Developing a holistic understanding of consumers' experiences

An integrative analysis of objective and subjective elements in physical retail purchases

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Abstract

Purpose – This paper aims to investigate how the physical and sensory environmental triggers interact with subjective consumer evaluations in the production of shopping experiences, an under-investigated theme, despite its relevance.

Design/methodology/approach – An interpretative multi-method approach was used by combining video observation with camera eyeglasses and in-depth interviews with 30 customers of a department store.

Findings – Results offer a holistic framework with four-dimensional axial combination involving physical comfort, psychological comfort, physical product evaluation and sensorial product evaluation. Based on this framework, results highlight the role of comfort and products in producing shopping experience in ordinary store visits.

Research limitations/implications – The findings contribute both to consumer experience studies and to the retail marketing literature in shading a light on experience production in ordinary store visits. Specifically, we detail these visits not as a static response to a given environment stimulus, but as a simultaneous objective and subjective combination able to produce experience.

Practical implications – The results encourage managers to understand the experience production not just as an outcome of managerially influenced elements, like décor or odor. It involves considering subjective elements in the design of consumers' physical and sensorial retail experiences.

Originality/value – Adopting an innovative method of empirical data collection, results generated a framework that integrates the objective shopping environment and subjective consumer responses. This research considers the role of comfort and product features and quality both physically and sensorially to develop experiences in a holistic manner in ordinary shopping visits.

Keywords Environmental triggers, Ordinary store visits, Physical retail, Consumer subjectivities, Consumers' experience

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

Retail marketing literature has highlighted the vital importance of better understanding the store environment to improve retail sales (Dagger and Danaher, 2014). Many studies

recognize the environment as a source of physical and sensorial triggers for consumer experiences by investigating the effects of physical elements including product display (Bellizzi *et al.*, 1983), retail organization (Bitner, 1990), and other sensorial elements like scent (Mattila and Wirtz, 2001) and music (Areni, 2003; Imschloss and Kuehnl, 2017).

However, purchase decisions are not only based on the environment itself but also on the implicit judgments, preferences, beliefs and feelings of the consumer. The coalescing of beliefs and feelings that customers have in response to any direct or indirect contact with the company is the consumers' subjective response (Addis and Holbrook, 2001; Gilboa *et al.*, 2016; Gilboa and Vilnai-Yavetz, 2013). Existing research on subjective consumer evaluations has focused on the impact of the store environment such as the perception of in-store crowding (Machleit *et al.*, 2000) and consumer expectations (Ofir and Simonson, 2007). In this sense, consumer experience involves both physical and sensorial stimulus in producing experience. It is the individual consumer subjective responses to those stimuli.

The present paper investigates the connection between the objective store environment (physical and sensorial) and subjective consumer responses; with the goal to answer the research question: How do the physical and sensory environmental triggers assemble with subjective consumer evaluations in the generation of shopping experiences?

This understanding is important as the consumption experience is created through an interaction that involves relationships between the consumer, the product and the environment (Addis and Holbrook, 2001). Consumers' experiences rely on previous experiential information that elicits spontaneous, unconscious reactions that form the present shopping experience (Schwarz, 2004). Therefore, consumer experiences consists of an internal and subjective process involving (but not limited to) personal judgments, beliefs, feelings and perceptions (Addis and Holbrook, 2001; Gilboa *et al.*, 2016) that should be analyzed in a holistic (Addis and Holbrook, 2001; Verhoef *et al.*, 2009), subjective (Gilboa and Vilnai-Yavetz, 2013) and multidimensional manner (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016).

In spite of the importance of the influence of the physical and sensorial triggers on consumer experiences, researchers have rarely investigated subjective consumer responses to those environmental triggers in ordinary store visits (Addis and Holbrook, 2001; Carù and Cova, 2003; Pecoraro and Uusitalo, 2014; Yakhlef, 2015). The majority of previous studies focus on enjoyable experience during shopping activity to provoke extraordinary moments (Burke, 2002; Michon *et al.*, 2005; Pantano and Naccarato, 2010). Based on a massive dramatization of the retail space – as per example the flagships stores (Kozinets *et al.*, 2002; Peñaloza, 1998) – the environmental triggers are described as a managerial mechanism to turn ordinary products in extraordinary ones (LaSalle and Britton, 2003). It follows a Pine and Gilmore (1999) perspective of experience involving the intention of the company to engage individual customers in a way that creates memorable experiences. While the notion of extraordinary consumer experience is useful to describe the retail marketing tendency in transforming the environment in a fascinating space for entertainment, it is excessively reductive and normative approach (Carù and Cova, 2003). Adopting a typology of consumption experiences which goes beyond experience as extraordinary, we recognize consumer experience as the customer's holistic subjective response to a direct and indirect encounter with the company (Lemke *et al.*, 2011). Therefore, we can also consider the experience in ordinary store visits: in which consumers go shopping for functional reasons and acquire previously planned goods, even though when pleasure can be involved in the searching task.

To address this gap in the existing literature, a multi-method qualitative approach was developed. We analyzed the combination of objective environment and the subjective

response given by consumers. Consumers visited one of two franchises of a home-décor department store located in shopping centers wearing a pair of eyeglasses with a built-in camera that recorded both video and audio, allowing us to collect data about where they were walking, what they were looking at, how they acted and reacted during the shopping experience and how they experienced the store. One week after this purchase experience, participants were individually interviewed with the support of an adaptation of the auto-driving photo-elicitation technique (Heisley and Levy, 1991). Our data collection was integrated and cross-validated by multiple methods, overcoming limitations presented by the unidimensional objectivity of observation and subjective post-fact data collections (Arnould, 1998; Belk, 2013).

The study contributes to consumer experience and retail marketing studies by describing ordinary store visits not as a static response to a given environment, but rather as a simultaneously objective and subjective combination that produces experiences. Results offer a holistic consumer experience framework involving a four-dimensional axial combination between objective physical and sensorial environmental triggers with subjective consumers responses. Consumers' subjectivities involve beliefs and feelings operating on two distinct levels for this study – convenience and product features and quality. In doing that, we complement previous literature on retail environment analysis highlighting the role of comfort and products in consumers experience production. They are not merely in-store environmental triggers, but also emerging experiential dimensions. Our results also offer recommendations to manage consumer experience, especially, in cases where consumers are not looking for extraordinary and memorable experience and discuss its implications exploring the notion of ordinary store visits.

This paper is structured as follows: a theoretical overview of consumer experiences as related to physical and sensorial environmental triggers and subjectivity is given in Sections 2-4; analysis and results and discussion are stated in Sections 5 and 6; and conclusions are stated in Section 7.

