

# The Impact of Background Music on Customer Purchase Intentions: The Case Study of Retail Supermarkets in Harare, Zimbabwe

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## Abstract

Retail supermarkets in Harare have been finding it difficult to differentiate their store environment based on the traditional components of the retail mix. As such, a quantitative research study was conducted to determine the impact of background music on consumer buying behaviour for retail supermarkets in Harare, Zimbabwe. Specifically, the study sought to determine the effect of playing familiar songs on customer purchase intentions and examine the impact of music tempo on customer purchase intentions in retail supermarkets. The study also intended to determine the effect of music volume on customer purchase intentions in retail supermarkets. Key findings indicated that music volume has a negative effect on customers purchase intentions ( $r = -0.199$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). The study also revealed that music tempo had a negative effect on customer purchase intentions with a coefficient  $r = -0.208$  at 5% level of significance. The findings implied that when music tempo increases customer purchase intentions will equally inversely decrease at the sampled retail supermarkets. Furtherance, findings from the study revealed that familiar music was positively and significantly correlated with consumer purchase intentions with a coefficient  $r = 0.650$  at 5% level of significance. Thus, the supermarkets can use background music as differentiation strategy for enhancing the value of products or services offerings through positive experiences. Indeed, creating pleasant experiences to customers while shopping products or services can help these customers to feel emotionally attached and bonded with the retail supermarkets.

**Keywords:** Background Music, Familiar Songs, Music Tempo, Music Volume, Purchase Intentions, Retail Supermarkets

## 1. Introduction

Background music has become a major element of retail atmospherics as it directly impacts on shopping experience by influencing customer purchase needs, affective evaluations, repeat purchase, rate of spends and quantity purchased. Moreover, background music has also been attributed for enhancing brand images, managing time perception, liking or disliking of shops and increasing purchase intentions (Kotler, Armstrong, Agnihotri & Haq, 2013, p.19; North, Sheridan and Areni, 2015; Surabhi & Mishra, 2015, p.11). Indeed, background music is of profound importance in enhancing varied responses, such as attitudes, expectations, quality evaluation and perceptions, which are cognitively processed (North, Sheridan & Areni, 2015, p.16). Consumers usually transfer their positive feelings to store evaluation and to in-store behaviour when exposed to environmental cues such as background music.

Retail supermarkets in many countries have been facing increasingly hyper-competitive market place and, as a consequence, had found it difficult to differentiate their stores just on the basis of the 4ps of marketing alone (product, place, people, price and promotion). Due to ever changing consumer demographics, it is now impossible for retailers to stick to the old ways of marketing. In this highly competitive environment where customer behaviour had been ever changing and customer attrition spiraling, it has become paramount to build and retain customers. More so, the emphasis had been shifting away from the use of in-store product displays to elements such as graphics and background music in order to create personality and have a unique shopping experience for customers or shoppers (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003, p.58; Jiang, Scolaro, Bailey & Chen, 2011, p.38; Vida, Obadia & Kunz, 2007, p.29). Most consumers are no longer buying products or services in the traditional sense but look for enjoying the whole process of buying products or services. At the same time, customers now demand increased experience orientation and focus on the emotional sides of shopping today. In this regard, music has become an emotional stimulant for inducing behavioral responses and the subconscious minds of shoppers.

In Zimbabwe, where music is regarded as the “food of the human soul”, many retail supermarkets had been playing various music genres as part of intangible environment elements that would influence consumer buying behaviour (Gajanayake, Gajanayake and Surangi, 2011, p.49). As a result, most retail supermarkets in Harare had been outclassing and out-competing each other in using music to attract customers of different ages and lifestyles. The music played in these retail supermarkets consists of various genres ranging from rnb, country, classic, hip hop, reggae, zimdancehall and local “musewe” songs. All these music have been meant to lure customers and influence their buying behaviors. Indeed, most of the retail supermarkets had been outcompeting and outclassing each other in playing popular international and local songs. Some retail supermarkets play the various songs at lower volume whilst others play at high volumes. More so, the retail supermarkets have even hired their own “DJs” with sound speakers at the store entrances (Mandila & Gerogiannis, 2012; Kim, Johnson, Kim, Mun & Lee, 2015, p.63). However, some customers have expressed dissatisfaction caused by playing loud music. According to Dube & Morin (2009, p.6), some shoppers would eventually abandon stores that did not play their music or preferred volume level. Against this background, the primary goal of this research was to examine the effect of background music on customer buying behaviour in retail supermarkets. For the purpose of the study the following specific research objectives have been formulated:

- i. Determine the effect of playing familiar songs on customer purchase intentions in retail supermarkets.
- ii. Examine the impact of music tempo on customer purchase intentions in retail supermarkets.
- iii. Determine the effect of music volume on on customer purchase intentions in retail supermarkets.

