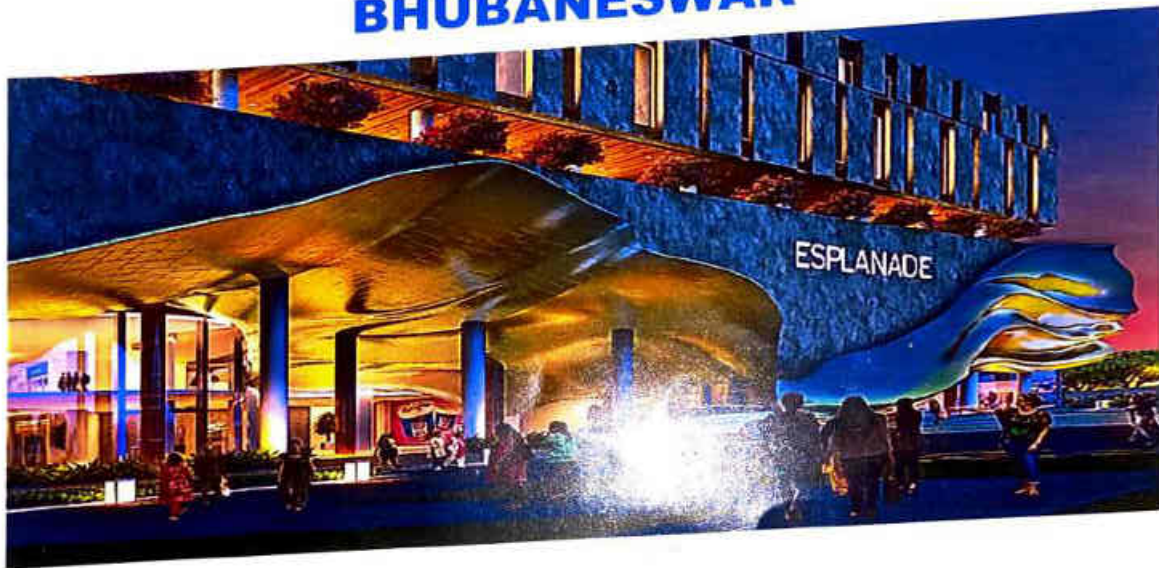


ASTHA SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT, BHUBANESWAR

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION (18MBA106)

SEMIOTICS IN RETAIL SECTOR A FIELD STUDY AT ESPLANADE, BHUBANESWAR



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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the following students have successfully completed the field work at Esplanade, Bhubaneswar as part of their experiential learning-cum- evaluation.

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This topic assigned was Semiotics in retail for the course Business Communication (18MBA106).



Signature

(Prof. Dr. S. Subramanian)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We are really grateful to our BC professor (Prof. Dr. Sharmila Subramanian for advising us to do the field study, and introducing the project to us in a lucid way which has helped us complete the field study (project) easily and effectively on time.

THANK YOU

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Semiotics is the theory and study of signs and symbols, especially as elements of language or other systems of communication. Common examples of semiotics include traffic signs, emojis, and emoticons used in electronic communication, and logos. Especially in retail sectors semiotics plays a vital role for customers. For management students like us study of semiotics (signs and symbols) in retail play a very important role in communicating with the customers and the stakeholders. So, studying semiotics in a retail mall helps a management student to understand how signs and symbols in non verbal communication can be applied to real life situations and in organizational situations. For this purpose, we did a semiotic study in Esplanade, Bhubaneswar in order to analyze how they are using signs and symbols non verbally to attract the customers. We took three different aspects i.e., aesthetic, essentials and made a comparison between the anchor stores.

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INTRODUCTION

- Semiotics (also called semiotic studies) is the study of sign processes (semiosis), which are any activity, conduct, or process that involves signs, where a sign is defined as anything that communicates something, usually called a meaning, to the sign's interpreter. The meaning can be intentional such as a word uttered with a specific meaning, or unintentional, such as a symptom being a sign of a particular medical condition. Signs can also communicate feelings (which are usually not considered meanings) and may communicate internally (through thought itself) or through any of the senses: visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory, or gustatory (taste). Contemporary semiotics is a branch of science that studies meaning-making and various types of knowledge.
- The semiotic tradition explores the study of signs and symbols as a significant part of communications. Unlike linguistics, semiotics also studies non-linguistic sign systems. Semiotics includes the study of signs and sign processes, indication, designation, likeness, analogy, allegory, metonymy, metaphor, symbolism, signification, and communication.
- Semiotics is frequently seen as having important anthropological and sociological dimensions; for example the Italian semiotician and novelist Umberto Eco proposed that every cultural phenomenon may be studied as communication. Some semioticians focus on the logical dimensions of the science, however, They examine areas also belonging to the life sciences—such as how organisms make predictions about, and adapt to, their semiotic niche in the world (semiosis). Fundamental semiotic

