



## **CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS APPAREL BRANDS IN CHENNAI**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Indian consumers were known to exhibit a distinctively higher preference for imported goods and foreign brands. In this study, Consumer Behaviour Towards Apparel Brands were considered based on ten factors such as Brand name, Product Category, Criteria for Apparel Purchase, General shopping pattern, Shopping frequency, Spending Pattern on Apparel, Preference of Shopping, Factors Influencing on Shopping, Preference of Fabric type, Effect on Discount offers and Current Fashion Trends. About 250 questionnaires were distributed among the respondents in a shopping mall that has been randomly selected, of which 238 (95.2%) were responded. Highly preferred brand by the consumers were 'Only' and 'Zara' (13% each of the Category). It is followed by Jockey (11.3%) , Adidas (10.5%), Allen Solly (10.5%) and Levis (10.5%) Men's wear was most preferred. It is followed by woman's wear and kids' wear. Casual shopping and occasions was the shopping pattern among the respondents. Nearly 74% spent in below Rs. 4000/- in a month. Knitted apparels were preferred more than woven apparels. Discount offers and current fashion trend plays a decisive role in the shopping of apparels besides the worth of purchase. Consumer Behaviour towards Apparel Brands not only relay on brand, it has other impact factors also.*

**KEY WORDS:** Consumer behaviour, apparel brand, shopping and spending patter, current trend, consumer behaviour in shopping mall, mode of shopping.

### **INTRODUCTION**

In the pre liberalisation era, Indian consumers were known to exhibit a distinctively higher preference for imported goods and foreign brands. However, post two decades of liberalization, the Indian apparel market is flooded with brands with their origin in foreign

countries. The increased popularity of such international brands and the relatively similar big city customer profiles across countries (Quelch, 1999).

Several apparel brands like Tommy Hilfiger, Marks & Spencer, Peter England, Zara, Mango, Polo have marked fashion retailing in India offering world class fashion and shopping experience through shopping malls or through their franchised separate showrooms. Fashion is defined by the involvement of a product category which it represents the identity of the consumers with its brand traits (Aagerup, 2011). Hence, fashion basically represents a consumer's outlook that has a positive influence on their style and status. Brand popularity is also one of the factors that influence the consumer preferences. Kinra (2006) reviewed that consumers tend to have positive brand image perceptions towards international brand of products. Major push to the Indian fashion has come from factors like increasing number of deep pocketed consumers and retail spaces such as malls and boutiques, fashion consciousness among the age group of below 45. Though there are many local brands, foreign brands have always caught the fancy of consumers here.

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

The concept of shopping confidence reflects consumers' belief in their ability to shop for clothing and select the right products for themselves. Brand or store loyalty describes a consumer's tendency to continue to patronize the brand and /or online store they prefer, which also suggests self confidence in the consumer's ability to evaluate alternatives. In this study, convenience consciousness refers to consumers' preference to put minimal effort into the clothing purchase process. Convenience therefore implies concern for ease-of-use issues such as accessibility and simplicity of navigation (Gehrt et al., 2007; Workman & Cho, 2012).

The Studies on customer based, brand equity of apparel products among USA and Korea (Jung & Sung, 2008), Malaysian consumers (Gharleghi, 2013) and Pakistan consumers (Ismail, Masood and Mehmood, 2012) indicates that the consumer preferences were based on country of origin, quality, promotion, lifestyle and price.

Many of the research studies, increasingly interested to understand the purchase intention among the consumers. Majority of them explored the direct relationship between individual dimensions such as purchase intention, attitude, shopping orientation etc. (Liebermann & Stashevsky, 2009; Ling, Chai, & Piew, 2010); Seock & Bailey, 2008; Sung & Jeon, 2009; Kim & Karpova, 2010; Shaw & Shiu, 2003; Yan et al., 2012).