## 2. Empirical Review

The integration of economies and globalization, customers has provided customers with provided with different options for products. In this regard, understanding customer buying behaviour has become an important aspect for every marketers and organisations for aligning their strategies according to customers taste (Andersson, Kristensson, Wästlund & Gustafsson, 2012, p.28; Kotler, Armstrong, Agnihotri & Haq, 2013, p.66; Salomão, Aguiar & Melo, 2014, p.24). In particular, background music played in retail outlet has an impact on consumers’ conscious and unconscious decisions in their purchase intention. The use of background music in retail stores has become not uncommon because of its facilitative effect on customer brand attitude and buying behaviour. A copious of studies have sought to understand the linkages between store atmospheric and consumer buying behaviour (Chebat, Sirgy & Grzeskowiak, 2010, p.39; Di Muro & Murray, 2012, p.26; Hassan, Muhammad & Bakar, 2010, p.29; Vaccaro, Yucetepe, Ahlawat & Lee, 2011, p.73). As argued by Hassan, Muhammad & Bakar (2010, p.103), atmospheric cues, such as background music, greatly impact on environment-store related consumer behavioural response. More interestingly, background music can be controlled by marketers: ranging from loud to soft music, vocal to instrumental, heavy metal to hit-oriented rock, or classical to contemporary urban. However, there have been academic debates with regard to empirical evidence on the effects of background music variables (such as familiarity, tempo and volume) on customer buying behaviour.

Although background music may not completely convince buyers to abandon their typical preferences, it should be noted that attention to detail when selecting background music could help retail supermarkets make a few more sales. As pointed out by Jain & Bagdare (2011, p.72) on Indian retail stores indicated that 85% of shoppers had been affected by music in their shopping outcomes. Another meta-analysis study by Chebat, Sirgy & Grzeskowiak (2010, p.83) revealed that more than 86% of customers in Vietnam had been influenced by music in their purchase decisions. In this regard, it can be argued that music acts as an invisible language that would stimulate customer internal feelings and emotions. In particular, background music in a retail store has the ability to influence the shopping behaviours of customers. As postulated by Hassan, Muhammad & Bakar (2010, p.98), background music and its various elements are important in arousing and expressing customer feelings such as happiness or sadness. In the same vein, Alpert & Alpert (2005, p.20) opine that background music occupies an important place in the lives of consumers since it can be an influential stimulus for shaping consumer experiences in a retail environment. This is also elucidated by Chebat, Chebat & Vaillant (2007, p.72) who opine that music helps in rejuvenating, pepping up and creating gratification and unforgettable experiences for customers. In the same vein, Martin & Morich (2011, p.132) have also supported the view that background music has the capacity to influence the shopper behavioural response in retail supermarkets environment. However, studies by Stacy & Weirs (2006, p.17) did not find any association between background music and customer behavioural responses in the context of wine purchases in French restaurants.

The speed of music being played, or tempo, can also have a significant effect on customer buying behaviour. Indeed, different speeds of music can influence a variety of emotions that customers can have while shopping. It is argued that the tempo of music can influence customer’s emotional expressions such as anger, fear, pleasantness, happiness and surprise. For instance, Kotler, Armstrong and Agnihotri & Haq (2013, p.105) noted that slow tempos

tend to be associated with low-arousal sad music, whilst fast tempos are associated with high arousal happy music. In a study by Hassan, Muhammad & Bakar (2010, p.30) on Iranian supermarkets, it was concluded that when fast-paced music was played, shoppers would walk more quickly through the shop thereby giving them less time to make impulsive purchases and to absorb the range of items for sale on the shelves. Conversely, the study found that slow-tempo music would slow customers down as they shopped and purchased more during their shop visit. Zatorre & Peretz (2009, p.56) found that slow tempo music was associated with higher levels of intention to buy compared to fast tempo music. As noted by North, Sheridan & Areni (2015, p.39), low tempo music is largely associated with longer stay time in a retail shop. This is corroborated by Surabhi & Mishra (2015, p.50) who elucidate that customers spend less time in retail shops when louder music is played as compared to soft and low music. Survey studies Banat & Wandebori (2012, p.18) have shown that the low volume music was positively associated with many customers prepared to pay more for the same products than when other musical styles or no music are played.