theories take *signs* or sign systems as their object of study; applied semiotics analyzes cultures and cultural artifacts according to the ways they construct meaning through their being signs. The communication of information in living organisms is covered.

Signs, signification, and semiotics (semiology)

Signals, signs, and symbols, three related components of communication processes found in all known cultures, have attracted considerable scholarly attention because they do not relate primarily to the usual conception of words or language. Each is apparently an increasingly more complex modification of the former, and each was probably developed in the depths of prehistory before, or at the start of, man's early experiments with vocal language.

Signals

A signal may be considered as an interruption in a field of constant energy transfer. An example is the dots and dashes that open and close the electromagnetic field of a telegraph circuit. Such interruptions do not require the construction of a man-made field; interruptions in nature (e.g., the tapping of a pencil in a silent room, or puffs of smoke rising from a mountain top) may produce the same result. The basic function of such signals is to provide the change of a single environmental factor in order to attract attention and to transfer meaning. A code system that refers interruptions to some form of meaningful language may easily be developed with a crude vocabulary of dots, dashes, or other elemental audio and visual articulations. Taken by themselves, the interruptions have a potential breadth of meaning that seems extremely small; they may indicate the presence of an individual in a room, his impatience, agreement, or disagreement with some aspect of his environment or, in the case of a scream for help, a critical situation demanding attention. Coded to

refer to spoken or written language, their potential to communicate language is extremely great.

Signs

While signs are usually less germane to the development of words than signals, most of them contain greater amounts of meaning of and by themselves. Ashley Montagu, an anthropologist, has defined a sign as a "concrete denoter" possessing an inherent specific meaning, roughly analogous to the sentence "This is it; do something about it!" The most common signs encountered in daily life are pictures or drawings, although a human posture like a clenched fist, an outstretched arm, or a hand posed in a "Stop" gesture may also serve as signs. The main difference between a sign and a signal is that a sign (like a policeman's badge) contains meanings of an intrinsic nature; a signal (like a scream for help) is merely a device by which one is able to formulate extrinsic meanings. Their difference is illustrated by the observation that many types of animals respond to signals, while only a few intelligent and trained animals (usually dogs and apes) are competent to respond even to simple signs. All known cultures utilize signs to convey relatively simple messages swiftly and conveniently. Signs may depend for their meaning upon their form, setting, color, or location. In the United States, traffic signs, uniforms, badges, and barber poles are frequently encountered signs. Taken end masse, any society's lexicon of signs makes up a rich vocabulary of colorful communications.

Symbols

Symbols are more difficult than signs to understand and to define because, unlike signs and signals, they are intricately woven into an individual's ongoing perceptions of the world. They appear to contain a dimly understood capacity that (as one of their functions), in fact, defines the very reality of that world. The symbol has been defined as any device with which an abstraction can be made. Although far from being a precise construction, it leads in a profitable direction. The

abstractions of the values that people imbue in other people and in things they own and use lie at the heart of symbolism. In Whitehead's opinion, symbols are analogues or metaphors (that may include written and spoken language as well as visual objects) standing for some quality of reality that is enhanced in importance or value by the process of symbolization itself. Almost every society has evolved a symbol system whereby, at first glance, strange objects and odd types of behavior appear to the outside observer to have irrational meanings and seem to evoke odd, unwarranted cognitions and emotions. Upon examination each symbol system reflects a specific cultural logic, and every symbol functions to communicate information between members of the culture in much the same way as, but in a more subtle manner than, conventional language. Although a symbol may take the form of as discrete an object as a wedding ring or a totem pole, symbols tend to appear in clusters and depend upon one another for their accretion of meaning and value. They are not a language of and by themselves; rather they are devices by which ideas too difficult, dangerous, or inconvenient to articulate in common language are transmitted between people who have acculturated in common ways. It does not appear possible to compile discrete vocabularies of symbols, because they lack the precision and regularities present in natural language that are necessary for explicit definitions,

