becoming a dynamic subdomain of the broader fashion industry. Indonesia, home to the world's largest Muslim population, stands at the forefront of this expansion, with its modest fashion market valued at approximately USD 20 billion in 2023 and projected to reach USD 22 billion by the end of 2024 (see <https://www.aseanbriefing.com/news/investing-in-indonesias-halal-economy/>). This growth is driven by a young, digitally savvy demographic demanding fashion that reflects both modern aesthetics and cultural authenticity. However, despite the market's potential, many modest fashion brands in Indonesia continue to compete primarily on price and availability, rather than strategically engaging consumers through emotionally resonant experiences. This utilitarian approach persists even as global retail trends shift toward immersive and memorable brand interactions. Fashion rooted in cultural and religious values offers fertile ground for cultivating customer intimacy through MCEs (Moliner-Tena et al., 2023).

MCEs are defined as positively valenced, enduring experiences that are emotionally engaging and personally meaningful to consumers (Tynan et al., 2010). These experiences are shaped by cognitive, affective, and sensory stimuli encountered throughout the customer journey (Kim et al., 2012). Prior research has shown that memorable experiences significantly influence post-purchase behaviors, including satisfaction, loyalty, and word-of-mouth intention (Hossain et al., 2024). Importantly, MCEs are not merely the outcomes of functional service delivery but are embedded in the emotional and symbolic layers of brand interaction (Walls et al., 2011). Scholars have found that high memorability is typically associated with novelty, unexpectedness, emotional intensity, and personal relevance (Pine & Gilmore, 1998).

Given that MCEs are often rooted in affective responses and multi-dimensional stimuli, sensory marketing has emerged as a foundational strategy to elicit such responses. Sensory marketing refers to the strategic orchestration of visual, auditory, olfactory, tactile, and gustatory stimuli to influence consumer perceptions, emotions, and behaviors (Krishna, 2012). These sensory cues operate synergistically to shape the consumer's holistic experience with a brand or environment (Spence, 2022). Sensory elements such as lighting, music, scent, and touch enhance a retail encounter's vividness, emotional salience, and relevance—key antecedents of memory formation (Spence et al., 2022; Youssef & Spence, 2023). For example, the warmth of ambient lighting, the rhythm of background music, or the softness of fabrics can evoke affective states that anchor the experience in long-term memory. However, despite the alignment between MCE and sensory marketing theory, little research has examined their intersection in culturally expressive markets such as modest fashion (Tekin & Kanat, 2023).

To address this gap, the present study examines the influence of multisensory cues—specifically visual, tactile, olfactory, and auditory stimuli—on the formation of MCEs within the Indonesian modest fashion market. Using a cross-sectional research design, data were collected from 400 respondents in the Facebook group “OOTD Hijabers,” representing active modest fashion consumers. A probability-based simple random sampling technique ensured representativeness. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics and simple linear regression in SPSS 26.0.

As shown later in **Table 1**, the results confirm that all multisensory cues significantly and positively influence MCEs. This suggests that store elements such as color schemes, layout, lighting, product presentation, background music, texture and contour of fabrics, and ambient scents play critical roles in encoding consumer memory during offline shopping experiences.

Theoretically, this study contributes by empirically demonstrating how culturally contextualized sensory cues—visual, tactile, olfactory, and auditory—influence MCEs in modest fashion retail. It extends the Grapex model of experience and sensory marketing theory into non-Western, culturally expressive contexts (Sahhar et al., 2023). Managerially, it encourages modest fashion retailers to adopt multisensory strategies that align with consumers’ cultural values and emotional expectations. Educationally, this research supports SDG 4 (Quality Education) by providing a culturally grounded teaching case for marketing and fashion management curricula. In addition, it contributes to SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) by highlighting the value of culturally sensitive, experience-focused retail strategies over mass-market standardization.

## 2. METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach to examine the impact of multisensory cues on Memorable Customer Experiences (MCEs) among consumers of Indonesian modest fashion brands. A cross-sectional research design was used to collect primary data during a specific time frame, aiming to capture consumer perceptions at a single point in time (Ganesha & Aithal, 2022). Respondents were drawn from members of the Facebook group “OOTD Hijabers,” which was selected due to its relevance in representing active modest fashion consumers in Indonesia.

A total of 400 participants were selected using a probability-based simple random sampling technique, ensuring that each member of the defined population had an equal chance of being included in the sample (Naseri et al., 2024).

The dependent variable was Memorable Customer Experience (MCE), operationalized through three dimensions derived from the Grapex model: valence (Y1), type of experience (Y2), and visceral intensity (Y3) (Sahhar et al., 2023). The independent variables were multisensory cues, measured through four key dimensions—visual (X1), tactile (X2), olfactory (X3), and auditory (X4)—adapted from previous studies in sensory marketing (Krishna, 2012; Tekin & Kanat, 2023).