Moreover, Vaccaro, Yucetepe, Ahlawat & Lee (2011, p.62) surveyed shoppers in a mall and found that they were more likely to buy a snack in a store without intending to buy under slow tempo music conditions than under fast tempo music conditions. Furthermore, other studies by Alpert & Alpert (2005, p.28) on supermarket shoppers' behaviours showed that slow tempo music condition had significantly higher sales volume than that of the fast-tempo music treatment, which had lower daily sales figures. Thus, it can be argued that music tempos do have an effect on the amount customers spent and their length of stay in store. This shows that slow tempo music could be used to increase customer throughput without reducing spend. According to Gajanayake, Gajanayake & Surangi (2011, p.109), slow tempoed music slows down the pace at which shoppers move in a shop, resulting in increased purchased items. A similar study by Lai & Chiang (2012, p.13) on Chinese restaurants found that slow music caused customers to spend significantly higher dollar amount on alcohol whilst fast music led to a faster meal and shorter wait times for incoming customers.

Meta-analytic studies by Han, Back & Barrett (2010, p.7) revealed that slow tempo music in the background caused patrons in restaurants to stay longer and consume more alcoholic beverages. This is supported by Tol, Van Den & Edwards (2011, p.30) who suggested that consumers spend more on their main meals in cafeteria when slow music such as country, classical and jazz music are being played. Furthermore, Mandila & Gerogiannis (2012, p.105) noted that patrons would select more expensive wine in wine stores when classical music was played. It has also been noted that mellow and soft background music made wine taste more subtle, zingy and refreshing (Gillani, 2012, p.5; Zeynep & Nilgun, 2011, p.48). Guéguen, Jacob, Lourel & Guellec (2007, p.21) also noted that consumers who visited toys and knick-knack stalls stayed longer slow background music was played and that resulted in better sales.

Furthermore, another study by Oakes & North (2006, p.107) concluded that slow and calming music would make people spend more time in a store and subsequently spend more money. In the same vein, Morrison, Gan, Dubelaar & Oppewal (2011, p.11) surveyed patrons of an Australian restaurants and the results showed that "upscale" music such as jazz, popular and classical were positively associated many patrons willing to spend. In addition, Jacobs, van der Merwe, Lombard & Kruger (2010, p.45) pinpointed the success of the Dutch lingerie chain stores where evidence revealed shoppers' unconscious had been motivated by the playing of classical music. In fact, the study concluded that classical music was more influential on decision making than the product itself since this created a prestigious store atmosphere, leading to a customer perception of higher merchandise and service quality. For Woods (2010, p.3), classical and pop music generate the greatest spending among customers. In the same vein, a study by Guéguen & Jacob (2010, p.8) found that customers who listened to country music were prepared to pay more for utilitarian products than the participants who listened to classical music. This is corroborated by Jacob (2006, p.21) who argue that classical music in a retail store would produce the judgment that the setting is upmarket, and people would be willing buy more expensive items to also be perceived as classy. From the foregoing, it can be argued that it is of profound importance for retail supermarkets to consider the 'soundscape' of the shopping environment.

The loudness or softness, or volume, of music can also affect customers' emotions while shopping. According to Zatorre & Peretz (2009, p.72), soft volume music would usually produce feelings of sadness, sentimentality, and serenity; whilst loud volume causes feelings of excitement and majesty. As noted by Grossbart, Hampton, Rammohan & Lapidus (2012, p.8) lower volume resulted in positive emotions and customers lingering in the store. On the other hand, music with higher volume created negative emotion leading customers to have less pleasant time duration (Lian and Lin, 2008; Walsh, Shiu, Hassan, Michaelidou & Beatty, 2011, p.51). In agreement, Mukherjee & Nath (2007, p.44) elucidate that louder music causes shoppers to shop more quickly, and in-store traffic flow would be significantly slower. If customers consider background music to be too loud they are likely

to spend less time in the store. Another study by Han, Back & Barrett (2010, p.33) found that loud music led to less total time spent shopping when compared to low music. Kim & Kim (2012, p.77) also noted that older customers are more likely to spend more time shopping when music in the background is very low. However, Tol, Van Den & Edwards (2011, p.82) believe that younger shoppers would more likely spend more time shopping when music played in the background is very loud. Thus, it can be categorically argued that using music volume to influence consumer buying behaviour is not a 'one size fits all' tactic.