Icons

Rich clusters of related and unrelated symbols are usually regarded as icons. They are actually groups of interactive symbols, like the White House in Washington, D.C., a funeral ceremony, or an Impressionist painting. Although in examples such as these, there is a tendency to isolate icons and individual symbols for examination, symbolic communication is so closely allied to all forms of human activity that it is generally and not consciously used and treated by most people as the most important aspect of communication in society. With the recognition that spoken and written words and numbers themselves

constitute symbolic metaphors, their critical roles in the worlds of science, mathematics.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

Semiotics study in Esplanade, Bhubaneswar

FIELD STUDY ANALYSIS

We did a semiotic field study in Esplanade Bhubaneswar on the basis of three different aspects such as

- Aesthetic aspect (which is concerned with beauty of art)
- Essential aspect(Necessity for every retail sector)
- Anchor stores (Usually large and well-known stores such as Max fashion and Reliance retail in Esplanade, Bhubaneswar)

AESTHETIC ASPECT

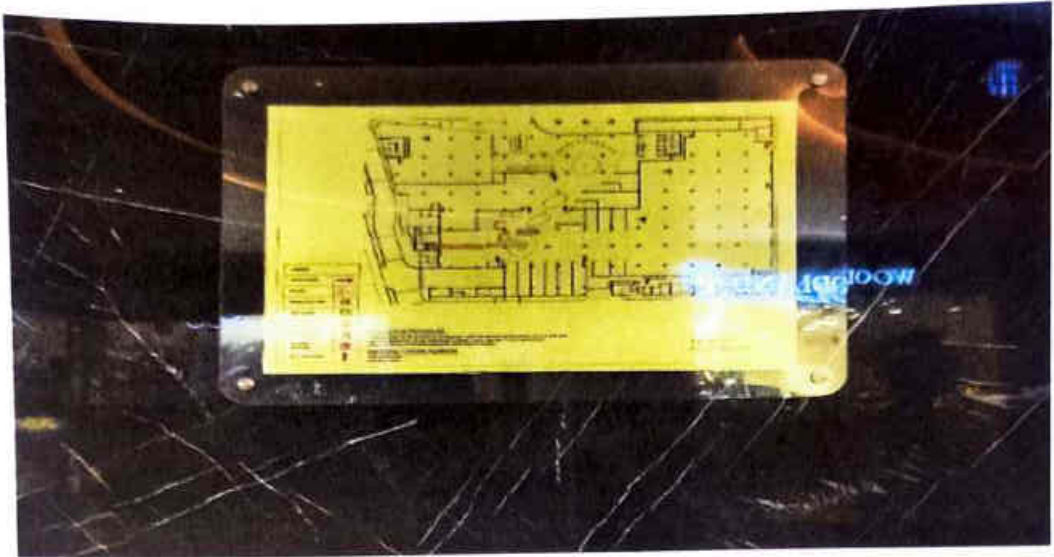
The things which come under aesthetic aspects are

1)The front facade(the entrance gate)





- ❖ In the entrance of the front gate, we have analyzed that there are hoardings of anchor stores which signifies the valuable brands of the whole mall.
- ❖ The gate is made up of glass and the pillars are umbrella like structure which indicates the transparency of the mall and it mainly attracts the customers from the very beginning. At the front of the gate there is a garden with sitting arrangements for all so that they can spend their extra time after or before visit to the mall. Below the anchor store hoardings, the entrance of the mall looks a cave like structure, the cave is basically the underground parking and the wave which is going up gives the front elevation.



- ❖ In the entrance part of the ground floor there is a floor plan which is stuck to the wall that signifies the entire ground floor planning system as well as the placement of stores in the entire floor.

2) Visual merchandising:

- ❖ While merchandising the stores we should influence the purchasing decision by following the C3 rule
C3 Rule - Creative presentation, Clarity and Crafted comfort (Based on interview inputs given by Santosh Ku Barik, Assistant store manager, Reliance retail)



Creative Presentation

- ❑ Create interesting merchandising pods to guide the customer around your store
- ❑ Rotate the product for a fresh look every month



Clarity

- Maintains symmetry, balance and harmony in the wall and fixture setups
- Make it easy to find the product
- Represent clear color stories based on the deliveries and information in the seasonal guides
- Influence decisions by presenting an outfit/wardrobe concept
- Suggest styling tips through ensemble creation



Comfortable shopping experience

- Lay out the store according to occasions and experiences.
- Make the customer feel at home.
- Maintain appropriate store temperature and cleanliness.
- Play brand approved music.
- Provide comfortable environment for customers.