2. Physical and sensorial environmental triggers

Store environments include many easily identifiable factors that potentially enrich the shopping process in physical stores (Ruiz *et al.*, 2003) in terms of consumers' responses/ orientations, ambiance, attractiveness and stimulus (Teller and Reutterer, 2008). Previous studies suggest that the physical store environment is relevant or at least influential in directing shopping, a phenomenon which follows distinct perspectives. One of the theoretical perspectives in this field considers the store environment as being directly related to consumers' emotional (pleasure, arousal, and dominance) and behavioral (approach-avoidance) responses (Mehrabian and Russell, 1974). This perspective was introduced into the store environment literature by Donovan and Rossiter (1982) and was later revisited by Donovan *et al.* (1994) and served as a basis for studies that identified specific elements that compose the store environment in the following decades. In the 1980s, Baker (1986) suggested a three-component framework to understand the retail environment. These components were the ambient, social aspects and design elements of the physical space. Later, Bitner (1992) evaluated the impact of three physical surroundings (ambient conditions; spatial layout and functionality, and; signs, symbols and artifacts) on consumers' and employees' behavior. More recently, Hoffman and Turley (2002) offered a more specific version of what composes store environment highlighting both tangible surroundings (the building, carpeting, fixtures, point-of-purchase decorations) and intangible elements (color, music, temperature, scents).

Subsequent to these earlier studies, various others have explored the impact of specific sets of environmental elements on specific consumer behaviors. For example, Rayburn and Voss (2013) demonstrated the association of four perceived environment constructs (organization, style, modernness and atmosphere) on hedonic and utilitarian shopping evaluations. Over the years, variables developed to study the impact of environmental elements on retail experiences have included atmosphere (Ballantine *et al.*, 2015), visual, auditory, tactile, olfactory, and gustatory aspects (Spence *et al.*, 2014) and merchandise assortment and interaction with staff (Terblanche, 2018).

Several elements that form the store environment are invisible (Teller and Reutterer, 2008) and may be imperceptible in individual terms but are perceived by consumers as part of the total environment. For instance, when entering a store, consumers experience various environmental stimuli including visual merchandise or the product itself, and experience sensorial elements such as sound, temperature, light and aroma. In Table I, we summarize distinct physical and sensorial aspects that contribute to an integrative comprehension of in-store environmental elements.

Despite this large pool of factors, the studies referred to in Table I are characterized by a deterministic approach as they exclude factors such as individual characteristics and pre-conceptions of consumers, prior knowledge, previous experience, perceptions and personality traits (Yakhlef, 2015). For instance, Peñaloza (1998) observed the importance of explicit knowledge of space, cultural meanings, and products in producing extraordinary consumption forms in the flagship store Nike Town. Kozinets *et al.* (2002) focused on the ESPN Zone to identify the mythological appeal of places that create mindscape-related feelings such as entertainment, therapy or spiritual growth. It reinforces that notion that a wide variety of setting from the store environment affects the experience creation in retail spaces. This set of elements forming the space and the place are fully negotiated in the

Environmental characteristics	Key elements	Key references
Physical environmental elements	*Store design*: layout, display, equipment, furnishings, comfort;	Bitner (1992); Turley and Milliman (2000); Addis and Holbrook (2001); Bäckström and Johansson (2006; 2017); Seock (2009), Sorensen (2009); Pecoraro and Uusitalo (2014), Ainsworth and Foster (2017)
	Style of décor: in-store signs, symbols, and art/crafts, architecture, space integration	Bellizzi, Crowley and Hasty (1983); Turley and Milliman (2000); Hoffman and Turley (2002); Otterbring *et al.*, (2014); Pecoraro and Uusitalo (2014)
	Product organization: product displays, product access	Bitner (1990); Turley and Milliman (2000); Bäckström and Johansson (2006; 2017)
Sensorial environmental elements	*Personal perception*: visual, auditory, tactile, taste, and olfactory;	Spence *et al.*, (2014); Otterbring *et al.*, (2014); Terblanche (2018)
	Atmospheric conditions: temperature, air quality, noise, music and in-store music, odor, and aroma	Beverland *et al.*, (2006); Andersson *et al.*, (2012); Michon, Chebat and Turley (2005); Teller and Reutterer (2008), Morrison *et al.*, (2011); Ballantine, Parsons, and Comeskey (2015); Imschloss and Kuehnl (2017)
	Architectural sensorial effect: color, lighting	Bellizzi, Crowley and Hasty (1983); Mattila and Wirtz (2001); Bäckström and Johansson (2006)
Source: Elaborated based on literature review		

Table I.
Physical and sensorial in-store environmental elements

production of meanings and interpretation of the environment – sometimes subverting even the retailers' strategy with the environment manipulation (Maclaran and Brown, 2005).

Meanwhile, consumer interpretation of the environmental triggers seems to be relevant in both extraordinary and ordinary retailing environments (Maclaran and Brown, 2005; Verhoef *et al.*, 2009; Otnes *et al.*, 2012). Ordinary store visits are shopping experiences with no singularity but still able to provide a high level of stimulation, satisfaction, pleasure and emotional response (Otnes *et al.*, 2012; Pecoraro and Uusitalo, 2014; Russell and Levy, 2012). It counter-points that the extraordinary store visits occurs where consumers are looking for fun activities, fascinating displays, and promotional events, transforming store visit in a 'shoppertainment' (Pine and Gilmore, 1999), ordinary store visits involve functional reasons to acquire previously planned goods.

It is particularly interesting to understand how physical and sensorial in-store environmental elements work as triggers in consumers experience even in ordinary store visits. While extraordinary experience usually involves a meaning production and interpretation replaying managerial stimulus (Carù and Cova, 2003; LaSalle and Britton, 2003), in ordinary store visits it may require strong consumers subjectivities. In this situation, consumers tend to manifest heterogeneous answers to environmental triggers, evoking personal values and perceptions (Bäckström and Johansson, 2006). It reinforces the importance of considering various store environmental elements – physical and sensorial – interacting with influence consumers' experience and comprehending how these consumers respond to them. We reinforce the theoretical perspective about consumer experience not only as an outcome of the mind (Gallagher, 2005) or an outcome of the managerial manipulation (LaSalle and Britton, 2003), but as a link between environmental stimuli perception and the consumer's subjective response to those stimuli. In the next section, we detail this understanding about the subjective character of environment interpretation.

3. Subjectivity consumer evaluation of the store environment

In physical retail consumers interact with the atmosphere, brand, employees, other consumers, and products (Grewal *et al.*, 2009). Throughout these interactions, consumers engage in conscious and unconscious evaluation processes. These evaluations are rooted in individual characteristics and pre-conceptions, prior knowledge, perceptions and personality traits (Yakhlef, 2015). Information from the environment combined with evaluations based on previous experiences elicits spontaneous, unconscious reactions that join and interact to form the present shopping experience (Schwarz, 2004).

These evaluations and subjective judgments are derived from personal experience, word-of-mouth endorsements/criticisms, and/or companies' marketing efforts (Woodruff *et al.*, 1983). Experience with specific brands produces deep meaning that can be memorable and influence the level of trust that consumers feel (Ha and Perks, 2005). Therefore, consumers' experiences embody subjective processing where perceptions, beliefs, feelings and habits – in addition to rational evaluations – are formed (Addis and Holbrook, 2001; Gilboa *et al.*, 2016).

