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# Public Awareness and Perception of Guerrilla Marketing: Implications for Small Businesses in Chennai

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**Abstract:**

Guerrilla marketing has attracted growing interest from academics and practitioners as a cost-effective alternative to traditional advertising, especially among SMEs operating in resource-constrained environments. This study examines public awareness and consumer perception of guerrilla marketing strategies and investigates their impact on purchase behaviour among 110 consumers in Chennai. A quantitative descriptive design was used, with primary data collected via a structured Likert-scale questionnaire. Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation analysis, one-way ANOVA with Tukey HSD post-hoc comparisons, and multiple regression analysis were employed. Results indicate that both awareness and perception are positively and significantly correlated with purchase intention ($r = .558$ and $r = .466$, respectively; $p < .001$), while the intercorrelation between awareness and perception was negligible and non-significant ($r = .050$, $p = .606$). Multiple regression identified both predictors as independently significant: awareness ($\beta = .536$, $p < .001$) was the stronger predictor and perception ($\beta = .439$, $p < .001$) was the secondary predictor. The final two-predictor model accounted for 50.3% of variance in purchase intention ($R^2 = .503$, $F[2, 107] = 54.218$, $p < .001$). ANOVA tests revealed no significant group differences across age, educational qualification, internet usage, or residential area. Gender produced a significant difference in perception only ($F[1, 108] = 4.407$, $p = .038$). Findings indicate that both campaign recognition and perceptual evaluation independently drive purchase intention, with practical implications for guerrilla marketing strategy design.

**Keywords:** guerrilla marketing, consumer awareness, consumer perception, purchase intention, small businesses, Chennai

## 1. Introduction

In a fast-changing marketing landscape, businesses are under increasing pressure to increase visibility and consumer engagement while managing ever-smaller advertising budgets. Traditional advertising - which relies on mass media and sustained financial investment - poses particular problems for SMEs, which cannot sustain the costs necessary to compete through traditional channels. In response, guerrilla marketing, which uses creativity, surprise and audience participation rather than financial intensity to create memorable brand encounters, has emerged as a strategically viable alternative. Guerrilla marketing includes a wide range of unconventional promotion tactics, including informal media, street-based activations, experiential events and content for viral social networking dissemination. The spread of digital and social media platforms has greatly increased the reach of these campaigns, allowing for a much wider audience reach than their physical footprint would otherwise allow. Consequently, the effectiveness of guerrilla marketing depends not solely on the scale of campaign deployment but critically on how consumers recognise, interpret, and evaluate the promotional encounter. The idea is to identify the level of awareness among the Gen Z about the guerrilla Marketing

Chennai, as one of India's major metro centre, host highly concentrated SMEs across retail, hospitality, education and service sectors, with fragment markets. Despite practical relevance of guerrilla marketing tactics to this urban environment, how Chennai consumers perceive and respond to such campaigns remain limited.

In order to close this gap, the current study looks at how much consumer awareness and perception of guerrilla marketing affects purchase intention in the Chennai setting. The study aims to determine whether psychological reactions to guerrilla marketing are more predictive of behavioural intent than demographic traits by using a structured quantitative design with descriptive, correlational, and multivariate analytical techniques. The current study try to fill the practical implications for small businesses looking for economical promotional strategies.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Conceptualising Guerrilla Marketing

Guerrilla marketing was first formally conceived by Levinson (1989) as a low-cost, high-impact advertising approach based on creative execution and intentional disruption of consumer expectations. Unlike traditional advertising, which seeks predictable reach through established media, guerrilla marketing places originality, timing, and audience engagement as the primary brand communication mechanisms. Hutter and Hoffmann (2011) have since systematized this concept, distinguishing guerrilla marketing from a guerrilla marketing aimed at a disproportionate consumer attention relative to the cost of the product, and identifying surprise, diffusion and low cost as defining structural features.

Recent studies have expanded this basic framework to include the integration of guerrilla tactics into digital communications ecosystems. Gündüzeli (2025) shows how guerrilla marketing along with social media platforms increases consumer engagement with brand awareness. Faridniya et al. (2024) shows that the new generations are being more open to experiential and participatory campaigns than the older generation consumers. Collectively, this literature frames guerrilla marketing as an inherently audience-oriented practice, the effectiveness of which is mediated by psychological processes at the individual level.

### 2.2 Consumer Awareness and Perception

Consumer awareness is generally defined in the literature on guerrilla marketing as the degree to which individuals recognize and attribute a non-traditional promotional incentive to their sponsoring brand or organisation. Khalid (2024) shows that awareness of guerrilla campaigns is positively correlated with brand recall and purchase behaviour among younger segments of consumers, although this relationship is moderated by the perceived relevance and originality of the content of the campaigns.

Perception is a multifaceted, intricate concept. Consumer evaluations of guerilla marketing encounters are primarily based on creativity, entertainment value, credibility, and intrusiveness, according to the empirical literature (Hutter and Hoffmann, 2011; Al-Kanaani et al. 2025). While authenticity refers to the campaign message's perceived credibility and authenticity, creativity and entertainment reflect the assessment's emotional and aesthetic aspects. The degree to which a campaign is viewed as an unwanted disruption of everyday life, however, is known as intransigence. According to Akbiyik (2025), brand trust is positively correlated with creativity and perceived innovation, but the beneficial effects of advertising on consumer attitudes are diminished by high intrusiveness.