Visual stimuli included color schemes, lighting, and product presentation, which influence consumer attention and emotional engagement. Tactile cues refer to texture and material comfort, which enhance perceptions of product quality and experiential memory. Olfactory stimuli were associated with ambient scents in the retail environment, linked to emotional responses and memory recall. Auditory cues involved background music and soundscapes that influence mood and spatial perception.

Data were collected through a structured online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms to group members located in Bandung. All items used a five-point Likert scale ranging

from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Before full deployment, the questionnaire underwent validity and reliability testing with 43 respondents. The results confirmed that all measurement items met the reliability criteria, with Cronbach's alpha values exceeding 0.70 and item-total correlations above 0.30.

To ensure data relevance, respondents were screened to confirm that they had purchased modest fashion products offline within the past six months. This criterion was intended to ensure the recency and salience of their sensory retail experiences.

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize respondent demographics and variable distributions. Then, simple linear regression analysis was conducted using SPSS 26.0 to determine the direct influence of multisensory cues on MCE. This statistical approach enabled the assessment of both the strength and direction of the relationship between sensory elements and the memorability of retail experiences within the modest fashion context in Indonesia.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To better understand the characteristics of modest fashion consumers in Bandung, this study gathered demographic and behavioral data from 400 respondents with recent offline shopping experiences. As shown in **Table 1**, the data provide an overview of the respondents' age, education level, spending habits, fashion preferences, shopping channels, and the sensory factors influencing their purchasing experiences. As shown in **Table 1**, the majority of respondents were young adults aged 18–25 years (45%), followed by those aged 26–35 (35%) and 36–45 (20%). This indicates that the modest fashion market is largely youth-driven, reflecting a digitally connected and style-conscious demographic. Regarding educational background, 60% held a bachelor's degree, 30% completed high school, and 10% held postgraduate qualifications, suggesting a relatively well-educated consumer base.

Monthly spending on fashion showed that half the respondents spent between IDR 500,000 and 1 million, while 25% spent below and 25% above that range. This reflects a moderate to high purchasing power. The most common fashion purchases were casual daily wear (40%) and office wear (30%), with lesser interest in formal wear (20%) and sportswear (10%). All respondents had recent offline shopping experiences—this inclusion criterion enabled accurate reflection on sensory stimuli. Respondents reported that visual and olfactory stimuli had a strong influence on their shopping experience, while tactile and auditory stimuli exerted a moderate influence.

**Table 1.** The Respondents' Profile.

No	Category	Percentage / Description
1	Age Group	18–25 years: 45%; 26–35 years: 35%; 36–45 years: 20%
2	Education Level	Bachelor's degree: 60%; High school: 30%; Postgraduate: 10%
3	Monthly Spending on Fashion	< IDR 500k: 25%; IDR 500k–1 million: 50%; > IDR 1 million: 25%
4	Type of Fashion Purchased	Casual daily wear: 40%; Office wear: 30%; Event/formal wear: 20%; Sportswear: 10%
5	Preferred Shopping Channel	Offline store (mall, store, boutique): 100%
6	Sensory Influence on Shopping	Visual: Strong; Olfactory: Strong; Tactile: Moderate; Auditory: Moderate

To test the hypothesis, a simple linear regression analysis was conducted. The aim was to evaluate the extent to which multisensory cues influence MCE. **Table 2** presents the model summary. As shown in **Table 2**, the model exhibits a strong positive correlation ( $R = 0.817$ ) between multisensory cues and MCE. The  $R^2$  value of 0.668 indicates that 66.8% of the variance in MCE can be explained by the multisensory variables. The adjusted  $R^2$  of 0.667 and a low standard error (4.172) confirm the model's strength.

**Table 2.** Model Summary.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.817	0.668	0.667	4.172

To further assess the model's significance, **Table 3** presents the ANOVA results. Table 3 shows a highly significant model ( $p = 0.000$ ). The F-value of 800.526 confirms that multisensory cues significantly predict MCE in modest fashion retail.

