

A STUDY OF YOUTH PERCEPTION AND FACTORS THAT IMPACTS THEIR BUYING BEHAVIOUR: AN UNEXPLORED MARKET OF PUNJAB

Dr. Namita Kalra¹ & Dr. Yuvika Midha²

¹Assistant Professor, GNA University

²Assistant Professor, GNA University

Email:- namitakochhar9980@gmail.com

yuvikamidha@gmail.com

Abstract

The present study focusses to analyze the perception of the consumers of Punjab and their intentions to buy branded apparels based on the factors that influence their buying behavior. In this study, descriptive statistics is used on the basis of demographic profiles of the consumers and factor analysis to interpret the youth of Punjab and their bend of choice towards branded apparels in comparison to non-branded apparels. It is concluded that gender, age, location, and occupation profiles play a significant role in governing young consumer perception for buying branded apparel. The researcher also explored and found six factors that impact the buying behavior of youth of Punjab. These are Need of Uniqueness, Social Media, Advertisement, Social Recognition, Materialism, and Social Factors. Among these social factors, materialism and need of uniqueness are the most influential factors that drive the purchase intentions of youth of Punjab today. Being limited study found in Punjab, the study will definitely provide a direction to decide the unexplored market of Punjab in the coming future. Moreover, the rising population will never let the demand for apparel to fade away. Also, Branded apparel segment can be a promising sector in Punjab for a new start-up, which the youth can look upon.

Keywords : Consumer , Perception , Buying Behaviour , Brand Preferences

Introduction

India's population is among the youngest in an ageing world. India's working-age population has numerically outstripped its non-working age population. This working-age population consists of highly motivated youths with diverse aspirations. Also, there is wide variation observed in the patterns of young consumers' perception since the last two decades which is highly influenced by the social and economic standards of the consumers. McKinsey's report stated that by the end of 2025, India is going to be observed as the world's fifth-largest consumer market. Moreover, it was also concluded that tolls of people accounting for nearly 291 million will jump over the poverty line and adopt a more sustainable lifestyle. This will lead to an obvious rise in the middle-class section from 50 million to around 583 million people. It is also expected that by the end of 2025, an Indian population of 23 million people will be counted among the country's wealthiest citizens, which is again a very large

Jhanji (2020) did a study to determine consumer attitudes and behaviours about a product, as well as how they influenced the consumer's decision-making process. The research was based on a poll of 80 people as well as social media analysis. The findings of the study revealed that a strong casual wear brand name has a positive and significant impact on Indian adolescent purchasing behaviour for branded clothing. The author came to the conclusion that the brand name played an important role in the decision-making process, and as a result, young people in India are motivated to spend a premium price for a dress with a prominent brand name.

Rahman et al., (2020) discussed research based on the impact of fashion blogs on consumer purchases based on gender difference and customer innovativeness. The researchers used the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) with consideration, visual usability, easy-to-use simplicity, awareness of social influence, apparent reliability of impact, and fashion art as a variety of research. A survey was performed using consumers who represent the young Chinese population including 1196 females and 614 males. The findings of the study showed that attitudes towards fashion blogs, user perceptions, visible social influence, and perceived reliability of impact were important predictors of teen shopping intent. The research will help advertisers and managers to develop appropriate strategies to improve consumer behaviour for fashion consumers.

Agarwal (2019) presented the results of a study that was performed with store managers, designers, corporates, and consumers in order to uncover customer wishes that will lead to future customer expectations. It also describes that how designers, as well as corporates, meet the user requirements. The author also highlighted the different technologies that improve Indian marketing according to the fashion brands. The results indicated that there exists a strong indication of the inclusion of sustainable technology in the fashion industry.

Khandual & Pradhan (2018) conducted short-term research by gathering responses from Gen Z consumers to determine the importance of mediation between product engagement and fidelity objective, as well as validating the significance of product knowledge oversight. The author observed the direct and indirect consequences of product love in expanding existing models and proposing new ones. According to the author, advertisers in practically every product category have a lot of promise in rising markets like India. However, due to the advent of a fashion-loving age, gen Z, the fashion clothes category has emerged as an attractive market.

The author stated that today's retailers place a premium on client loyalty, and this study aids in the development of better branding efforts.

conducted the study in the town of Jalandhar in Punjab and discussed customer satisfaction level and factors that contributed towards the purchase of ready-made garments. They also widened their study to understand the major consumer requirements that might be helpful in guiding the ready-to-make

garment manufacturers to plan growth. This study described that Tommy Hilfiger and Peter England were the most popular items in the town of Jalandhar and the key items dominating the purchase of clothing in terms of price and quality.

Rajput et al., (2012) presented a study that described the different factors that affect the purchase decision based on the gender perspective. The author performs a survey on empirical findings and applies the chi-square test by using a sample of 320 participants who lived in Delhi and the NCR region of India. The major objective of the paper was to identify consumer awareness towards the different apparel brands that were available in the Indian market. The experimental results had shown that there was not any significant difference that defines the awareness of brands, shopping frequency between females and males.