### 2.3 Guerrilla Marketing and Purchase Intention

The relationship between guerrilla marketing and purchasing intent has attracted increasing empirical attention. Sharma and Kumar (2025) report that urban Indian consumers who are more aware of guerrilla campaigns have more purchasing intent, especially if the campaigns are perceived as creative and relevant in their context. Baltes and Leibing (2008) earlier identified a comparable pattern in service sector contexts, suggesting that the mechanism linking guerrilla marketing to behavioural intent operates through affective engagement and credibility rather than cognitive processing alone.

Despite these contributions, the extant literature presents two important gaps relevant to the present study. First, the relative explanatory weight of awareness versus perception in predicting purchase intention has rarely been examined within a single integrated model. Second, the role of demographic moderators — including age, gender, education, and geographic location — in shaping guerrilla marketing effectiveness has received inconsistent

treatment in the literature, with some studies reporting significant demographic differences and others finding none. The present study is designed to address both gaps in the specific context of Chennai's small business sector.

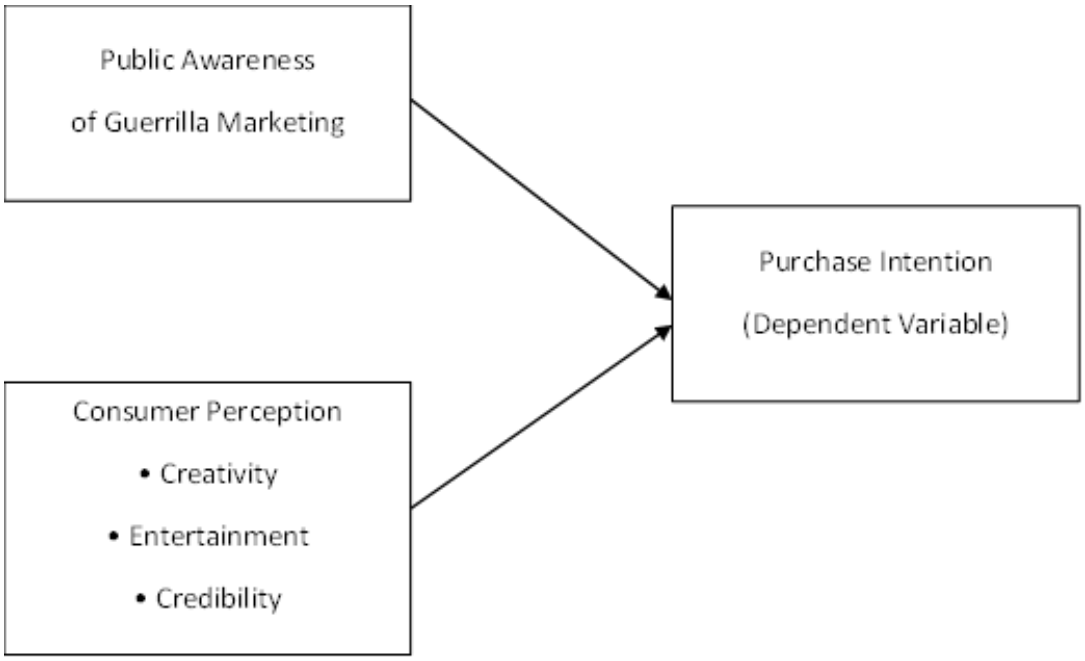
### 3. Conceptual Framework And Research Objectives

The conceptual framework adopted in this study places awareness and perception as an independent variable and purchase intent as a outcome. Awareness is the extent to which consumers recognise and understand unconventional marketing techniques; perception is the evaluation of their response across the dimensions of creativity, fun, credibility and intrusiveness; and purchasing intent is the self-reported likelihood of buying from small businesses using guerrilla marketing.

The model assumes that increased awareness improves consumer perception by providing a cognitive basis for interpreting campaign messages, and that positive perceptions subsequently reinforce purchase intent. Conversely, negative assessments - especially those associated with high intrusiveness or low plausibility - are expected to reduce the intentionality of the behaviour.

The framework proposes that increased awareness provides consumers with a cognitive basis for interpreting guerrilla campaign messages, thereby shaping perception. Positive perceptions — particularly evaluations of high creativity, entertainment value, and credibility — are expected to enhance purchase intention, while negative assessments, especially those associated with high intrusiveness, may attenuate this effect. The framework also recognises that awareness may exert a direct effect on purchase intention independent of its influence through perception.

**Figure 1. Conceptual Framework Illustrating the Relationships Among Public Awareness, Consumer Perception, and Purchase Intention in Guerrilla Marketing**




This framework provides the theoretical basis for the three research objectives guiding the study:

(1) To assess the level of public awareness of guerrilla marketing strategies among consumers in Chennai.

(2) To analyse consumer perception toward guerrilla marketing across the dimensions of creativity, entertainment, credibility, and intrusiveness.

(3) To evaluate the independent and joint impact of awareness and perception on purchase intention toward small business products and services promoted through guerrilla marketing.

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## 4. Research Methodology

### 4.1 Research Design

A quantitative descriptive research design was adopted to examine the study variables across a representative urban sample. This design was selected because it permits the systematic measurement of constructs and the statistical examination of relationships and group differences without requiring experimental manipulation — an appropriate approach given that guerrilla marketing occurs naturalistically in consumers' everyday environments.

### 4.2 Sample and Data Collection

Primary data were collected from 110 consumers in Chennai through a structured, self-administered questionnaire. Respondents were selected using convenience sampling across multiple locations within the city, including commercial districts, educational institutions, and residential areas. The sample encompassed diverse demographic profiles across age, gender, educational attainment, daily internet usage, and residential location. All items were rated on a five-point Likert scale anchored at 1 (Strongly Disagree) and 5 (Strongly Agree).