## **OBJECTIVE**

The objective of the study were

- To identify the Brand name preferred by the consumers
- To know the type of Product Category preferred by the consumers,
- To identify the Criteria for Apparel Purchase,
- To know the General shopping pattern of the consumers,
- To identify the Shopping frequency and Spending Pattern on Apparel,
- To know the Preference of Shopping by the consumers
- To identify the Factors Influencing on Shopping by the consumer,
- To know the Preference of Fabric type among the consumers ,
- To elucidate the Effect on Discount offers and Current Fashion Trends.

## **HYPOTHESES**

The following hypotheses were formulated based on the objectives.

- There exist significant difference in the Brand name preferred by the consumers
- There exist differences in Product Category preferred by the consumers,
- There exist certain Criteria for Apparel Purchase,
- There exist uniformity in General shopping pattern of the consumers,
- There exist differences in the Shopping frequency and Spending Pattern on Apparel,
- The Preference of Shopping varies among the consumers
- There exist influencing factors in Shopping by the consumer,
- There exist difference in the Preference of Fabric type among the consumers ,
- There exist impact on Effect on Discount offers and Current Fashion Trends.

## **SAMPLE**

About 250 questionnaires were distributed among the respondents in a shopping mall that has been randomly selected, of which 238 (95.2%) were responded. Out of 238 respondents, 117 (49.2%) were male and 121 (50.8%) are female, in which 155 (65.1%) respondents were in the age group of 18-25, 59 (24.8%) were in the age group of 26-35. 124 (52.1%) respondents were students and 41 (17.2%) were IT professionals. 93 (39.1%) respondents' earnings were less than Rs. two lakhs and 82 (34.5%) respondents' earnings were between Rs. 4-6 lakhs. Among the 238 respondents, 182 (76.5%) respondents were hailing from urban and 43 (18.1%) were from semi urban backgrounds.

## DATA ANALYSIS

Consumer Behaviour towards Apparel Brands were considered based on ten factors such as Brand name, Product Category, Criteria for Apparel Purchase, General shopping pattern, Shopping frequency, Spending Pattern on Apparel, Preference of Shopping, Factors influencing on Shopping, Preference of Fabric type, Effect on Discount offers and Current Fashion Trends.

### Brand Name

The shopping mall, in which the study carried out were marketing number of brands, of which 10 brands were studied. The customers' brands on these ten brands were ascertained and the same has been shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Brand Name**

S.No.	Description	Frequency	Percent
1	Adidas	25	10.5
2	Allen solly	25	10.5
3	Jockey	27	11.3
4	Levis	25	10.5
5	Only	31	13.0
6	Puma	14	5.9
7	Superdry	14	5.9
8	Tommy Hilfiger	23	9.7
9	US Polo	23	9.7
10	Zara	31	13.0
Total		238	100.0

'Only' and 'Zara' were the two popular brands that has been preferred by 13% each of the Category. It is followed by Jockey (11.3%) and Adidas, Allen Solly and Levis (10.5%). 9.7% prefer US Polo and Tommy Hilfiger. Least preference was given for Puma and Superdry (5.9%).

### Product Category

The product categories preferred by the respondents were shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: Product Category**

S. No	Category	Frequency	Percent
1	Men's Wear	117	49.2
2	Women's Wear	112	47.1
3	Kid's Wear	9	3.8
Total		238	100.0

It is inferred from the Table 2 that out of 238 respondents, 117 (49.2%) preferred men's wear, 112 (47.1%) preferred woman's wear and 9 (3.8%) preferred kids wear.

### Criteria for Apparel Purchase

The criteria for apparel purchase have been analysed based on the variables such as: - design, brand, material plus quality, price, comfort plus fit, design plus material quality and all the variables. The opinions of the respondents were given in Table 3.

**Table 3: Criteria for apparel purchase**

S. No	Description	Frequency	Percent
1	Design	41	17.2
2	Brand	28	11.8
3	Material and Quality	84	35.3
4	Price	19	8.0
5	Comfort and Fit	49	20.6
6	All	12	5.0
7	Design and material quality and comfort fit	5	2.1
Total		238	100.0

It can be seen from Table 3 that out of 234 respondents, 84 (35.3%) indicated material plus quality as their first preference followed by preferred for comfort and fit(49, 20.6%) and design (41, 17.2%). Least preference was given for design, material quality and comfort fit together (2.1%).