Experience involves a subjective episode in the construction or transformation of the consumer, with an emphasis on the emotions and sense lived during the immersion of a place or action (Carù and Cova, 2003). Experience, even that externally stimulated, is a result of individual production by who is immersed into the experience. Thus, consumer experiences can be defined as internal and subjective responses that customers have to any direct or indirect contact with a company (Addis and Holbrook, 2001; Meyer and Schwager, 2007; Gilboa *et al.*, 2016). It is a coalescing of symbolic meaning with allied behavior, thoughts and feelings that occur during the service/product consumption (Ha and Perks, 2005). Consumer experiences

are constructed of both controllable and uncontrollable elements from the perspective of the company (Verhoef *et al.*, 2009).

In this sense, we could term an assembling process in consumers' production of the experience, between the environmental triggers and their subjectivities to produce the retail evaluation. This proposition is supported by the classic perspective of Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) who affirmed that each particular environmental elements are dynamically assembled in the subjectivity of the consumer experience. For them, the experiential aspect of consumption is a phenomenon directed toward the pursuit of fantasies, feelings and fun. However, the authors recognize that consumers' inputs are complemented by environmental ones. In this sense, even in consumer subjective experiences, the environment can work as objective triggers (inputs) that stimulate the totality of physical and sensorial elements that are essential to consumers' experiences.

There is a holistic nature to experimental behavior suggesting that experiential components are nonlinear and interdependent on one another (Yoon, 2013). It encompasses behavioral, cognitive and emotional consumers' reactions to store environments (Gilboa and Vilnai-Yavetz, 2013). According to Carú and Cova (2007), an experience involves a combination of a stimulus (product) and stimuli (environment, activities). Therefore, experiences involve more than only one takeaway from the environment (Lemke *et al.*, 2011; Verhoef *et al.*, 2009) provoking an interactional process between consumers and the environment (Addis and Holbrook, 2001). It means that to explain the production of shopping experience involves recognizing an objective environment operating in parallel with a subjective dimension that produces consumers' experiences.

4. Research design

Aiming to explore how the physical and sensory environmental aspects contribute to the creation of a consumer's experience holistic interpretation, we adopted an interpretative approach with a combination of naturalistic videographic observations and interviews with regular customers of a department store focused on home décor. The resulting qualitative data allowed the researchers to understand some intimate aspects of the consumer experience (Denzin and Lincoln, 2006).

The choice to use video as an information source resulted in a more complete and complex comprehension of the experience (Arnould, 1998). The visual form has the potential to assist different types of understanding; in particular, experiential understanding. Visual registers provide the context, facilitate descriptions of how the experience happens, allow observation of an informant's face and physical movements, and make possible insights that the written word cannot offer (Belk, 2013). In particular, this method produces a naturalistic visual recording that allows market researchers to observe, record, and interpret consumers' experiences from the informants' literal and figurative viewpoints (Starr and Fernandez, 2007). This approach allowed for an efficient capture of what people do and their interactions with the store environment, comparing in-store behaviors with rational and declared information provided by the interviewees. Participants were provided with the opportunity to offer a much more comprehensive representation of their experiential interaction with the environment which increased reliability and the synergy of insights (Harper, 2002).

The selection of research participants was based on obtaining permission to access the frequent customer database of a department store focused on home decor with locations in two Brazilian metropolises, São Paulo and Porto Alegre. In accordance with the storés criteria, we consider anyone that shopped in the store at least three times in the past 12 months before the research as a frequent customer. The company provided a list with 200 consumers' name per city, then, a team dedicated to contact customers called them to invite to participate in the

study. We did this procedure until we reached 15 participants per city who accepted to participate. The participants were aware that they would take part in a real consumption experience in-store while wearing a pair of eyeglasses with a camera and would participate in a subsequent interview to be scheduled some days after this in-store experience. In Appendix 1, there are pictures of the consumers wearing the glasses and being interviewed. In total 30 consumers between the ages of 25 and 65 participated in the study. The number of participants was limited by both store capacity for shopping in a non-crowded situation and the availability of equipment (eyeglasses with cameras). Participants received two vouchers worth a total value of R$100 (equivalent to US$30) to spend in the store: one to be used during the purchase experience (first phase of the study) and the second one was given after the participation in the interview. This division into two equal parts served as an incentive to participate in the second phase of the study. Participants' in-store times varied significantly with some informants spending less than 20 min, while others chose to spend almost 60 min. Appendix 2 specifies the participants and the time spent inside the store during the first phase of the study.

The first stage of the research was the video recordings of the shoppers within the naturalistic setting of their purchase experience in a real department store. Before entering the store, participants were made aware that they were participating in a scientific study and not a customer evaluation and that research ethics guidelines would be followed at all times. Each participant signed a consent form and received a pair of camera eyeglasses. Then, they received the instructions on the purchasing process that included a request to keep the glasses on at all times and to make purchases as they normally would. Throughout the experience, only the participants and staff were in the store. Data collection happened 2 h before the store was regularly open to the public. To maintain the environment as normal as possible, the store had their regular employees come in early. In addition to the eyeglasses with cameras, three fixed cameras were positioned to register overview angles, aiming to capture the full consumers' visit inside the store. In Appendix 3, there are photos from the department stores.

The second data collection stage involved post-purchase experience interviews with these same consumers. All participants were invited to an in-depth interview no less than seven and no more than fifteen days after the in-store purchase experience. Each participant's video was used as a stimulus during the interview. Consumers watched their video playing while being interviewed about their consumption habits. Video stimulus included color, motion, and sounds, thus being a more sensitive and discriminating measure of memory than simple recall (Starr and Fernandez, 2007). This technique consists of an adaptation of auto-driving – a photo-elicitation technique (Heisley and Levy, 1991) that uses photographs of the interviewee taken in a research context as a stimulus.

While video and photo-elicitation are usually applied as projective stimulus, we adapted the method to offer a memory-prompt stimulus. A semi-structured questionnaire containing ten questions regarding two central themes was used:

(1) consumption motivations – influence of the environment in choices; visual and sensory stimulus – and

(2) shopping environment preferences – physical and sensory store characteristics and the store environment. Interviews were conducted in participants' houses and had an average duration of 55 min.

4.1 Data analysis
Data analysis followed a three-step process. First, all interviews were transcribed and analyzed, totaling 18 h of filmed interviews generating almost 300 single-spaced pages of text using 12-point Times New Roman Font. Interviews were organized in 30 different files,

one for each respondent. In the second step, a thematic analysis following the process outlined by Lofland and Lofland (1995) was used. This involved a coding process where key emergent codes were identified across the different data sources (videos and interviews) to create congruency. Next, these codes were organized individually to identify axial connections (themes). A peer-coding system in which the different researchers codified and discussed was used to achieve a unified code system which would ensure the trustworthiness and validity of the themes emerging from the data analysis.