### 4.3 Measures

Three primary constructs were operationalised for this study. Awareness was measured through three items assessing respondents' recognition and understanding of unconventional promotional tactics (e.g., awareness of guerrilla techniques, exposure to unconventional campaigns, ability to identify guerrilla strategies). Perception was assessed across four sub-dimensions — creativity, entertainment, credibility, and intrusiveness — each represented by a corresponding item. Purchase intention was measured through five items reflecting the respondents' self-reported likelihood of purchasing from small businesses that use guerrilla marketing. All constructs were assessed on a five-point Likert scale.

#### 4.3.1 Reliability and Validity Assessment

The internal consistency and construct validity of the measurement scales were evaluated prior to hypothesis testing. Internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, with values above 0.70 considered acceptable (Nunnally, 1978). Composite reliability (CR) was computed from the factor loadings and measurement error terms derived from exploratory factor analysis, with a threshold of 0.70 adopted. Convergent validity was assessed using average variance extracted (AVE), where values above 0.50 indicate that the construct explains more than half of the variance in its indicators. Standardised factor loadings above 0.60 were used as the criterion for adequate indicator reliability.

Table 9 presents the reliability and validity statistics for all three constructs. All Cronbach's alpha values exceeded 0.85, and CR values were in the range of 0.82–0.84, confirming acceptable to good composite reliability. AVE values ranged from 0.48 to 0.60; the Purchase Intention construct returned an AVE of 0.48, marginally below the 0.50 threshold, though its CR of 0.82 and alpha of 0.89 indicate adequate internal consistency. Factor loadings across all items ranged from 0.63 to 0.82, with all items meeting or approaching the 0.60 criterion. Collectively, these results indicate that the measurement model provides a sufficiently reliable and valid basis for the subsequent regression and ANOVA analyses.

### 4.4 Analytical Approach

Data were analysed using SPSS Version 26. The analytical procedure comprised two stages. Stage 1 employed descriptive statistics and Pearson product-moment correlations to characterise the sample and examine bivariate relationships among the three main constructs. Five one-way between-subjects ANOVAs were then conducted — one per demographic variable — with Tukey HSD post-hoc tests applied where omnibus tests reached significance ($\alpha = .05$) and group sizes were sufficient. Stage 2 employed backward elimination multiple regression, entering awareness, perception, and all five demographic variables simultaneously as predictors of purchase intention and progressively removing variables whose partial contribution did not meet the retention criterion ($p < .10$).

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## 5. Results

### 5.1 Sample Characteristics

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the 110 respondents. The sample was moderately male-dominant, with male respondents accounting for 56.4% of the total. The below-25 age cohort constituted the largest single group (32.5%), followed by those aged 25–35 (31.8%). Undergraduate and postgraduate degree-holders together represented 81.8% of the sample, reflecting a relatively educated respondent base characteristic of Chennai's urban consumer population.

**Table 1** Demographic Profile of Respondents

| Variable | Category | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Gender** | Male | 62 | 56.4 |
| | Female | 48 | 43.6 |
| **Age** | Below 25 | 36 | 32.5 |
| | 25–35 | 35 | 31.8 |
| | 36–45 | 29 | 26.4 |
| | Above 45 | 10 | 9.1 |
| **Education** | Undergraduate | 46 | 41.8 |
| | Postgraduate | 44 | 40.0 |
| | Other | 20 | 18.2 |

### 5.2 Descriptive Statistics

#### 5.2.1 Awareness of Guerrilla Marketing

Table 2 presents item-level means and standard deviations for the awareness construct. Respondents reported moderate awareness overall: recognition of guerrilla marketing techniques (M = 3.17, SD = 1.14) and the ability to identify such strategies (M = 3.14, SD = 1.24) were rated above the scale midpoint, while reported personal exposure to unconventional campaigns was comparatively lower (M = 3.18, SD = 1.25). This pattern suggests that cognitive familiarity with guerrilla marketing as a concept is reasonably established among the sample, whereas first-hand experiential exposure remains less universal.

**Table 2** Item-Level Descriptive Statistics for Awareness of Guerrilla Marketing

| Statement | M | SD |
|---|---|---|
| I am aware of guerrilla marketing techniques | 3.17 | 1.14 |
| I have seen unconventional marketing campaigns | 3.18 | 1.25 |

| Statement | M | SD |
|---|---|---|
| I can identify guerrilla marketing strategies | 3.14 | 1.24 |

Note. Scale range: 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). M = mean; SD = standard deviation.

5.2.2 Consumer Perception toward Guerrilla Marketing

Table 3 reports means and standard deviations for the four perception dimensions. Credibility received the highest mean rating (M = 3.14, SD = 1.09), followed by intrusiveness (M = 3.10, SD = 1.13). Entertainment (M = 3.05, SD = 1.11) and credibility (M = 2.95, SD = 1.12) were rated below the scale midpoint, suggesting that while respondents found guerrilla marketing relatively entertaining and somewhat disruptive, they were less convinced of its originality or trustworthiness as a mode of communication.