**Table 3.** ANOVA.

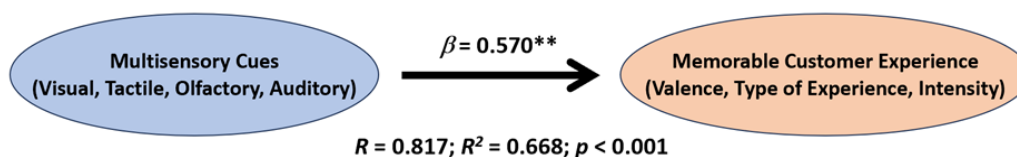
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	13,935.887	1	13,935.887	800.526	.000
Residual	6,928.551	398	17.408		
Total	20,864.438	399			

Next, **Table 4** presents the regression coefficients, illustrating the direction and strength of the relationship between multisensory cues and MCE. The regression coefficient for multisensory cues ( $B = 0.570$ ) indicates a strong positive effect. Each one-unit increase in multisensory stimulation corresponds to a 0.570-unit increase in MCE. The p-value ( $< 0.05$ ) confirms statistical significance, supported by a large t-value ( $28.294 > 1.966$ ).

**Table 4.** Regression Coefficients.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t-value	Sig.
(Constant)	$B = 4.230$ , Std. Error = 1.046	—	4.044	.000
Multisensory Cues	$B = 0.570$ , Std. Error = 0.020	Beta = 0.817	28.294	.000

These results are visually represented in **Figure 1**, which illustrates the model of influence. As illustrated in **Figure 1**, the model confirms a direct and substantial influence of multisensory cues on customer memory in the modest fashion retail setting.



**Figure 1.** The Model of the Influence of Multisensory Cues on Memorable Customer Experience. Note: Blue ellipse = Multisensory Cues; Orange ellipse = MCE; Arrow = Positive Path ( $\beta = 0.570$ )

These findings reinforce earlier research showing that visual, tactile, olfactory, and auditory cues can significantly shape emotional engagement and memory recall (Spence, 2022). However, unlike general apparel contexts where visual and auditory cues dominate (Tekin & Kanat, 2023), this study found that visual and olfactory stimuli had the greatest

impact. This may reflect Islamic traditions emphasizing cleanliness, visual harmony, and emotional modesty.

Moreover, the results align with the Grapex model, which theorizes that valence, experiential type, and visceral intensity are shaped by multisensory input (Sahhar et al., 2023). Studies by Kim et al. (2012) and Walls et al. (2011) also affirm that sensory-rich environments heighten emotional memory and loyalty. While Pine and Gilmore (1998) emphasized novelty and entertainment, this study suggests that cultural alignment, rather than surprise, may drive memorability in modest fashion retail.

From a managerial perspective, the implications are clear: modest fashion retailers must integrate culturally resonant sensory elements to build immersive and emotionally meaningful experiences. Educationally, these insights support curriculum development in marketing, Islamic fashion business, and consumer behavior. They also echo SDG 4 by offering applied case study content for business schools and SDG 12 by promoting sustainable, identity-driven fashion experiences over commodified retail models.

Nonetheless, the study is not without limitations. The cross-sectional design restricts causal inference. Sampling from a single urban online group may limit generalizability, and self-reported measures may introduce recall bias. Future studies should use longitudinal or experimental designs, compare cross-cultural responses, and explore digital and hybrid sensory formats in omnichannel retail.

This study offers empirical insight into how multisensory cues—visual, tactile, olfactory, and auditory—shape Memorable Customer Experiences (MCEs) in Indonesia’s modest fashion retail sector. By integrating sensory marketing theory with the Grapex model of experience, the study affirms that sensory stimuli are not peripheral enhancements but central components of consumer-brand interaction that influence emotional engagement and memory retention (Sahhar et al., 2023).

The results showed that multisensory cues significantly and positively influenced the formation of MCEs. Visual and olfactory elements were especially impactful, reflecting the cultural values of modesty, cleanliness, and harmony that are embedded within Islamic fashion norms. These results are important because they demonstrate that the memorability of retail experiences can be rooted in cultural congruence, not merely novelty or entertainment, as suggested in previous Western-centric literature (Pine & Gilmore, 1998; Tekin & Kanat, 2023).

The findings contribute to experiential marketing theory by extending its application into culturally expressive and religiously defined markets. The implication is that brands in modest fashion—and similar identity-driven sectors—can benefit by designing sensory environments that align with consumer values and aesthetics, rather than relying solely on product features or price competitiveness.

From a managerial perspective, this study recommends that modest fashion retailers invest in designing immersive sensory experiences tailored to cultural expectations. Practical strategies may include using ambient fragrances associated with spirituality, color palettes that evoke calm and modesty, and tactile materials that reinforce brand authenticity and comfort. These enhancements can strengthen brand loyalty, emotional resonance, and long-term differentiation.

From an educational perspective, the research supports SDG 4: Quality Education by offering a culturally contextualized case study suitable for use in marketing, retail, and fashion management courses. It also advances SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production by encouraging brands to move beyond transactional tactics toward value-based, culturally relevant design. This aligns with sustainability principles by promoting meaningful



consumption, emotional attachment to products, and long-term customer-brand relationships.