As a next procedure, each video was cross-examined by the team of researchers comparing divergent opinions or perspectives about the subjective verbal communications of the informants and their filmed objective behaviors as a consistency check. The combination of videographic observations and the interviews provided a unique consumer experience description, including thoughts, feelings, behaviors, body movements and expressions, which, when combined with video-elicitation, created an integrated yet independent data triangulation. Therefore, the subjective consumer evaluations based on past and present feelings and beliefs that affected consumer responses to the store environment were identified.

Based on existing literature and the data collected, the influence of the two categories from the environment that are premised on the idea that consumers assemble physical and sensorial atmospheric elements into an experience was identified. These broader categories of environmental triggers that had been previously described in the literature – physical environmental and sensorial environmental triggers – were found in the stories told by the participants. It is important to highlight that the stores are in shopping malls so environmental elements of the mall as a whole and not only of the store emerged in data analysis.

Detailed analysis of the data based on the premise that the experience is also formed by subjective evaluations allowed for the emergence of a second order interpretation as presented in the background literature. As a result, the subjective evaluations allowed for an understanding of two understudied themes:

(1) Convenience subjectivities; and

(2) Product features and quality subjectivities.

In this sense, the thematic proposition is a result of the findings. The interaction of these two categories environmental and subjective (a two environmental-level matrix versus two subjective-level) resulted in a four-dimensional framework presented and detailed in the next section.

5. Findings

Our findings lie on two basic theoretical definitions from previous literature: Physical and Sensorial Environmental Triggers. Physical environmental triggers include the atmosphere, brand, employee/s, other consumers, products, etc. (Grewal *et al.*, 2009) that contribute consciously or unconsciously to consumer experiences. Potential elements in this dimension include store design (display, equipment and furnishings); store layout (décor, in-store signs, symbols, window display, attractiveness, skillful product display); and product organization (color and trademark or brand). In addition, sensorial environmental triggers are discussed in the literature as including elements that create comfort, fondness, and well-being. More specifically, this dimension is composed of atmospheric conditions such as temperature, air quality, noise, music (including in-store), odor, and aroma; and architectural sensorial effects such as color and lighting.

Besides the acknowledged composition of environmental triggers, the literature also sets that interaction with any variety of these environmental triggers could provoke subjective consumer responses (Lemke *et al.*, 2011; Meyer and Schwager, 2007) that affect the

consumption experience. Although it is already known that environmental triggers combined with evaluations based on previous experiences elicits spontaneous, unconscious reactions from the consumer forming the present shopping experience (Schwarz, 2004), there is a lot to understand about how this assemblage occurs and which are the main elements that provides an holistic understanding of an ordinary shopping experience.

We first identified two main themes that arose from our data. One theme is related to convenience and another to product features. *Convenience* was perceived to be related to the physical and sensorial environmental triggers and can be understood as the ease of finding products and prices, availability of stock, product display and organization, and ease of payment. The video recordings of the participants made clear that the majority tend to choose products that are more available and accessible. This includes products that are located closer to the cashier, at eye level, or in other exceptionally well-located places. The absence of subjective evaluations (or the presence of negative evaluations) of convenience may cause consumers to refrain from making a purchase, as in the case of products located in areas with less convenient access. Therefore, convenience subjectivities is a dimension that emerged from this study and can be defined as consumers' feelings about ease of access to the shopping environment and the purchase act itself.

Our second theme, *product features*, was either related to the physical and sensorial environmental triggers. Product features include origins, raw materials and quality. When someone purchases a product they experience a mental possession process with the material elements having the capacity to secure the customer's attention (Healy, 2014). Therefore, we define that the products in the environment – more specifically in the store – can enhance atmospheric experiences. The products themselves may be part of the layout, create displays, be perceived as a style of decor, or influence consumer perceptions due to their color or disposition (Turley and Milliman, 2000). The linking of physical or sensorial environmental triggers with subjective consumer evaluations of available products can produce a specific experience. In this sense, Product features and quality subjectivities is a dimension that emerged from our data and can be defined as 'consumers' feelings produced while them interact with the materiality of the shopping environment and products exposed in the store.

Based on the premise that there is a link between in-store environmental triggers and consumer subjectivities, we organized the findings around the framework that describes the purchase process in holistic terms. Note that although our literature review clearly points the importance and existence of physical and environmental triggers, as well as considers the role of subjectivity on consumer experience, the interaction and the sub-groups derived resulted in novel dimensional quadrants, called physical comfort, sensorial comfort, physical product evaluation and sensorial product evaluation. Figure 1 summarizes the quadrants.

To support how we created the quadrants, we highlight some interview transcripts and observations from the camera glasses in the next sub-session; in addition, we relate the quadrants to the ongoing of an ordinary shopping experience at an ordinary store visit.

5.1 Assembling physical environmental triggers and convenience subjectivities
The relationship between convenience subjectivities and the physical environmental triggers was observed in-store elements. For instance, one consumer talked about the availability of sitting in the store:

> It depends if it's comfortable. Some stores have a comfortable chair for you to sit on. Because at my age [. . .] Sometimes I go shopping with my daughters and they are trying something on [. . .] I want to be comfortable while waiting for them, I want to sit. (Maria).
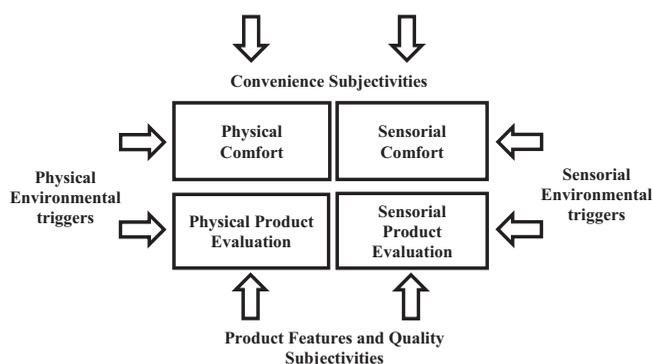
Figure 1.
Holistic purchase
framework

The presence of signs and other physical in-store elements that help with the shopping process such as baskets and carts increase the feeling of convenience. Recorded images showed clients that are holding many products taking their products to the cashier and putting their names on them. Others chose to take a cart to carry bulkier products, thus increasing the possibility of keeping their hands free. For instance, one video showed Debora receiving a basket from a salesperson, and another showed Heloise checking the price of a bowl because her hands were free (Debora, Heloise, Emily, Jessy, and Margot's cameras – observation, 2015). Physical elements that enable shoppers to keep their hands-free increase convenience and shopping comfort during the shopping experience.

Subjective feelings of convenience can go beyond the store's internal environment. The stores included in this study were located in shopping centers so their broader location can be understood to increase feelings of convenience. Store locations were considered to be highly convenient. Informants reported that the fact of the store is located in shopping malls make the purchasing routine easier due to the concentration of stores and service provided by the mall. This produces comfort for consumers by increasing the ease of finding convenient solutions. This was mentioned by many interviewees:

> If I went to buy something in a street store downtown, there would probably be too many people, and the stores are far from each another (Alice); I used to go there (shopping mall where the store is located) for anything at all, ranging from meals, like lunch or dinner, up to services, such as sewing clothes (Heloise).