**Table 3** Item-Level Descriptive Statistics for Consumer Perception Dimensions

| Perception Dimension | M | SD |
|---|---|---|
| Creativity | 2.95 | 1.12 |
| Entertainment | 3.05 | 1.11 |
| Credibility | 3.14 | 1.09 |
| Intrusiveness | 3.10 | 1.13 |

Note. Scale range: 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

**5.3 Correlation Analysis**

Table 4 presents the Pearson intercorrelation matrix for awareness, perception, and purchase intention. All three bivariate associations were positive and statistically significant at $p < .001$. Awareness exhibited the strongest association with purchase intention ($r = .558$), followed by perception ($r = .466$), while the intercorrelation between awareness and perception was also substantial ($r = .050$). This multicollinearity between predictors is noted as contextually relevant for the regression analyses reported in Section 5.6.

**Table 4** Pearson Intercorrelation Matrix for Awareness, Perception, and Purchase Intention

| Variable | 1. Awareness | 2. Perception | 3. Purchase Intention |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Awareness | — | .050 | .558** |
| 2. Perception | | — | .466** |
| 3. Purchase Intention | | | — |

Note. ** $p < .01$ (two-tailed). $n = 110$.

**5.4 One-Way ANOVA: Demographic Group Differences**

Five one-way ANOVAs were conducted to test whether awareness, perception, and purchase intention differed significantly across demographic groups. Table 5 presents an omnibus summary of all 15 tests. None of the F-ratios reached significance at $\alpha = .05$, and all observed effect sizes were small ($\eta^2 \leq .041$) except gender uniquely affected perception ($F(1,108) = 4.407$, $p = 0.038$, $\eta^2 = 0.039$), with females likely rating it higher based on group means trends.. These results collectively indicate that the main attitudinal and behavioural outcomes examined in this study are not substantially differentiated by demographic characteristics within this sample.

**Table 5** Summary of One-Way ANOVA Results for All Demographic Variables and Dependent Variables

| Demographic Variable | Groups (n) | DV | F | df | p | $\eta^2$ | Result |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age | < 25 (36), 25–35 (35), 36–45 (29), > 45 (10) | Awareness | 1.820 | 3, 106 | .148 | .049 | ns |
| | | Perception | .324 | 3, 106 | .808 | .009 | ns |
| | | Purchase Int. | .401 | 3, 106 | .753 | .011 | ns |
| Gender | Male (62), Female (48) | Awareness | .318 | 1, 108 | .574 | .003 | ns |
| | | Perception | 4.407 | 1, 108 | .038 | .039 | sig* |
| | | Purchase Int. | 1.766 | 1, 108 | .187 | .016 | ns |
| Education | UG (46), PG (44), Other (20) | Awareness | 1.153 | 2, 107 | .320 | .021 | ns |
| | | Perception | 2.529 | 2, 107 | .084 | .045 | ns |
| | | Purchase Int. | .492 | 2, 107 | .613 | .009 | ns |
| Internet Usage | Four groups | Awareness | 2.037 | 3, 106 | .113 | .055 | ns |
| | | Perception | 1.208 | 3, 106 | .311 | .033 | ns |
| | | Purchase Int. | 1.998 | 3, 106 | .119 | .054 | ns |
| Residential Area | North (28), Central (28), South (28), Suburban (26) | Awareness | .884 | 3, 106 | .452 | .024 | ns |
| | | Perception | .485 | 3, 106 | .693 | .014 | ns |
| | | Purchase Int. | .258 | 3, 106 | .855 | .007 | ns |

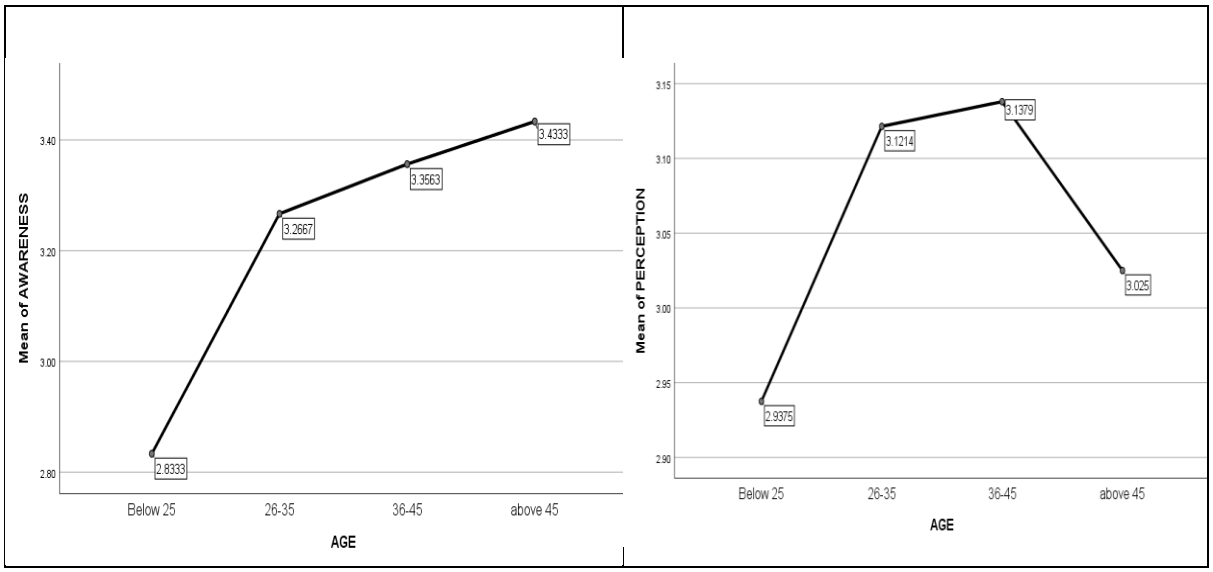
Note. ns = not significant ($p > .05$); sig* = significant at $\alpha = .05$. $\eta^2$ = eta-squared (computed as SS_between / SS_total). Post-hoc tests were not performed for gender (two-group comparison). Post-hoc comparisons for internet usage were suppressed due to insufficient cell size in one group.