### General Shopping Pattern

The criteria for general shopping pattern have been analysed based on five variables such as discounts, festivals, occasions, change in trends and casual shopping. The opinions of the respondents were given in Table 4.

**Table 4: General Shopping Pattern**

S. No	Description	Frequency	Percent
1	Discounts	43	18.1
2	Festivals	20	8.4
3	Occasions	51	21.4
4	Change in Trends	35	14.7
5	Casual Shopping	89	37.4
Total		238	100.0

It is observed from Table 4 that out of 238 respondents, 89 (37.4%) respondents preferred casual shopping and 51 (21.4%) respondents preferred shopping during occasions. The least preference was given to shopping during festivals by 20 (8.4%) respondents.

### Shopping frequency

The criteria for shopping frequency have been analysed based on the variables such as:- once in month, once in 2 months, quarterly, half yearly and during sale periods. The opinions of the respondents were given in Table 5.

**Table 5: Shopping Frequency**

S. No.	Description	Frequency	Percent
1	Once in a month	94	39.5
2	Once in 2 months	75	31.5
3	Quarterly	38	16.0
4	Once in 6 months	21	8.8
5	During a sale	10	4.2
Total		238	100.0

It can be seen from Table 5 that 94 (39.5%) respondents preferred shopping of apparel once in a month followed by 75 (31.5%) respondents preferred apparel shopping once in 2 months and the least preference were given by 10 (4.2%) respondents for shopping during a sale.

### Spending Pattern on Apparel

The spending pattern on apparel by the respondents are given in Table 6

**Table 6: Spending pattern on apparel**

S. No	Description	Frequency	Percent
1	< 2000	79	33.2
2	2000-4000	99	41.6
3	4000-6000	51	21.4
4	> 6000	9	3.8
Total		238	100.0

It is observed from Table 6 that 99 (41.6%) respondents spent in the range of Rs.2000-4000/-, followed by 79 (33.2%) respondents spent less than Rs.2000/- on apparels. The least spent was above Rs.6000/- by 9 (3.8%) respondents.

## Preference of Shopping

The mode of shopping whether online or offline or both were analysed and is given Table 7.

**Table 7: Preference of Shopping**

S. No	Description	Frequency	Percent
1	Online	54	22.7
2	Offline	146	61.3
3	Both	38	16.0
Total		238	100.0

It is noted from Table 7 that out of 238 respondents 146 (61.3%) respondents preferred shopping in visiting the retail stores physically and 54 (22.7%) respondents preferred E-shopping whereas about 38 (16%) respondents were comfortable in both modes.

## Factors Influencing on Shopping

The factors influencing for apparel purchase have been analysed based on the variables such as: - window display and fabric knowledge. The opinions of the respondents were given in Table 8.

**Table 8: Factors Influencing on Shopping**

S.No.	Description	Yes		No	
1	Influence on window display	184	77.3%	54	22.7%
2	Knowledge on Fabric Type Woven or Knits	178	74.8%	60	25.2%

It is noted from Table 8 that out of 238 respondents, 184 (77.3%) indicated that window display is a decisive factor in shopping and 178 (74.8%) respondents indicated that fabric type whether woven or knits is also another decisive factor in their shopping.

## Preference of Fabric type while Apparel Shopping

The preference of fabric type in apparel shopping by the respondents were analysed and is given Table 9.

**Table 9: Preference of Fabric type while Shopping**

Description	Knit		Woven	
Preference	113	64.2%	63	35.8%

It is revealed from table 9 that out of 238 respondents, 113 (64.2%) respondents' preferred knitted apparels and followed by 63 (35.8%) respondents' preferred woven apparels while

shopping. It can be inferred from the above that the comfort is more in knitted apparels than in woven apparels perhaps because of its characteristics.