In this sense, judgments about convenience are an important subjective evaluation because ordinary store visits involve pleasure in a meaningful ritual (Otnes *et al.*, 2012) and increase convenience in the individual's daily life. This convenience is increased because of physical environmental features of the shopping mall and the store. Tereza argued that: "In the shopping mall, I can take care of my whole life. I pay my bills, buy things, have fun, go to the movies". Consumers are not always seeking extraordinary consumption experiences. Rather, most of the time they are expecting more commonplace experiences that are convenient: "I work close to a shopping mall, and I can take care of things in an easier way" (Eline).

The comfort perceived by the consumer is not directly associated with a product itself that could be purchased, but rather to the store as a physical space and its broader environment, which also includes employee attitude. This is clear on Heloise's comment:

In regular stores, small benefits can bring a huge perception of comfort. For instance, if an attendant shows skills of cooking and is able to recommend good kitchen products, that brings credibility.

She complements:

I am not a Master chef, I know there is no master chef in the store, but if someone knows how to use the new products and shows confidence it might be a master chef for me, at least at that moment.

Accordingly, consumers' subjective feelings related to convenience interact with physical environmental triggers to create *physical comfort*. This is the first dimension of the holistic purchase framework and is defined by us as "the physical sensation that a consumption activity is comfortable for the consumer in the sense that it does not require extra physical effort to find or access the store or to find, access or pay for products purchased in the store".

5.2 Assembling physical environmental triggers and product features and quality subjectivities
The physical environmental triggers, when assembled with subjective evaluations of product features and quality subjectivities, produce a consumer experience in product evaluation. Although, subjective evaluations of product quality are not driven exclusively by current shopping/consumption experiences. When asked about specific products encountered during shopping experiences, the most common answers from interviewees were based on previous experiences. Pierre explained that he only buys products he is already accustomed to buying because he knows the quality of the products. He actively avoids trying new options. Jessy gave a similar answer indicating that she enjoys her time in stores that she knows they will have the kind of shoes she is looking to buy. Emily and Debora explained that they avoid stores that have very cheap products, especially those imported from China, because, in their view, the raw materials used in these kinds of products are not of a good quality.

Despite many interviewees' declared preference to purchase products that they are already familiar with, some participants mentioned the enjoyment of seeing new products in the store (e.g. James, Debora). New products might attract consumer attention and change their experience and behavior in the store due to the arousal of curiosity. Two practical examples from the individual cameras indicated this:

(1) While waiting in line to pay, Valquiria found a metal wine bottle stopper. She turned to her husband – who was also participating in the study and said, "I've never seen this in Brazil before, just at a friend's house. How cool that they sell this here now" (Valquiria's camera – observation).

(2) In the wine section, James stopped and observed the products that were at eye level. He then took his hands out of his pockets, removed an electric wine opener from the shelf, looked at it and then returned it (James' camera – observation). In both cases, the products were not purchased, but their novelty and placement created a tangible experience for the consumers which may lead to future purchases.

Similarly, observational cameras showed a client approaching a well-organized perfume display that included sachets. The participant held a sachet of perfume in her hands; next, she picks up a second one, puts it back, picks up a third one and then a fourth. The different formats of the perfume sachets were being experienced. Afterward, the participant returned

all the sachets and picked up a bottle of liquid perfume (Patricia's camera – observation). This connection between product choices and evaluations with store layout and product placement emphasizes the importance of interactions between the environment and consumer subjectivities in building consumer experiences.

Product evaluations that were based on previous knowledge or judgments were also evident in the videos when consumers avoided touching objects such as glasses or tea sets. They were more inclined to touch pans, bed sheets, cutlery, etc. When one of these customers was asked about her decision not to touch products in these areas, she replied:

> I was looking for a crystal glass and I'm very clumsy, so I'm afraid to break them. So, my relationship with crystal involves a safe distance. I look at them, but I don't touch them. (Tatiane)

Previous evaluations of product features and quality can be educational and teach consumers how to behave with certain products. Here, the crystal is perceived as something desirable and that requires a high degree of care.

Existing marketing literature commonly analyzes and explains the role of physical environmental elements like equipment, furnishings and product placement in creating experiences (Bellizzi *et al.*, 1983; Bitner, 1990), but we perceive that the product itself produces experience. The central role of judgments about product format, size, composition, features and quality produces experience. The opportunities to touch, smell, see the product and compare it with their previous judgments produces an evaluation of the product. The environment plays an important role affecting the possibility consumers have to touch or not the product, to compare material, to create an unconscious perception of the product. This is clear on Heloise speech "An organized store, with variety, and a nice arrangement of the dishes encourages us to get inside, to take a look, and see the new and good products." Valerie complement:

> The design of the store is good, organized, clear, it is easy to find what we are looking for there, the good variety gives us the chance to choose not only beautiful products (in her case pans) but durable ones.

Therefore, physical environmental variables have the potential to trigger subjective evaluations of product features and quality. Linking physical environmental triggers with product features and quality subjectivities allows for the establishment of *physical product evaluations* as another dimension of the holistic purchase framework, which is defined by us as "in-store physical product evaluations and choices made possible by the access to products in the environment and the assessment of their associated actual and previous judgments".

5.3 Assembling sensorial environmental triggers and subjective convenience evaluations
Combining the sensorial environmental triggers to subjective assessments of convenience, a list of key elements can be perceived. The store location may provide a feeling of convenience expressed as safety, comfort and well-being, as in this example:

> I'm very concerned with security. I don't go out to shop a lot. I feel better going to a shopping mall, where I can park my car and I have a feeling of security. I feel safer. In a street store, if it's night, I'm very afraid (Edna).

Although Teller and Reutterer (2008) found that consumers did not include parking convenience as an element in their evaluations of the attractiveness of stores, different results were found in Brazil. Characteristics that surround the store, including empty or deserted areas, dark or non-populated neighborhoods may lead to a perception of fear and

consequent feelings of inconvenience for customers. This is particularly the case in places where safety concerns and rates of robbery are very high as is the case in Brazil.

The sensorial environmental triggers such as noise, visual pollution, and temperature are elements that relate directly to the number of people in a store at a given time. These elements can provoke a perception of convenience or inconvenience during a shopping visit. If a store is too crowded, a customer may have the perception that he/she is "losing time," which is inconvenient. The interviewee Maria explains:

> I'll lose time in that store because I won't be able to look at the products as I'd like to and the dressing rooms will be full and I'll have to wait in line to pay.

The perception of an environment in which one does not "lose time" is directly related to convenience. Emily explained that: "We live on a very tight schedule; we want to enter the store, choose the product, purchase and leave. A place that is practical is convenient." Sensorial elements that are unpleasant for the customer can be perceived as intensely inconvenient to the point that they abandon the shopping experience altogether:

> The environment [. . .] the climate. I had an experience in a store we went in which we had to leave because of it. We weren't able to stand it. It was incredibly hot inside the store; the air conditioner was turned off [. . .] Although I had already decided what to buy, I had to decide not to purchase to get out of the store. It was unbearable" (Jessy).