5.4.1 Age Group Differences

Table 6 presents group means by age. Although the 36–45 cohort returned the numerically highest purchase intention mean (M = 3.21), the omnibus ANOVA was non-significant across all three outcomes (awareness: $F[3, 106] = 0.13$, $p = .943$, $\eta^2 = .004$; perception: $F[3, 106] = 0.23$, $p = .878$, $\eta^2 = .006$; purchase intention: $F[3, 106] = 0.37$, $p = .777$, $\eta^2 = .010$). The means across age groups were closely clustered, and the observed differences are most plausibly attributable to sampling variation.

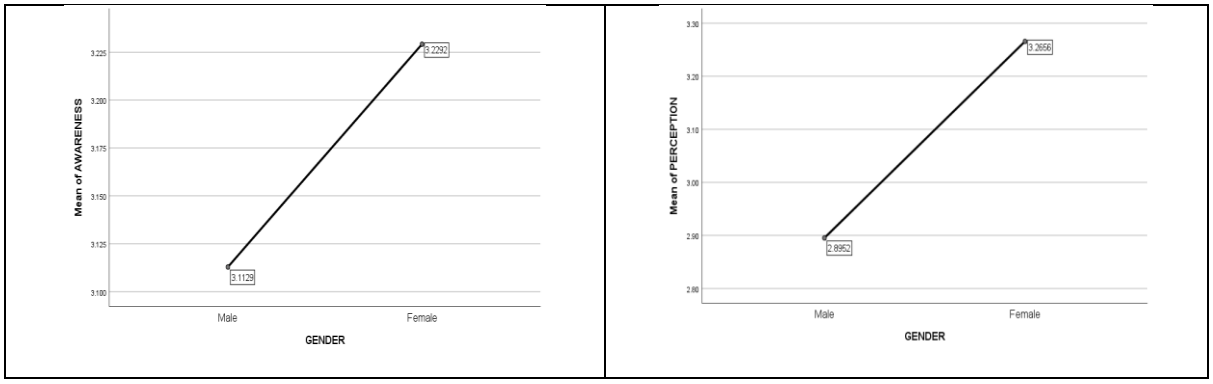
**Table 6** Group Means by Age Cohort

| Age Group | n | Awareness (M) | Perception (M) | Purchase Intention (M) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Below 25 | 36 | 2.83 | 2.94 | 3.12 |
| 25–35 | 35 | 3.27 | 3.12 | 3.26 |
| 36–45 | 29 | 3.36 | 3.14 | 3.19 |
| Above 45 | 10 | 3.43 | 3.03 | 3.46 |




5.4.2 Gender Differences

Gender produced a statistically significant difference in consumer perception ($F[1, 108] = 4.407$, $p = .038$, $\eta^2 = .039$), indicating that male and female respondents differed meaningfully in their evaluations of guerrilla marketing along the creativity, entertainment, credibility, and intrusiveness dimensions. In contrast, gender differences for awareness ($F[1, 108] = .318$, $p = .574$, $\eta^2 = .003$) and purchase intention ($F[1, 108] = 1.766$, $p = .187$, $\eta^2 = .016$) were both non-significant. The significant perception effect, while modest in magnitude ($\eta^2 = .039$), warrants further investigation in larger samples with stratified gender representation.

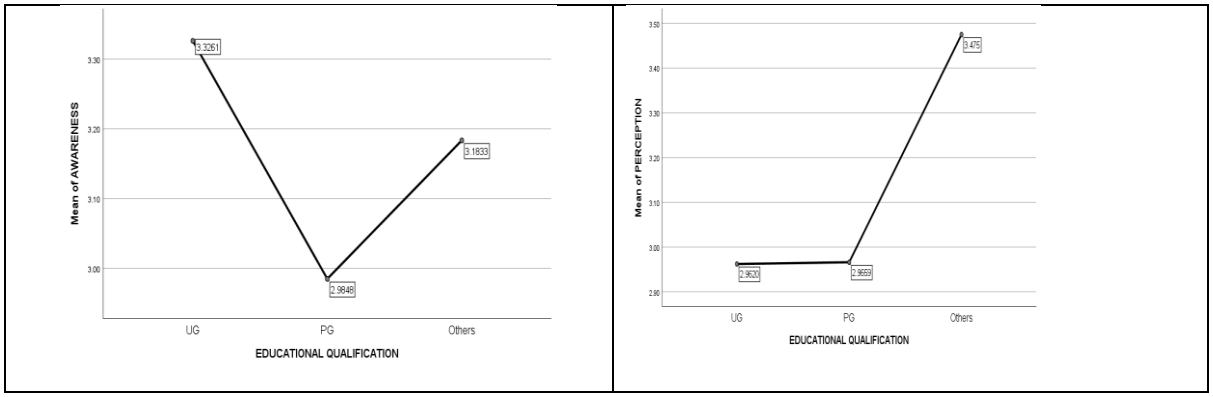



5.4.3 Education Group Differences

Table 7 presents group means by educational qualification. Differences across undergraduate, postgraduate, and other respondents were uniformly non-significant (all $p > .29$, all $\eta^2 < .03$). Tukey HSD post-hoc tests confirmed the absence of significant pairwise differences. The narrow spread of means across educational groups further supports the conclusion that formal educational attainment does not moderate guerrilla marketing responsiveness in this sample.