Proper and enough lighting in the selling space as well as in the negative area.



3) COLOUR COMBINATION



- Color story of Yellow & Blue. With this way different color stories can be displayed using the colors placed opposite on the color wheel.
- Wall created continuous using the colors placed next to each other in the color wheel. This is also a transition from the cool to the warm colors.
- Red is the lead color in this wall, yellow and blue function are supporting player. With this way two color story can displayed on big wall.

4) Lighting

Lighting is a strategic element of visual merchandising. Light can be used to put the focus on products that you want to move in terms of sales. It is important to showcase them by shining a light that will enhance your product's colors, shape or size.

Importance of lighting in retail stores

- It attracts and invites customers into the environment.
- It guides the customers through the stores and draws their attention to specific products and allows for a better examination and appearance.
- It creates an atmosphere that helps customers relax, get comfortable or excited and affects moods and behavior and the buying habits.
- People tend to follow bright path: brightness focuses attention and aids orientation.
- It increases the chances of sales and communicates the fact that you have a well-established merchandising strategy and that you want to offer them the best experience.
- It can also communicate the quality of the products, services even the price range of the store.

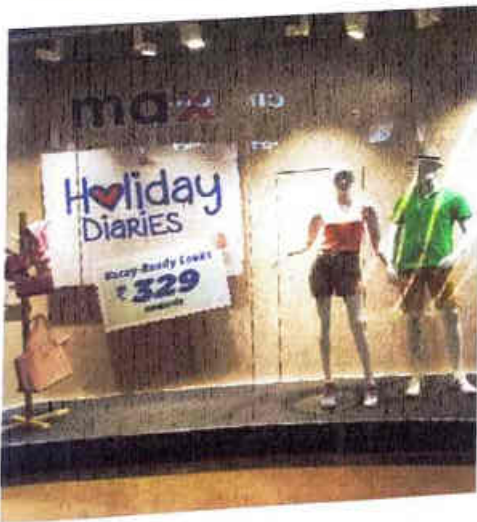


ESSENTIAL ASPECTS

Essential aspects are something that is required for every retail store such as informative signs, directory signs and safety signs.

- An informative sign is a very legibly printed and very noticeable placard that informs people of the purpose of an object, or gives them instruction on the use of something.
- Directory signs enable visitors to find their way throughout the store.
- Safety signs are a type of sign designed to warn of hazards, indicate mandatory actions or required use of Personal protective equipment, prohibit actions or objects, identify the location of firefighting or safety equipment, or marking of exit routes.

INFORMATIVE SIGNS



Picture 1 (Informative)



Picture 2 (Informative)

The first picture indicates the information about the **offer** that Max is giving to their customers, and the second picture indicates about the covid guidelines and the awareness.



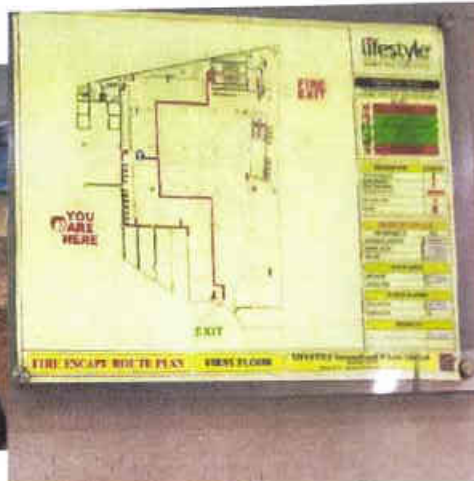
Picture 3 (Informative) Picture 4(Informative)

Picture 3 provide information about price of the product that is 599 and it's the women casual section. Picture 4 provides information (that is the black color board) MENS WEAR.