Studies by Gillani (2012, p.10) noted that customers tended to spend less time when the music was played loud and sales were also affected by the loud music. In the same vein, Srinivasan and Srivastava (2010) believe that high volume of music can make customers feel that they have spent longer time doing their shopping than what actually was. Thus, it can be argued that the longer perception of time makes customers to stay away as it takes too much time to do shopping. Tol, Van Den & Edwards (2011, p.6) argue that too loud music is unfavourable for supermarkets if they wish to attract customers and make them come back again. Moreover, social interaction between customers and the sales staff may be discouraged when music is played at high volume. According to Geetha, Bharadhwaj & Sharma (2013, p.39), when the volume of music is too loud it may be difficult to speak with someone and customers will end up unwilling to approach employees to ask questions about products. This might lead to not buying the product. As postulated by Andersson, Kristensson, Wästlund & Gustafsson (2012, p.18), moderate volume of music is usually optimal for activities that need concentration and attention whilst loud volume of music may impair human need attention. In other words, loud volume of music can be very distracting for customers. In corroboration, North, Sheridan & Areni (2015, p.36) have argued that very loud music can make feel uncomfortable and restless in shopping retail environment. In contrast, low and soft music will make customers to focus on hearing the music. Wyse (2017, p.53) also estimates that length of customer stay in a shop is longer when there is softer music as compared to loud music.

Psychologist and marketing practitioners have also examined the effect of playing popular songs that are familiar with in a shopping environment. Familiar songs usually draw the attention of people as compared to relatively less known songs. According to Zeynep & Nilgun (2011, p.69), when customers hear familiar songs they would estimate the perceived duration of time longer than when they would have heard unfamiliar songs. At the same time, familiar songs tend to be more accessible in customers' memories, which make the perceived time passing by seem longer (Bailey & Areni, 2006, p.40; Mandila & Gerogiannis, 2012, p.19). An exploratory study by Martin & Morich (2011, p.28) revealed that shoppers would spend nearly 8% more time shopping, whilst people who heard unfamiliar music perceived time to pass quicker. This is also expounded by Dube & Morin (2009, p.77) who argue that level of arousal would be high when recognizable music is played in a store and customers would pay more attention to the music. According to Vida, Obadia & Kunz (2007, p.11), familiar music would result in positive moods and this would ultimately result in positive customer evaluations and behaviours. In addition, Grossbart, Hampton, Rammohan & Lapidus (2012, p.31) found in a field study survey that customers were more likely to indicate return shopping intentions under familiar music conditions compared to unfamiliar music conditions.

From the foregoing literature review the study's conceptual framework was built. The conceptual framework consists of total four variables where three are independent such as familiar songs, music tempo and music volume. The variables have influence or effect on the dependent variable organizational performance. The following figure 1 illustrates the relationship between the study's independent and dependent variables.