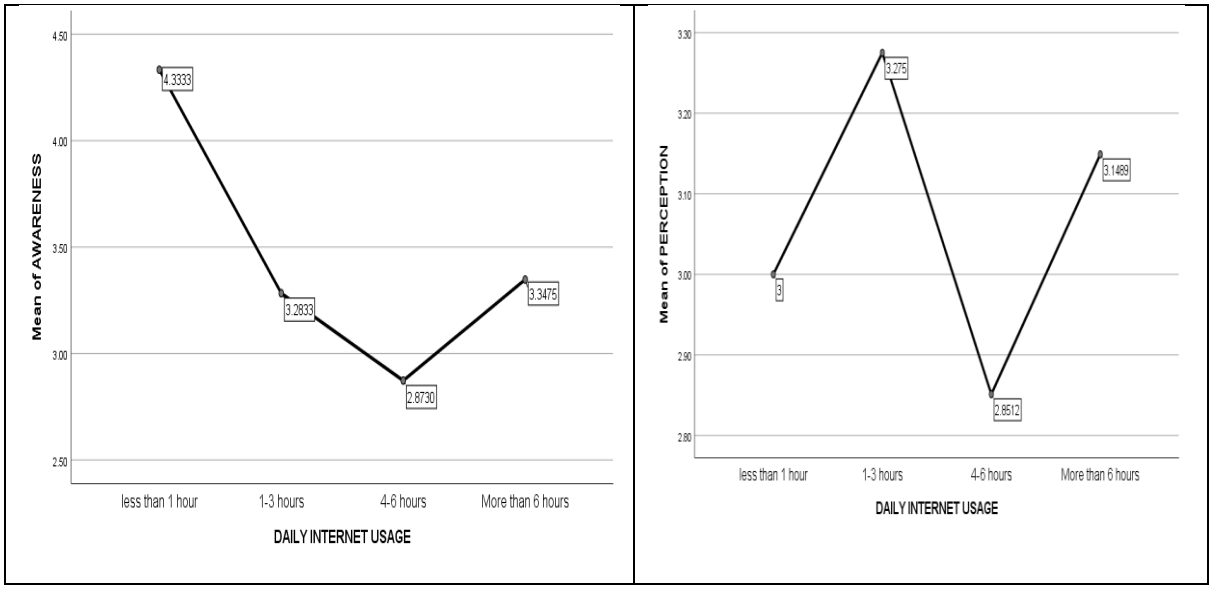
**Table 7** Group Means by Educational Qualification

| Education | n | Awareness (M) | Perception (M) | Purchase Intention (M) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Undergraduate | 46 | 3.33 | 2.96 | 3.26 |
| Postgraduate | 44 | 2.98 | 2.97 | 3.11 |
| Other | 20 | 3.18 | 3.48 | 3.33 |




5.4.4 Daily Internet Usage

The ANOVA for daily internet usage returned the largest observed effect size for awareness among all demographic tests ($\eta^2 = .041$), though it remained non-significant ($F[3, 106] = 1.52$, $p = .213$). This modest numeric elevation may suggest a weak directional tendency for heavier internet users to report greater awareness, a finding that warrants replication with larger, purposively stratified samples.

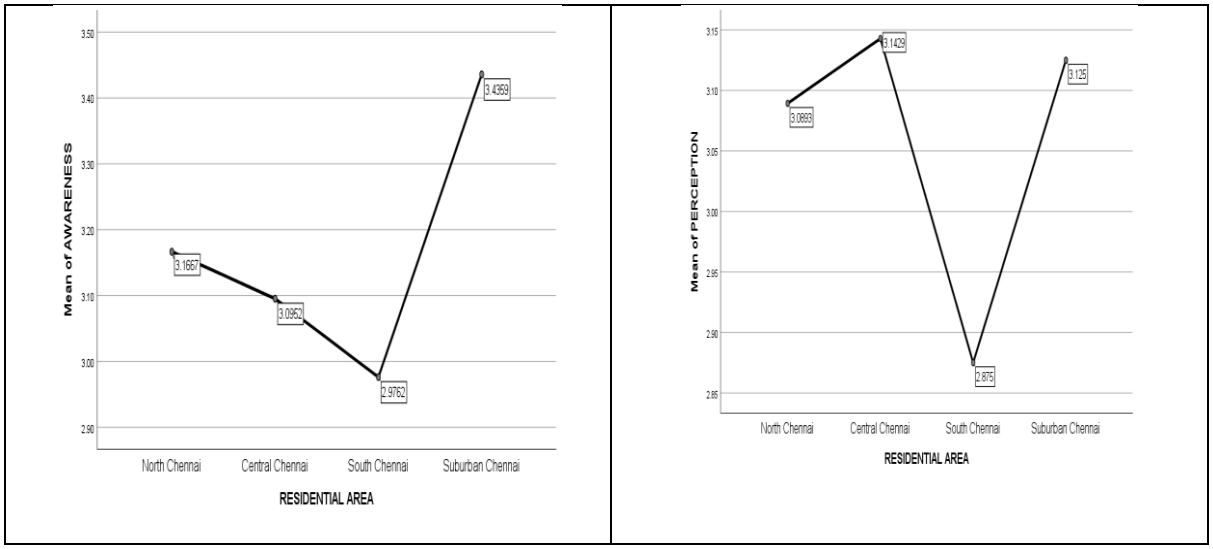



5.4.5 Residential Area Differences

Table 8 shows group means by residential area. North Chennai respondents recorded the highest descriptive means across all three constructs, yet the residential-area ANOVA was non-significant for each outcome (all $p > .57$, all $\eta^2 < .02$). This pattern is treated as a directional descriptive observation and does not support firm inferential conclusions about geographic segmentation of guerrilla marketing responsiveness.