Alternatively, stores with nice colors, comfortable temperatures and pleasant music can be understood to increase feelings of convenience. As Angelika explained, when the music is cool, the consumer even tends to ignore service failure:

> One of these days I was at the supermarket, and a very cool song was playing. My shopping cart had a wheel that wasn't working well, but I didn't care, because I was feeling connected to the music and that didn't bother me.

Emily offered a similar example:

> No matter the kind of music, it might even be a rock'n'roll, that I don't particularly like, I think it does me good. It's life; you are listening to music, you are surrounded by other people, this is good to our soul. To my soul, at least.

Sensorial environmental triggers provoked and influenced subjective assessments of convenience by creating experiences that could be either positive or negative. While the shopping experience literature associates comfort with the layout and physical attributes of the facilities (Ainsworth and Foster, 2017), psychological comfort can explain more complex experiential elements, in particular, consumers' feelings while they are interacting with that physical environment. Therefore, sensorial environmental triggers and subjective assessments of convenience join to establish *sensorial comfort* as a dimension of the holistic purchase framework, which is defined by us "as the psychological sensation that a consumption activity is comfortable for the consumer in the sense that it provides sensorial elements that are well-received by the consumer including feelings of being safe and comfortable within the environment".

5.4 Assembling sensorial environmental triggers and product features and quality subjectivities

Finally, the purposed fourth dimension results from the sensorial environmental triggers with subjective assessments of the features and quality of the products themselves. Many of the consumers that participated in the study also mentioned that they needed to touch products to create a more tangible experience. One interviewee clarified: "I need to see with

my hands" (Soraya). She added that she is capable of evaluating a product only when she takes it in her hands. Eline also talked about the importance of touch in producing experience: "I always need to touch, to feel the texture, the weight. To touch is a basic need when I'm shopping" (Eline). Analysis of the video recordings showed this need for a more tangible experience while interacting with the products in the store. Consumers can find a potential trigger to a sensorial experience in any physical product, complementing the social and physical triggers previously identified in the literature (Arnould and Price, 1993; Yakhlef, 2015).

This relationship is clear on Valquiria's video recording, in which she is perceptibly experiencing a feeling of pleasure when picking up scent diffusers. She holds them up and smells them one by one, and then she finds one that she likes the best. At the cashier, when the clerk enquires if she had found everything she wanted, she replies: "I didn't find the diffuser with the scent you are using in the store. The scent near to the towels is amazing, but I didn't find it to purchase." The clerk requested a salesperson to bring her that specific scent. Valquiria sniffed it and decided to buy the one that was brought to her instead of the one she had previously selected (Valquiria's camera – observation). During her interview, she explained: "That's the scent I want my laundry room to have." It is clear that the sensorial environmental triggers provided by the store clearly interacted with product beliefs that this consumer created during her store visit, enabling an experience to occur.

Another recording shows the link of subjective sensorial evaluations and product features, in that video recording, Debora was talking to a salesperson about a duvet. The salesperson went to the in-store bed display to explain the variety of duvets available. The customer touched the product and mentioned that it was very soft and that the combination presented in the store was beautiful. The salesperson decided to present another duvet that the participant could touch, smell and hold (Debora's camera – observation). This example illustrates the tactile sensorial perception of a product creating a sensation of comfort and well-being and that intervened directly with the choice and evaluation of this product. With no previous judgments on product quality, this participant had an in-store sensorial experience that interacted with her sensorial triggers where product quality judgments were established. Resultantly, this participant mentioned during the post-shopping experience interview that she had evoked in her imagination how nice it would be to have that duvet in her home.

These findings build up from previous sensorial atmosphere studies that included elements such as temperature, noise, music, and odor (Bäckström and Johansson, 2006; Bitner, 1992; Imschloss and Kuehnl, 2017; Yoon, 2013) showing the interaction of previous and actual subjective assessments of product features and quality with sensorial environmental triggers. Thus, the fourth and final dimension of the holistic purchase framework is the *sensorial product evaluation*, which is defined as 'the sensorial information provoked by physical products in a store. When a product is touched or held, it stimulates subjective evaluations of weight, texture, and usability that influence the form by which a consumer interacts with that product'. In the next session we discuss how these dimensions contribute to the literature and how companies can address them.

6. Discussion
In focusing on how consumers' link environmental triggers with their subjective assessments to produce retail consumption experiences in an ordinary store visit, our findings support the construction of a framework involving four axial quadrants able to describe the resulting experiential consumption dimensions. First, our results advance the literature on consumer experiences (Schmitt, 1999; Yoon, 2013; among others) by unmasking

the intersection of physical and sensorial environmental triggers (Mattila and Wirtz, 2001; Michon *et al.*, 2005) and consumers' subjective response (Addis and Holbrook, 2001; Gilboa and Vilnai-Yavetz, 2013). The environment provides objective triggers that involve solid elements like store building and décor artifacts, while consumer subjectivity is a real-time response to interactions with that environmental triggers. In detailing the role of the interactional character of objective and subjective aspects in-store visits, we reinforce the urgency in understanding the consumer experience in a holistic manner.

Second, while previous literature has demonstrated the marketing managers role in producing experience through physical and sensorial triggers (Areni, 2003; Bellizzi *et al.*, 1983; Bitner, 1990; Imschloss and Kuehnl, 2017; Mattila and Enz, 2002), our results emphasize the importance of the subjective aspects in experience production. This indicate that managers have less power in building experience stimulus than previous studies on store environment have predicted.

Hence, consumers' subjective responses to the store environment have only been described in a general sense, without providing practical orientations. For example, Addis and Holbrook (2001) reported that subjective responses involve various facets of consumers psychology including beliefs, feelings, loyalty and habits, but did not provide any details about how these variables operate in empirical terms. Results of the current study highlight that subjective responses do indeed involve beliefs and feelings. Specifically, beliefs and feelings produced experiences as they interacted with environment assessments of convenience and product features and quality.

In this sense, our results demonstrate how experience is an outcome of objective environmental triggers and subjective consumer response. It means to recognize that experience is not a static response to a given environmental stimulus, but rather a simultaneously objective and subjective combination produces distinct dimensions of experiences. In particular, our results allow the identification of four different experiential dimensions emerged in the environmental triggers interaction with subjective consumer evaluation, summarized in Table II.

It is important to note that while the previous literature described the sensorial and physical aspects of the environmental triggers in experience production (Hoffman and Turley, 2002; Rayburn and Voss, 2013), our emerging categories at the subjective level highlight the relevance of *convenience* and *product features and quality* in the subjective response. Pine and Gilmore (1999) emphasized that customer experience is defined as a set of interactions between customers, products and companies or any part of an organization that works as a trigger. We identified that an interactional process involving triggers and subjective response experience involves mainly two elements: comfort and product evaluation. It means that, in our case, the production of shopping experiences is a result of multi-physical and sensorial triggers (Mattila and Enz, 2002; Areni, 2003; Imschloss and Kuehnl, 2017) and subjective responses (Addis and Holbrook, 2001; Gilboa *et al.*, 2016; Gilboa and Vilnai-Yavetz, 2013) generating multiple dimensions of experience manifested mainly through the comfort and product evaluation. We further elaborate on it.