DIRECTORY SIGNS



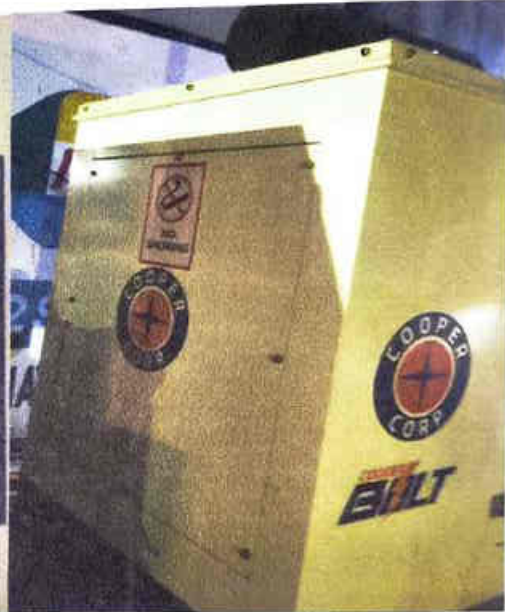
Picture 1 (Directory)



Picture 2 (Directory)

The first picture indicates the direction of the elevator and the second picture indicates the direction guide map of an anchor brand lifestyle.

SAFETY SIGNS



Picture 1 indicates the electrical point which is symbolized as danger. so, no one can go to that particular area.

Picture 2 signifies the fire alarm point, that means if there i.e., any kind of issue regarding fire it may happen through electric or any other substances, the store keeper should be aware of all.

Picture 3 indicates the UV radiation. In many stores there is a UV radiation chamber for refining all the material contaminated with virus. And UV radiation is very dangerous to health if it's not necessary. So, store management keep a safety sign against the UV RADIATION.

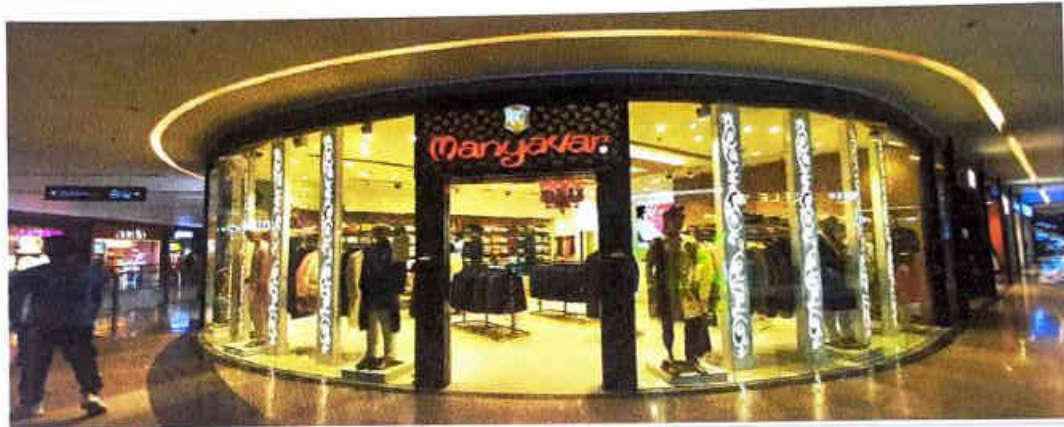
Picture 4 indicates that **NO SMOKING**. Everyone knows that **SMOKING IS DANGEROUS TO HEALTH**. And if someone smokes at that particular fire sensitive area it can catch the fire. Due to smoke the other customer should be affected which indicates the unethical practice. That's why there is a safety sign.

ANCHOR STORES

Here we did comparative analysis between anchor stores of Esplanade, and the anchor stores are

- Lifestyle vs Max fashion
- Van Heusen vs Manyavar

Van Heusen vs Manyavar



VANHEUSEN

1. The logo of the store is black in background and containing blue color LED lights, which indicate the western outfit collections.
2. The brand is basically the undergarments, shoes, sports shoes, casual collections etc.
3. They place their mannequin in casual outfit which indicates about the casual collection. The mannequin don't have head.
4. They arranged their items in very systematic and very clean manner. And also used the combination of blue and white color.
5. we found white, creamy blue and black color all colors are going with sports, casual ware etc.
6. There is no sitting arrangement for customers.
7. The space is so narrow so that the front facade of the store is not clearly visible.
8. At the left of the store the picture is very naked that indicates the modern casual era.