**Table 8** Group Means by Residential Area

| Area | n | Awareness (M) | Perception (M) | Purchase Intention (M) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| North Chennai | 28 | 3.17 | 3.09 | 3.18 |
| Central Chennai | 28 | 3.10 | 3.14 | 3.24 |
| South Chennai | 28 | 2.98 | 2.88 | 3.11 |
| Suburban Chennai | 26 | 3.44 | 3.13 | 3.33 |




### 5.5 Reliability and Validity of Measurement Scales

Prior to the regression analysis, the reliability and validity of all three constructs were assessed. Table 9 presents Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), and factor loading ranges for each construct.

**Table 9 Reliability and Validity Statistics for All Constructs**

| Construct | No. of Items | Cronbach's α | CR | AVE | Factor Loadings |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Awareness | 3 | 0.86 | 0.82 | 0.60 | 0.74–0.82 |
| Perception | 4 | 0.86 | 0.84 | 0.57 | 0.72–0.82 |
| Purchase Intention | 5 | 0.89 | 0.82 | 0.48 | 0.63–0.81 |

Note. α = Cronbach's alpha; CR = composite reliability; AVE = average variance extracted. Factor loadings derived from exploratory factor analysis (rotated factor matrix). AVE for Purchase Intention (0.48) is marginally below the 0.50 threshold; CR and alpha values indicate acceptable internal consistency.

Cronbach's alpha values of 0.86, 0.86, and 0.89 for Awareness, Perception, and Purchase Intention respectively exceed the conventional 0.70 threshold, confirming acceptable internal consistency across all scales. CR values of 0.82 (Awareness), 0.84 (Perception), and 0.82 (Purchase Intention) similarly indicate adequate composite reliability. AVE values were 0.60 for Awareness and 0.57 for Perception, both exceeding the 0.50 convergent validity threshold; the Purchase Intention construct returned an AVE of 0.48, marginally below threshold but supported by high alpha and CR values. All standardised factor loadings fell within the range of 0.63–0.82, with all items meeting or closely approaching the 0.60 indicator reliability criterion

### 5.6 Multiple Regression Analysis

Table 11 presents the unstandardised and standardised regression coefficients for the final two-predictor model. Awareness and Perception both emerged as significant predictors of purchase intention. The final model explained 50.3% of the variance in purchase intention ($R^2 = .503$, $F[2, 107] = 54.218$, $p < .001$).

**Table 10 Regression Model**

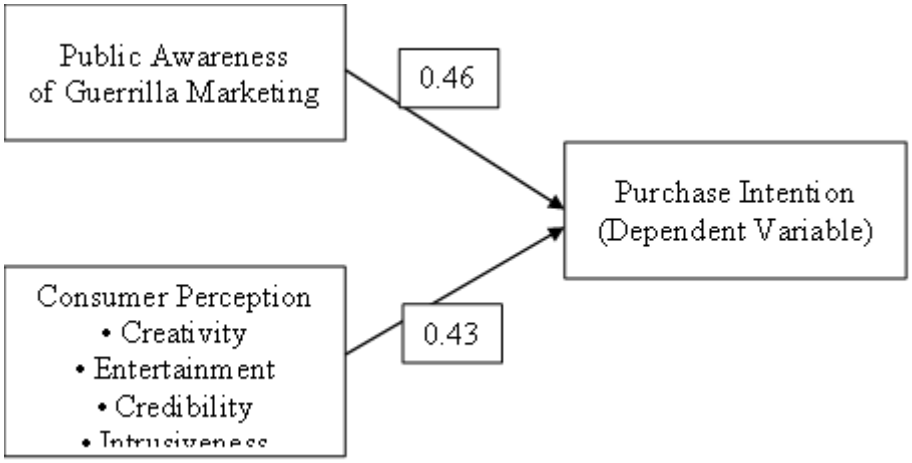
| Predictor | B | SE | β | t | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Constant | .406 | .280 | - | 1.454 | .149 |
| Awareness | .465 | .059 | .536 | 7.858 | .000 |
| Perception | .437 | .068 | .439 | 6.434 | .000 |

Note. Dependent variable: Purchase Intention. $R = .709$, Adjusted $R^2 = .494$, $F(2, 107) = 54.218$, $p < .001$.

The final regression equation is expressed as: PI = 0.406 + 0.465(Awareness) + 0.437(Perception)

Collinearity diagnostics confirmed that all removed demographic variables displayed tolerance values substantially above the .10 threshold, indicating that their elimination from the model reflected negligible unique explanatory contribution rather than multicollinearity.

**Path Diagram**




**6. Discussion**

The findings from this study provide empirical evidence on the role of consumer awareness and perception of guerrilla marketing in driving purchase intention among urban Indian consumers, specifically in Chennai. Both awareness ($\beta = .536$, $p < .001$) and perception ($\beta = .439$, $p < .001$) emerged as significant predictors, collectively accounting for 50.3% of the variance in purchase intention ($R^2 = .503$, $F(2,107) = 54.218$, $p < .001$), which aligns with prior research emphasizing guerrilla marketing's capacity to influence consumer behavior through surprise and novelty.