6.1 Comfort: having it physically, feeling it sensorially

Previous studies have particularly pointed consequences of the comfort perception in the consumers' experience. For example, Ballantine *et al.* (2015) identified that comfort affects how long consumers would spend in-store and their browsing behavior. These previous studies recognize comfort as an environmental trigger, highlighting the role of furnishing, layout, lighting, music, temperature among others elements (Ainsworth and Foster, 2017; Pecoraro and Uusitalo, 2014; Sorensen, 2009). However, our results allow identifying that

Objective triggers	Subjective response	Emerging experiential dimension	Illustration
Physical environmental	Convenience subjectivities	Physical comfort	It involves the role of physical elements of the store environment (e.g. chair) with subjective feelings about that convenience (e.g. feeling comfortable when using the chair). The simultaneous interaction of objective and subjective elements generates experience in the subjective perception of the comfort in the object
Sensorial environmental	Convenience subjectivities	Sensorial comfort	It involves the role of sensorial elements of the store environment (e.g. odor) with subjective feeling about that convenience (e.g. feeling well in the store). The experience produced has a higher subjective stimulus, once the trigger is not physical but a sensorial perception
Physical environmental	Product features and quality subjectivities	Physical product evaluation	In-store physical products are strong objective triggers evaluated subjectively by customers in terms of features and quality. Experience is shaped by the simultaneous interaction between the distinct products that consumers deal while shopping and their evaluation
Sensorial environmental	Product features and quality subjectivities	Sensorial product evaluation	The sensorial environment and their evaluation of the product features and quality develops a sensorial product evaluation, which can evoke memories, feelings, and perceptions. For example, when touching a product, consumers generate subjective evaluations of it, affecting accordingly the way s/he interacts with that product

comfort is not an in-store trigger but a key experiential dimension produced by in-store triggers when combined with the consumers' subjectivities. For instance, consumers can feel uncomfortable as a response to some personal previous experience with the store, an event that the physical triggers were not appropriately managed to provide comfort.

Even though creating a comfortable in-store environment is a vital step in terms of providing objective triggers to experience production, it requires a subjective response to be transformed into experience. The subjective response provides a physiological state about what constitutes comfort and lack of comfort (Groenesteijn *et al.*, 2012; De Looze *et al.*, 2003). In this sense, it involves a state of physiological convenience that interacts simultaneously in response to the environment triggers fostering the comfort dimension of the experience.

Hereafter, the examination of consumer comfort is concentrated mainly on physical comfort, ignoring sensorial elements that impact consumers' perception of psychological comfort within the retail space (Ainsworth and Foster, 2017). In unpacking the physical and sensorial comfort dimension, we help in explaining this multi-dimensional character of the comfort. In other words, the comfort experience is developed by sensorial aspects, and not just because the physical features are available.

Our results, in managerial terms, implies in highlighting one of the key elements on shopping literature – both online and offline. While comfort has been promulgated as a reason for doing online shopping, comfort remains a relevant element in offline shopping. In

this sense, this framework helps managers to reposition their store environmental strategies in terms of physical and sensorial comfort. It is essential for retailers to offer store environments that are efficient and functional, especially in ordinary shopping visits, while also taking into consideration that each consumer will have his/her particular subjective response during their store visit. Recognizing the interconnectivity between the environment and subjective consumer responses may lead marketers to find new ways to differentiate the store environment, aiming at providing more enjoying experiences for everyday purchases. Comfort in a shopping experience might not bring a wide-ranging word-of-mouth or exceptional experience; however, it is a great form to produce well-being and repeated shopping. When it comes to regular shopping trips, the ones that are done to bring some enjoyment to daily life, giving comfort to body and senses can make a difference.

6.2 Product feature and quality evaluation: it comes from physical, it comes from sensorial
Most of previous studies identified how the store environment influence the product perception and evaluation (Bitner, 1990; Mattila and Wirtz, 2001; Michon *et al.*, 2005). Our results complement the literature showing that the products have a special role in environment perception and experience construction. Product involvement (e.g. experiencing the product in the store) generates pleasurable or entertaining shopping experience. In other words, although the literature focuses on the store environment (e.g. decoration, light), we show that the exposed products have an important impact on the experience itself.

The type of product offered to consumers, how they are presented, if consumers will be able to touch them or not, the material and colors used on those products, altogether influence consumers evaluation and consequently their shopping experience. Therefore, products may assume a central position in the experience shopping. Not because of the display or layout that they are exposed, but due to the subjective responses developed by their physical features.

Shopping experiences associated with functional components, such as contact with products, creates or evokes sensations, developing a unique experience based on expectations and previous experience. Touching a pan that gets consumer attention in a store might produce a sensation, even unconscious. A consumer may imagine him/herself cooking to his/her family, fantasize about food with a great aroma or even feel the happiness of someone receiving the gift. Products became a protagonist in the store, able to provide experience. These findings contribute to the previous literature on retail marketing in highlighting the importance of products in the experience production during the shopping trip. Doing this, we amend the overestimation of the store environment role in generating experience, appraising the importance of the product. If every point of contact in which a consumer interacts can produce experiences (Grewal *et al.*, 2009; Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982), the contact with the product is one of high importance.

Therefore, our results highlight the importance of products on physical shopping trips in managerial terms. First, comparing with online shopping where the product contact is reduced, managers can explore the product as an experiential source in physical stores. Second, the experience is not only produced during interaction with the staff and related to the store environment in general but is also directly related to the products and the meanings built from them. Having the opportunity to touch products might influence perceptions of the product itself and service a trigger in building experience. Managers should seek to recognize the product interaction when evaluating how they can influence consumers' in-store experience.

6.3 Consumer experience in ordinary store visit

Initial studies on customer experience focused on extraordinary experiences. For example, Arnould and Price (1993) examined customers' perceptions and emotions during the practice of adventure sports, highlighting the importance of the role of the instructor and the other participants. However, customer experience management does not only include businesses whose products are experiential in nature (Pine and Gilmore, 1999), but also ordinary shopping experiences. Similar to the literature on extraordinary shopping experiences (Arnould and Price, 1993; Arnould, 2005; Kozinets *et al.*, 2002; Peñaloza, 1998) ordinary store visits also have a multifaceted character and consequently should be understood considering the multidimensional character of the experience.