MANYAVAR

1. The logo of the store is crimson red in color and background is Indian architecture wall, which indicates the marriage, grooming collections.
2. The brand is basically ethnic wear and formal, traditional and bridal groom wear.
3. They place their mannequin in bridal outfit which indicates about the traditional collections. The mannequin need head because, it has pagri.
4. They also arranged in systematic but in traditional manner and used the golden color light, which signifies the marriage function ambience.
5. We found red, marron. orange, pink a rainbow-like color which indicates enjoyment, entertainment and felling of festival.
6. There is sitting arrangement for the customers.
7. The space of the store is so wide and big so that a customer can easily move.
8. At the left of the store there is a carving like picture which indicates the traditional era.

SIMILARITY

The similarity between two store is the floor plan which is white in color and polished and oily in structure.

Lifestyle vs Max fashion!



PICTURE-1 (M. FASHION)



PICTURE-2 (M. FASHION)



PICTURE- 3 (M.FASHION)



PICTURE- 4 (M.FASHION)



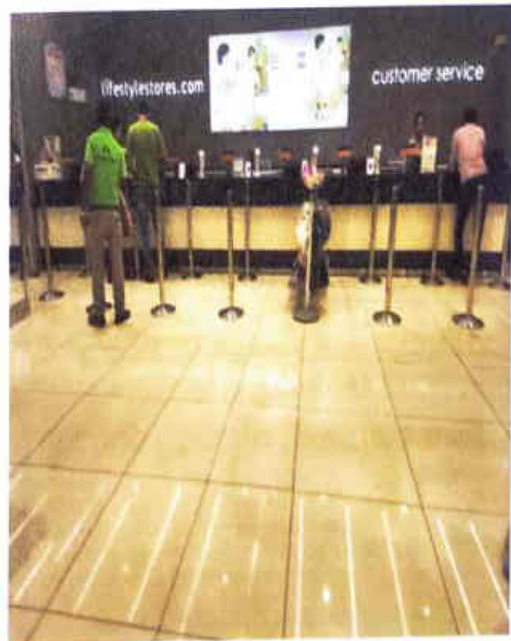
PICTURE- 1 (LIFESTYLE)



PICTURE- 2 (LIFESTYLE)



PICTURE- 3 (LIFESTYLE)



PICTURE- 4 (LIFESTYLE)

MAX FASHION

1. The logo of Max fashion is blue and red in color and have a white light background.
2. The floor tiles are black and white; the footpath tile is black in color.
3. If we consider the board section there is a green color board which represents green marketing that Max Fashion is doing in order to aware their customers.
4. Wall of Max fashion is simple and white. There is a directional board is present. The garments are hanging by the hanger carrying the price tag of 599.
5. The wall is very simple, there is no architect paint, not represent the garment style.
6. There is only 2 cash counters, the place standing for customers is very narrow. The counters are separated by glass wall which indicates that they are strictly following the covid guidelines.
7. Near the cash counter there are so many impulsive items are kept in order to enhance the impulsive purchases.

LIFESTYLE

1. The logo of lifestyle is white in color and have no background, there is only led lighting.
2. The floor tiles are white and there is no difference between footpath and tiles.
3. In Lifestyle, in mannequin sector there are two mannequins are standing wearing casual garments and in background, a denim like structure is present which signifies the modern era.
4. Wall of Lifestyle is brick like structure. Which represents the rough jeans. The garments are keeping in both folded and hanged. No price tag is there.
5. The wall is made up of bricks (unplastered, unfurnished) in structure. It enhances the value of jeans. Rugged jeans. Indicates worm, rough.
6. There is around more than 4 cash counters, the place standing for customer is very wide. The counters are not separated by glass wall.
7. No impulsive items are kept.

CONCLUSION

Although this study can be more elaborated, it can include other aspects also. For example, it can make more comparisons with regards to layout plan of different stores, it can make comparisons of different food counters or food court and included kids care, play zone even Cinepolis which is present there. The parking area can be taken as an area for studying semiotics. Here it is concluded that study of signs and symbols are very essential not just for understanding communication aspect but all the other aspects of management because even the customer interactions, the customer movements, the customer body language communicate so many things which can be a great help to the marketers and to the management.

(Based on inputs given by our respected Principal Prof. Dr. Sharmila Subramanian)

PHOTO GALLERY





REFERENCES

- 1) <http://web.sbu.edu/theology/bychkov/barthes.pdf>
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THANK YOU