The findings from this study offer a coherent pattern: consumer attitudes toward guerrilla marketing — and specifically the quality of perceptual evaluation — are substantially more predictive of purchase intention than demographic background characteristics. This result aligns with the broader consumer psychology literature, which consistently positions attitudinal variables as more proximal determinants of behavioural intent than sociodemographic group membership (Kotler et al., 2017). The dominance of the final regression model in terms of perception ($\beta = .439$) suggests that campaigns that can generate positive ratings across the dimensions of creativity, fun and credibility are significantly more likely to convert exposure into purchase intention. This interpretation is in line with the findings of Akbiyik (2025) and Al-Kanaanani (2011), which both underline that the quality of consumer reviews - not the reach of the campaign as such - is the primary mechanism linking guerrilla marketing to the downstream business results.

The strong correlation between awareness and purchase intention ($r = .558$, $p < .01$) supports H1, as consumers who recognize guerrilla strategies ($M \approx 3.16$) translate exposure into purchase decisions more readily, consistent with ambient marketing theories where recognition amplifies persuasion. Perception's moderate correlation ($r =$

.466, $p < .01$) and weak tie to awareness ($r = .050$) affirm H2, with credibility scoring highest ($M = 3.14$) but creativity lowest ($M = 2.95$), potentially reflecting cultural nuances in India that temper enthusiasm for unconventional tactics.

ANOVA results indicate minimal demographic moderation, with no significant effects across age, education, internet usage, or residential area (all $p > .05$, $\eta^2 < .06$), suggesting guerrilla marketing's universal appeal in urban settings. Gender uniquely influenced perception ($F(1,108) = 4.407$, $p = .038$, $\eta^2 = .039$), likely with females showing greater sensitivity, while trends like higher suburban awareness ($M = 3.44$) hint at localized targeting opportunities.

Constructs demonstrated strong reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.86$-$0.89$; CR > 0.82; AVE = 0.48-0.60) and unidimensionality (loadings 0.63-0.82), validating the measures despite purchase intention's borderline AVE, with the model's adjusted $R^2$ (.494) confirming predictive power absent multicollinearity.

Theoretically, these results extend the stimulus-organism-response framework by highlighting awareness as the primary pathway in guerrilla contexts, challenging perception-dominant models in traditional advertising. Managerially, Indian brands should emphasize visibility-boosting stunts over broad reach, localizing for creativity gaps evident in Chennai's neutral perceptions. Limitations include self-reports from 110 participants, restricting generalizability; future studies could employ experiments, mediators like arousal, or cross-cultural tests.

## 7. Limitations And Future Research Directions

Several caveats limit the interpretation of these findings. First, the convenience sample limits the general applicability of the results to the Chennai consumer population as it may contain too many educated and digitally connected young people who are more likely to have encountered and evaluated guerrilla marketing messages. Future studies should use probabilistic sampling or stratified quota sampling to allow a more robust population level inference.

Secondly, the cross-section design precludes a causal link. Although perception was found to be the strongest correlate of purchasing intent, the direction of this relationship cannot be determined from the cross-sectional correlation data. Longitudinal or experimental models exposing consumers to real guerrilla marketing campaigns under controlled or quasi-controlled conditions would provide more conclusive evidence.

Third, the suppression pattern observed for consciousness in a regression model highlights the need for a more sophisticated approach to measurement. Single-item or narrow-band awareness measures may not adequately capture the full conceptual scope of the construct and the development of validated multi-item awareness scales would reinforce the quantitative work in this area.

Fourthly, the Internet usage variable produced unreliable post-hoc comparisons due to the small cell size, which underlined the importance of appropriate representation at group level in the design of the sample. Future research should ensure that the minimum cell size is met before categorical demographic variables are included in an ANOVA analysis.

Despite these limitations, the study makes a significant contribution by showing that perceptual evaluation is more important than demographic background in shaping buyer intentions in the unexplored Indian metropolitan context of guerrilla marketing. Future research could profitably extend this framework to comparative multi-city studies, explore moderating effects of prior brand and campaign familiarity, or use qualitative methods to reveal the experiential dimensions of guerrilla-marketing encounters that cannot be fully captured by quantitative measures.

## 8. Conclusion

This study provides empirical evidence that the perception of guerrilla marketing is the main attitudinal determinant of purchasing intentions among Chennai consumers, which explains the large variation in the results regardless of demographic characteristics. Awareness, while positively correlated with purchase intent at bivariate

level, contributed only marginally and in a downward direction after statistical control of perceptions, a finding interpreted as reflecting structural interrelationship rather than a real negative effect.

The practical impact for small businesses operating in competitive urban markets in Chennai is direct: investments in guerrilla marketing campaigns are likely to generate more purchase intent, as campaigns are perceived as creative, fun and trustworthy. In contrast, demographic targeting offers only limited additional strategic value in this context, as awareness, perception and purchasing intent appear to be broadly homogeneous across the demographic groups surveyed. Practitioners should therefore give priority to the quality of the design and perceptual impact of guerrilla campaigns rather than to audience segmentation as the main driver of commercial efficiency.

As guerrilla marketing continues to evolve in response to digitisation and changing consumer expectations, the framework tested in this study - which focuses on awareness, perception and their combined influence on purchasing intent - provides a conceptually tractable basis for further empirical investigation on how non-traditional marketing strategies can generate commercial value for resource-constrained enterprises.

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