We conceptualize ordinary shopping visits as a shopping experience that cannot be considered extraordinary experiences (as presented by Arnould and Price, 1993, or Pine and Gilmore, 1999), but neither are daily shopping done with mainly instrumental purposes, as pharmacy or groceries. Ordinary regular shopping visits, instead, occur once and while, and bring enjoyment to regular daily life. This sort of experiences could provide customers with greater value and companies could retain and gain customers based on it. In this sense, the inclusion of ordinary consumption experiences contributes with the expansion of the consumer experience agenda in detailing experience production neither in extraordinary situations – where the experiential component is present in the established tendency to transform extraordinary store visits into a recreational activity (Bäckström and Johansson, 2006), neither in regular shopping – where the experiential component tends to be substituted by restricted functional reasons.

This sort of visit involves innumerous shopping situations where consumers are involved in functional reasons – with a view to acquiring regularly planned goods like clothes, accessories and, as in this study, nice home apparel – and have a pleasurable experience in searching task. Even though the shopping experience does not offer extraordinary singularities, it provides a high level of stimulations, satisfaction, pleasure and emotional response. In ordinary store visits, as we propose, there is no need to turn ordinary shopping in extraordinary experiences, as proposed by LaSalle and Britton (2003), but one can simply enjoy the opportunities of ordinary shopping experiences. For that, we advocate a change in experiential studies conception involving in three levels.

First of all, companies do not have to provide extraordinary consumption experiences to provide pleasurable experiences, small indulgences came from ordinary shopping experiences and fulfill daily life and daily shopping memories.

The second change is based on management control over the shopping experience. Although management can provide store environmental triggers and decide on product quality and features, as well as store convenience, the real perceptions about products and convenience are based on subjective actual and previous consumer experiences. In this sense, managerial efforts are just one of the pieces in a holistic experiential shopping comprehension. A consumer himself/herself has also a lot to add to building the experiential dimensions. As a result, the consumer experience does not rely solely on the consumer perception, neither is a purely managerial decision. Instead, it is an interplay between them. Based on this, our study contributes to the comprehension and elicitation of ordinary shopping experiences.

Finally, the third contribution refers to memorable experiences, usually related to extraordinary ones. Our study demonstrates that subjectivities can create memories for future shopping, supporting us to conclude that consumers don't need extraordinary experiences to have a memory about them. Consumers rely on subjectivities to build their ongoing shopping interpretation. Sometimes to have a memory from an ordinary

pleasurable shopping experience is the goal, not all shopping trips will be memorable in a broader sense, and not all should be.

Based on such an assumption, our managerial recommendations relate to manage consumer experience in cases where consumers are not looking for extraordinary and memorable experience. This research offers a contribution to retail marketing practices by emphasizing the importance of taking into consideration the insight that experience is produced through the subjectivity of each consumer while they interact with objective environmental triggers. This helps managers to recognize the importance of experience production as the interaction of subjective and objective elements throughout a store visit.

7. Final considerations
The holistic interpretation developed in this paper goes beyond the more common single source analysis. An interpretative approach to data collection was implemented through the use of a combination of naturalistic in-store video observations and post-shopping interviews. The subsequent use of each participant's video as a stimulus during the interviews allowed for a deeper understanding of consumers' subjective responses to objective environmental triggers observed in the video, opening avenues for future studies.

First, subjectivities can be better understood in the cultural contexts in which they occur. For example, convenience is strongly linked to security, which provides physical and psychological comfort in Brazil. Therefore, availability of parking and the location of the stores on shopping malls take on a different role as places for convenient shopping in different contexts and thus encourage future studies in different cultures and countries. Hence, subjective assessments of product features and quality can vary depending on culture. For instance, in Brazil, supplies and products with the *Made in China* label are usually associated with cheap copies of branded products. Despite substantive changes in the quality of materials and products made in China, subjective evaluations based on previous information persist. Future studies could be developed to understand changes to or indeed, the persistence of subjective judgments.

Second, the study focused on an ordinary shopping experience for home decor. While not extraordinary, this kind of shopping does occur less frequently than grocery shopping or shopping for other daily necessities. Future research could use a holistic framework to analyze even more commonplace kinds of shopping.

Third, our aim was not to explore social interactions between consumers and employees as a source of subjective response. Therefore, further studies can explore the subjective response in social interactions, such as interaction with employee-approaching-consumer; consumer-approaching-employees or consumers-approaching-consumers. According to Tombs and McColl-Kennedy (2003), social environment influences customers' affective and cognitive responses and could influence the way as consumers produce experience.

Fourth, as previous studies highlight (Machleit *et al.*, 2000), social perceptions like crowd feeling impacts in environment perceptions and it certainly influences consumers' subjective responses. In this study, as the store was opened only to research participants, crowding could not be observed.

To conclude, the present study encourages further studies to consider a variety of types of stores including at the street level, thus allowing for a nuanced analysis of how assessments of convenience are experienced by consumers. The cognitive and emotional process experienced during the shopping experience could be investigated on external observation and on the basis of post-experience interviews, complementing the results found in this study. In accordance to this idea, cognitive and emotional could be improved with the integration of pre-shopping interviews or goal-tasking understanding. Finally, while this

research was designed to holistically investigate the interaction of environmental and subjective experiences, metaphysical elements and symbols in the environment that can affect shopping experiences were not analyzed.

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Appendix 2

N.	Codename	Gender	City	Time in the store
1	Alice	Female	Porto Alegre	0h 27'15"
2	Angelika	Female	Porto Alegre	0h 29'52"
3	Anne	Female	Porto Alegre	1h 08'32"
4	Christine	Female	Porto Alegre	0h 34'07"
5	Cintia	Female	Porto Alegre	0h 52'43"
6	Daniel	Male	Porto Alegre	0h 44'05"
7	Eline	Female	Porto Alegre	0h 30'22"
8	Jessy	Female	Porto Alegre	0h 36'17"
9	Leandro	Male	Porto Alegre	0h 34'24"
10	Lisa	Female	Porto Alegre	0h 39'11"
11	Louise	Female	Porto Alegre	0h 46'18"
12	Maria	Female	Porto Alegre	0h 35'47"
13	Tereza	Female	Porto Alegre	0h 32'13"
14	Audrey	Female	São Paulo	0h 36'56"
15	Camila	Female	São Paulo	0h 53'00"
16	Debora	Female	São Paulo	0h 21'15"
17	Emily	Female	São Paulo	0h 33'03"
18	Emma	Female	São Paulo	0h 21'25"
19	Heloise	Female	São Paulo	0h 42'11"
20	Isabella	Female	São Paulo	0h 38'38"
21	James	Male	São Paulo	0h 40'32"
22	Joly	Female	São Paulo	0h 19'39"
23	Lauren	Female	Sao Paulo	0h 41'49"
24	Layla	Female	São Paulo	0h 29'00"
25	Margot	Female	São Paulo	0h 46'27"
26	Natalie	Female	São Paulo	0h 32'38"
27	Patricia	Female	São Paulo	0h 47'44"
28	Pierre	Male	São Paulo	0h 24'53"
29	Sophia	Female	São Paulo	0h 34'41"
30	Valquiria	Female	São Paulo	0h 27'20"

Table AI.
Participants'
codename, gender,
city and in-store time

Source: Data collection

Appendix 3

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