### Effect and Fashion Trends

The effect on discount offers and current fashion trends while shopping have been analysed and is given in Table 10.

**Table 10: Effect on Discount offers and Current Fashion Trends while Shopping**

S.No	Description	Yes		No	
1	Effect on discount offers while choosing the brand	163	68.5%	75	31.5%
2	Effect on current fashion trends	160	67.2%	78	32.8%
3	Worth of Purchase	215	90.3%	23	9.7%

It can be seen from Table 10 that out of 238 respondents, 215 (90.3%) respondents indicated that there is value for the money in their apparel purchase. Further 163 (68.5%) respondents preferred discount offers while shopping whereas 75 (31.5%) respondents indicated that discount offers didn't have any effect in their shopping. Similarly 160 (67.2%) respondents indicated that current fashion trends is important factor in their shopping and 78 (32.8%) respondents indicated that current fashion trends didn't have any effect in their shopping. It is inferred that discount offers and current fashion trends plays a decisive role in the shopping of apparels. Today worth of purchase also considered as a vital factor.

### FINDINGS

- Consumer Behaviour towards Apparel Brands were considered based on ten factors such as Brand name, Product Category, Criteria for Apparel Purchase, General shopping pattern, Shopping frequency, Spending Pattern on Apparel, Preference of Shopping, Factors Influencing on Shopping, Preference of Fabric type, Effect on Discount offers and Current Fashion Trends.
- The shopping mall, in which the study carried out were marketing number of brands, of which 10 brands Adidas, Allen solly, Jockey, Levis. Only, Puma, Superdry, Tommy Hilfiger, US Polo and Zara were taken up for the study.
- Highly preferred brand by the consumers were 'Only' and 'Zara' (13% each of the Category). It is followed by Jockey (11.3%) , Adidas (10.5%), Allen Solly (10.5%) and Levis (10.5%). Least preferred brands were Puma and Superdry.
- Men's wear was most preferred (117, 49.2%). It is followed by woman's wear (112, 47.1%) and kids' wear (9, 3.8%).

- Material plus quality (84, 35.3%) as their first preference among seven Criteria for apparel purchase considered for the study followed by comfort and fit (49, 20.6%) and design (41, 17.2%). Least preference was given for design, material quality and comfort fit together (2.1%).
- In the case of general shopping pattern, casual shopping and during occasions were given top priority. The least preference was given to shopping during festivals.
- The Shopping frequencies were once in a month or once in 2 months.
- Nearly 41.6% spent in the range of Rs.2000-4000/-, and 33.2% spent less than Rs.2000/- in a month.
- Nearly 61.3% preferred shopping by visiting the retail stores physically and 22.7% through online. Only 16% respondents were comfortable in both online and offline modes.
- 64.2% preferred knitted apparels and 35.8% preferred woven apparels.
- 90.3% looks for value for the money in their apparel purchase. Further 68.5% preferred discount offers and 67.2% rely on current fashion trends. 31.5% indicated that discount offers didn't have any effect in their shopping. It is inferred that discount offers and current fashion trends plays a decisive role in the shopping of apparels.

## CONCLUSION

This study identifies the Brand name preferred by the consumers besides the type of Product Category preferred by the consumers. The General shopping pattern of the consumers, the Criteria for Apparel Purchase were also identified. The Shopping frequency, Spending Pattern on Apparel, and the Preference of Shopping by the consumers were elucidated. The Factors Influencing on Shopping by the consumer and the Preference of Fabric type among the consumers were also identified. The Effect on Discount offer, Current Fashion Trends and worth of purchase were also identified. This study also indicates that there exists direct relationship between individual dimensions such as purchase intention, attitude, shopping orientation etc. (Liebermann & Stashevsky, 2009; Ling, Chai, & Piew, 2010); Seock & Bailey, 2008; Sung & Jeon, 2009; Kim & Karpova, 2010; Shaw & Shiu, 2003). Effect on Discount, Current Fashion Trends and worth of purchase, besides the brand name, has also have direct relationship in consumer behaviour.

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