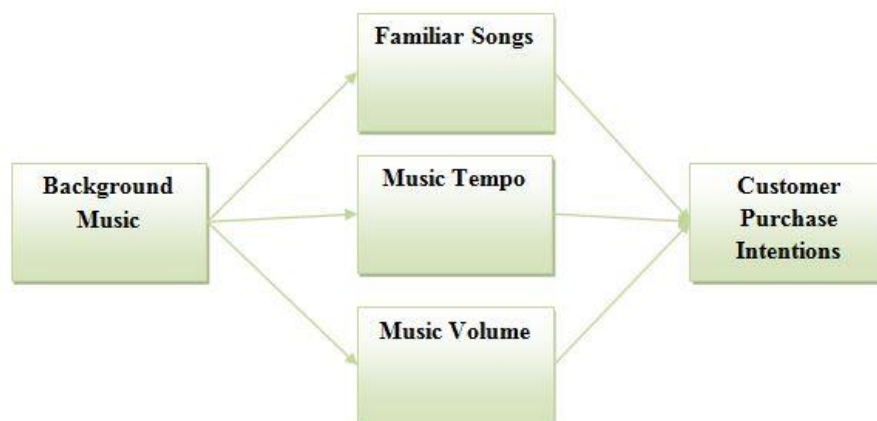


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

### 3. Research Methodology and Instrumentation

The study adopted a positivist philosophical approach for the collection and analysis of primary data. Under positivism, scientific methods are used for the generation process of knowledge with the aim of enhancing precision and understanding the relationship among given research variables (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.12; Yin, 2011, p.24). The study was situated in the positivist philosophical paradigm recognizing the following parameters: research would fit well with a survey approach; study sought objective data and the researcher was independent of the study. Accordingly, a quantitative research design was adopted for the study to describe, to compare and to attribute causality. From the researcher's ontological position of objectivism, a quantitative research design was found appropriate for inquiring into the business problem based on testing theory composed of variables and also analyzing with statistical procedures, in order to determine the impact of total quality management practices on organisational performance (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2012, p.63; Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2010, p.93). Moreover, a quantitative research design was adopted for the study because it is not abstract; it is reliable and uses structured tools to generate numerical data (Hussey & Hussey, 2007, p.40; Shrestha, Burns & Shields, 2013, p.51). Above all, a quantitative research design uses statistical methods to interpret, organize and present the collected data.

The study's target population consisted of customers from the selected 10 retail supermarkets within the circumference of central business district of Harare. These participants had shopped in the selected retail supermarkets between September 2017 and November 2017. There were approximately equal numbers of males and females. The study's sample size was calculated using the following Slovin's formula:

$$n = N / (1 + N(e^2))$$

Where; n = the expected sample size

N = the population

e = ±0.05, is the level of precision

Using the above formula, the sample size at 5% level of significance was  $n = 500 / (1 + 500(0.05)^2) = 217$  respondents. Thus, a total of 217 respondents were selected to participate in the study. In order to avoid type II error, the sample size was increased to 230 respondents. Stratified sampling was used to select respondents from the 10 retail supermarkets for the study. The selected retail supermarkets were found to have clear and consistent business structures that would allow generalization of results without a lot of errors. Within each identified strata (retail supermarkets), simple random sampling technique was then adopted. The advantage of simple random sampling was that it could protect the survey research strategy from selection bias by randomly picking the sample with equal probability to any other possible sample (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2009, p.27).

Structured questionnaires were used as the study's main research instrument since they would help to establish relationship with the respondents during administering while introducing the survey (Creusen, Hultink & Eling, 2012, p.44; Makienko & Bernard, 2012, p.21). Moreover, demographics, background data, behavioural and attitudinal data could be gathered using this method effectively and efficiently. Since the questionnaire was structured, the questions were made using a 5 point Likert scale. Many researchers, including Farnsworth (2010, p.105) and Holloway & Biley (2011, p.123) recommend the use of 5 point Likert-type scale because of their easiness in analyzing data statistically. Accordingly, the lowest rating of 1 would imply strong disagreement by the respondents whilst a high rating of 5 would imply strongest agreement with the statement provided. The questionnaires were administered personally by the researcher to the respondents. A pilot study was done to check if all the questions made sense and the respondents were able to understand them and answer in a meaningful way as it was intended. Thus, the questionnaire was pilot tested on 10 customers for relevance, comprehension and logic. These respondents were drawn from the sample study of 10 retail supermarkets in Harare.

Data analysis of primary data included inspection, cleaning, transforming and modelling so as to come up with information to draw conclusions and make necessary recommendations. The study used Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24 for windows to duly analyze the collect primary data. The software program would create a data sheet that would be used for analysis. Descriptive statistics in the form of frequency and percentages were used to summarize and organize the data while inferential statistics to investigate the influence of total quality management practices on organisational performance. Means and standard deviations were calculated for various dimensions of total quality management practices constructs.

### 4. Findings and Discussion

For the sake of obtaining more accurate results, only fully completed questionnaires were used for the study. From the distributed 230 questionnaires, a total of 203 questionnaires were returned representing a response rate of