Looking ahead, this study opens important directions for future research. Longitudinal and experimental studies could explore the durability of sensory-driven experiences over time. Comparative research across cultural and religious contexts may also clarify how values mediate sensory perception and memory. Finally, extending this framework into hybrid or digital retail channels will be essential as consumer experiences increasingly span both physical and virtual environments.

In summary, this research shows that memorable customer experiences in modest fashion retail are deeply sensory, culturally embedded, and emotionally significant. By recognizing and operationalizing these insights, retailers and educators alike can design experiences that not only meet functional needs but also honor consumer identity, foster engagement, and drive sustainable brand value.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This study confirmed that multisensory cues—visual, tactile, olfactory, and auditory—significantly influence Memorable Customer Experiences (MCEs) in Indonesia's modest fashion retail. Visual and olfactory stimuli were found to be the most impactful, likely due to their alignment with cultural and religious values. These findings are important because they show that experiential memorability can stem from cultural resonance rather than novelty alone. The results contribute to experiential marketing theory and offer practical guidance for designing culturally sensitive, immersive retail environments. Additionally, this study supports SDG 4 and SDG 12 by promoting education through culturally relevant case studies and encouraging responsible, value-driven consumption in fashion retail.

#### 5. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We would like to express our sincere appreciation to the UPI Gemilang Program of Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia for its invaluable academic encouragement and institutional support throughout the research process. The program's commitment to fostering scholarly growth and excellence has provided a motivating environment that contributed meaningfully to the successful completion of this study. This support also aligns with the institutional mission of promoting SDG-based education and innovation in culturally relevant sectors, such as modest fashion and experience design.

#### 6. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. Authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

#### 7. REFERENCES

- Ganesha, H. R., and Aithal, P. S. (2022). When to collect data? Choosing an appropriate time frame for data collection during Ph.D. program in India. *International Journal of Applied Engineering and Management Letters (IJAEML)*, 6(2), 271–287.
- Hossain, M. D. S., Hossain, M. D. A., Al Masud, A., Islam, K. M. Z., Mostafa, M. D. G., and Hossain, M. T. (2024). The integrated power of gastronomic experience quality and

- accommodation experience to build tourists' satisfaction, revisit intention, and word-of-mouth intention. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality and Tourism*, 25(6), 1692–1718.
- Kim, J.-H., Ritchie, J. R. B., and McCormick, B. (2012). Development of a scale to measure memorable tourism experiences. *Journal of Travel Research*, 51(1), 12–25.
- Krishna, A. (2012). An integrative review of sensory marketing: Engaging the senses to affect perception, judgment, and behavior. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 22(3), 332–351.
- Moliner-Tena, M. A., Monferrer-Tirado, D., Estrada-Guillen, M., and Vidal-Melia, L. (2023). Memorable customer experiences and autobiographical memories: From service experience to word of mouth. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 72, 103290.
- Naseri, R. N. N., Yahya, W. K., and Abdullah, R. N. R. (2024). Sampling frame development of individual items in the absence of a sampling frame: Quantitative approach. *International Journal of Research Methodology*, 13(2), 33–47.
- Pine, B. J., and Gilmore, J. H. (1998). Welcome to the experience economy. *Harvard Business Review*, 76(4), 97–105.
- Sahhar, Y., Loohuis, R., and Henseler, J. (2023). GraphEx: Visualizing and managing customer experience in its multidimensionality. *Journal of Service Theory and Practice*, 33(7), 94–115.
- Sharma, A. (2024). Aesthetic transcendence: Fashion's evolution, philosophical reflections, and societal impact. *Journal of Current Social and Political Issues*, 2(1), 10–21.
- Spence, C. (2022). Experimental atmospherics: A multisensory perspective. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, 25(5), 662–673.
- Spence, C., Motoki, K., and Petit, O. (2022). Factors influencing the visual deliciousness/eye-appeal of food. *Food Quality and Preference*, 102, 104672.
- Tekin, S., and Kanat, S. (2023). The effects of sensory marketing on clothing-buying behavior. *Autex Research Journal*, 23(3), 315–322.
- Tynan, C., McKechnie, S., and Chhuon, C. (2010). Co-creating value for luxury brands. *Journal of Business Research*, 63(11), 1156–1163.
- Walls, A. R., Okumus, F., Wang, Y. R., and Kwun, D. J.-W. (2011). An epistemological view of consumer experiences. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 30(1), 10–21.
- Youssef, J., and Spence, C. (2023). Gastromotive dining: Using experiential multisensory dining to engage customers. *International Journal of Gastronomy and Food Science*, 31, 100686.