88.26%. Overly, the response rate was high enough to make further analysis and statistical inferences with utmost confidence. In terms of the demographic characteristics of the respondents 46% of the respondents were males whilst the remaining 56% were females. Regarding the age of the respondents, 14% were less than 20 years old, 17% were aged between 20 years and 29 years and 33% were aged between 30 years and 39 years. In addition, 26% fell in the 40 years and 49 years age category whilst 10% in the 50 years and above age category. Additionally, the study also sought to ascertain the academic qualifications of the study respondents. According to the findings, 9% had secondary education, 21% had diplomas, 43% had undergraduate degrees and 27% had masters degrees. Basically, the findings do indicate that majority of the respondents (70%) had at least a university degree which is an indication they were quite conversant with the topic under discussion pertaining to the impact of background music on consumer buying behaviour. The monthly incomes of the respondents showed that 26% earned less than \$500, 39% earned between \$500 and \$999 and 25% earned between \$1000 and \$1499. Additionally, the findings revealed that 8% and 2% of the respondents fell within the \$1500 to \$1999 and \$2000 and above income brackets respectively. The findings pertaining to the demographic characteristics of the respondents are tabulated below:

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

<b>Demographic Variable</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Gender of Respondents	Males	46%
	Females	54%
Age of Respondents	Less than 20 years	14%
	20 years to 29 years	17%
	30 years to 39%	33%
	40 years to 49 years	26%
	50 years and above	10%
Level of Education	Secondary education	9%
	Diploma	21%
	Undergraduate degree	43%
	Masters degree	27%
	Doctorate degree	0%
Monthly income	Less than \$500	26%
	\$500 to \$999	39%
	\$1000 to \$1499	25%
	\$1500 to \$1999	8%
	\$2000 and above	2%

The study sought to determine the most preferred level of background music volume in the retail supermarkets. According to the findings, majority of the respondents (53%) preferred low volume whilst 34% and 13% preferred optimal and high volume respectively. These findings are diagrammatically illustrated below.

In order to test reliability of research instruments, the researchers used Cronbach's alpha with value of the coefficients ranging between 0 and 1. According to Scandura and Williams (2013), the closer the Cronbach's alpha value to 1 the higher the internal consistency of the scales. As expounded by Graziano & Raulin (2014, p.31), a coefficient that is higher than 0.7 is regarded as quite satisfactory. However, other researchers such as Fowler (2014, p.24) suggest that 0.8 should be the acceptable level of internal reliability. For the purposes of this study, the researchers accepted scales which had Cronbach's alpha higher than 0.8 as that would imply perfect reliability. The following table below shows the various constructs of the questionnaire.

Table 2. Cronbach Alpha Reliability Test

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Number Of Items</b>	<b>Cronbach Alpha</b>
Music Volume	8	0.818
Familiar Music	7	0.875
Music Tempo	7	0.808
Purchase Intentions	7	0.850

As shown from the table above, it can be seen that the entire Cronbach alpha values for the study variables such as music volume (0.818); familiar music (0.875); music tempo (0.84); emotional engagement (0.808) and purchase intentions (0.850). Basically, the study's items were more than acceptable and recommended Cronbach's alpha values. Thus, the scales in the questionnaires satisfactorily measured the constructs for the study.

Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett test of Sphericity were used to determine whether the study's sample was adequate enough to conduct correlation and regression analysis. According to Scandura and Williams (2013), a KMO value less than 0.5 implies that the items for the study are not suitable for correlation and regression analysis whilst high values indicate that the study items fit well. The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett test of sphericity values for the study are tabulated below:

Table 3. Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy

Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.794
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx.	434.806
	Chi-Square	
	df.	189
	Sig.	.000

The above Bartlett's Test of Sphericity and the KMO results do indicate that the variables for the study were suitable for further correlation and regression analysis. In particular, the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin value of 0.794 was above the minimum threshold of 0.5. The Bartlett's test of Sphericity p value of 0.000 also indicates that it was possible to continue with the factor analysis of background music variables and customer purchase intentions.

Pearson Correlation was used to determine the degree of effect and strength of the linear relationship between background music variables and dependent variable of customer purchase intentions. According to Hina, Zamir & Nudrat (2014, p.58), Pearson Correlation coefficient helps in determining the strength of a linear association between two variables. For this study, the Pearson correlation interpretation was based on following rules introduced by Franzblau (1985) to interpret correlation coefficient amongst different variables:

- (r = 0 to .20) indicates negligible or no correlation
- (r = .20 to .40) indicates positive but low degree of correlation
- (r = .40 to .60) indicates positive moderate degree of correlation
- (r = .60 to .80) indicates positive and marked degree of correlation
- (r = .80 to 1.00) indicates positive and high degree of correlation

For the study, Pearson correlation was used to determine the existence or non-existence of linear correlation between purchase intentions and variables such as music volume, familiar music and music tempo. The findings are presented in the following table:

Table 4. Correlation Analysis

		Music Volume	Familiar Music	Music Tempo	Purchase Intentions
Music Volume	Pearson Correlation	1	.128*	.266**	-.199*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.011	.000	.027
	N	203	203	203	203
Familiar Music	Pearson Correlation	.128*	1	.113**	.650*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.011		.000	.000
	N	203	203	203	203
Music Tempo	Pearson Correlation	.266**	.113**	1	-.208*

	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	203	203	203	203
Purchase Intentions	Pearson Correlation	-.199*	.650*	.208*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.027	.000	.000	
	N	203	203	203	203

\*Correlation is Significant at 0.05 Level

Likewise, the study also revealed that music tempo had a negative effect on customer purchase intentions with a coefficient  $r = -0.208$  at 5% level of significance. These findings imply that when music tempo increases customer purchase intentions will equally inversely decrease at the sampled retail supermarkets. These findings concur with a study by Hassan, Muhammad & Bakar (2010, p.30) on Iranian supermarkets who concluded that when fast-paced music was played, shoppers would walk more quickly through the shop thereby giving them less time to make impulsive purchases and to absorb the range of items for sale on the shelves. Conversely, the study found that slow-tempo music would slow customers down as they shopped and purchased more during their shop visit. Zatorre & Peretz (2009, p.45) also found that slow tempo music was associated with higher levels of intention to buy compared to fast tempo music.

Furthermore, findings from the study revealed that familiar music was positively and significantly correlated with consumer purchase intentions with a coefficient  $r = 0.650$  at 5% level of significance. These findings imply that if familiar music is played in a supermarket purchase intentions for the customers will equally improve. The findings agree with an exploratory study by Dube & Morin (2009, p.57) who noted that level of arousal would be high when recognizable music is played in a store and customers would pay more attention to the music. The study also agrees with Vida, Obadia & Kunz (2007, p.45), familiar music would result in positive moods and this would ultimately result in positive customer evaluations and behaviours. In addition, Grossbart, Hampton, Rammohan & Lapidus (2012, p.81) found in a field study survey that customers were more likely to indicate return shopping intentions under familiar music conditions compared to unfamiliar music conditions.

Furthermore, the multiple regression analysis was used to allow a simultaneous analysis of the effect of more than two ground music variables on purchase intentions. The results from the findings are shown in the following table tabulated below:

Table 5. Multiple Regression

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Coefficients Beta		
1	(Constant)	.549	.428		1.283	.202
	Familiar music.	.658	.067	.659	9.775	.000
	music volume	-.001	.099	-.001	-.012	.990
	Music tempo	-.225	.068	-.218	-3.323	.501

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intentions

The above table shows the effect of each of three independent variables (Familiar music, music volume and Music tempo) on purchase intentions. The leading factor is familiar music which revealed that a unit increase in familiar music in a retail shop would result in customer purchase intentions by a factor of 0.658. However, it was revealed that a unit increase in music volume would lead to a negative decrease in customer buying intentions by factor of -0.001. The study also revealed that a unit increase in music tempo would result in negative customer purchase intentions by a factor of -0.225.

## 5. Conclusions and Recommendations

The major objective of the study was to identify the impact of background music on consumer buying behaviour in the main retail supermarkets of Harare. The results from the study illustrated that background music has a significant impact on consumer buying behaviour in retail supermarkets. The conclusion made in the study was that consumers in the slow-tempo conditions would have more purchase intentions and took a longer time in the retail supermarket than they would do in fast-tempo conditions. The study also concluded that music volume has



a negative impact on customer purchase intentions in supermarkets. This might be because too loud music makes customers feel uncomfortable and this may lead to avoiding the shopping situation. From the findings, retail supermarkets can use music with a slower tempo to encourage customers to stay in the stores longer and consequently spend more. This might be because slower tempo music influences customers to also move slower and slow down their pace. Supermarkets should also strive to play music at low volumes in order to make customers stay longer.

## 6. Further Research

The study was largely confined to retail supermarkets within the perimeter of Harare CBD and was a purely quantitative research approach. Future studies can focus on the whole country or cover significant number of large and small cities to have a broader outlook of consumer behaviour in Zimbabwe. In addition, future studies can collect primary data from respondents using both qualitative and quantitative research designs to know more about the impact of these variables on customer purchase intentions.

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