- **Statement of the Problem**

In today's era, youth consumers play the most important role in every field, and hence their role cannot be neglected to analyse the fashion industry. The research problem is to analyse the effect of the demographic profiles of consumers and the factors that impacts on the apparel buying behaviour of youth consumers. In this respect, the current study focuses on analysing youth consumer perception in the Punjab state of India towards buying brands. In other words, the study aims to find the difference in the youth consumer perception concerning to gender, age, location, and the occupation of consumers as well the prominent factors that drives the buying behaviour of the youth consumers while making a purchase decisions.

- **Research Methodology**

Apparel is one of the retail categories described in the Indian retail report published by Knight Frank Report 2015 that shows that by 2028, the modern retail sector is going to increase by 50% in NCRs. Therefore, the primary analysis moved within the Punjab region to estimate the consumer pattern with respect to the branded clothes. In the analysis, the number of consumers against each demographic profile is confined to 400 youth over various regions of the Punjab viz-a-viz Amritsar, Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Bathinda, Patiala, and Mohali.

- **Objective of the study :**

- a. To explore consumers' perception towards branded clothing in Punjab.
- b. To study the factors that influence the consumer buying behaviour towards branded clothes

To fulfill the objective, demographic profile-based analysis is conducted to have an overview of consumer perception. Further few statements were framed to judge the consumer response so as to find the factors that impacts their purchase decisions.

Consumer Perception Analysis in Punjab

The analysis is mainly performed to find out the major demographic profiles that play a key role in

determining consumer perception. The number of respondents falling under each category is summarized in Table 1.1 against each variable used in the youth perception analysis.

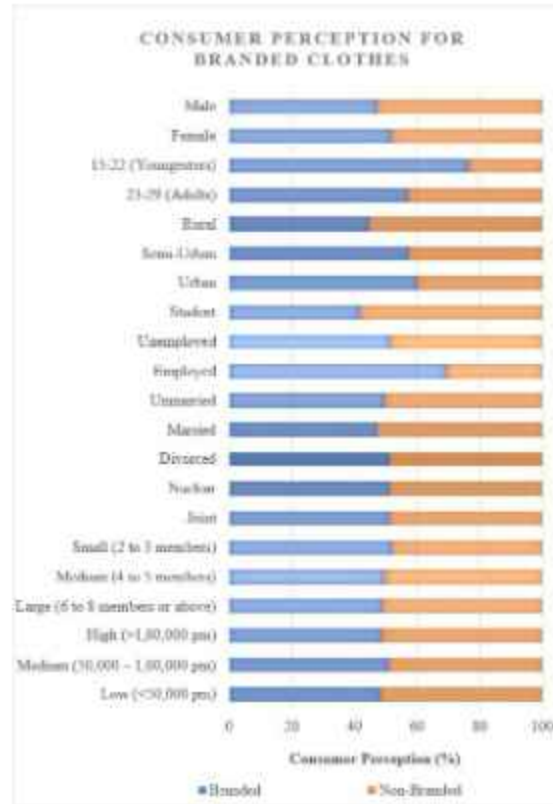
Table 1.1 Distribution of Consumer Responses

Demographic Profiles of the Consumer		Consumer Responses	
		In Favour of Branded Apparel	In Favour of Non-Branded
Gender	Male	95	105
	Female	104	96
Age	15-22 (Youngsters)	101	31
	23-29 (Adults)	154	114
Location	Rural	45	55
	Semi-Urban	69	51
	Urban	108	72
Occupation	Student	39	54
	Unemployed	31	29
	Employed	172	75
Marital Status	Unmarried	74	75
	Married	102	114
	Divorced	18	17
Family Structure	Nuclear	121	115
	Joint	84	80
Family Size	Small (2 to 3 members)	35	32
	Medium (4 to 5 members)	100	101
	Large (6 to 8 members or above)	65	67
Family Income	High (>1,00,000 pm)	65	68
	Medium (50,000 - 1,00,000 pm)	100	101
	Low (<50,000 pm)	84	89

Source: Primary Data

The consumer's responses and their views in favor of branded apparel are collected and analyzed. The study comprised demographic profiles namely, gender, age, location, marital status, occupation, family structure, family size, and family income. As illustrated in Figure 1.1 explains that most of the demographic variables did not exhibit a large difference in consumer perception.

Figure 1: Consumer Perception Analysis in Punjab



Source: Primary Data

The consumer perception analysis is summarized as follows:

*In the case of gender, 47.5% of the males had their inclination towards branded apparel while 52% of females have an attraction for the brand. This shows that male and female consumers have different perceptions of brand. Hence, gender is considered a significant variable in determining consumer attraction for the brand.

*In the case of age, youngsters and adults have a high attraction towards the brand that ranges from 23.48% to 76.51%.

* The location also showed significant variation in consumer perception as it has ranged from 40% to 60%.

*Occupation covers, students, unemployed and employed consumers who displayed a wide range of perceptions ranging from 30% to 69%.

*The marital status of the consumer did not show much effect in governing the consumer perception towards buying branded apparel which is reflected by the perception variation from 48.78% to 52.7% which is not a big measure.

*Similarly, family structure and family size exhibited the perception difference that ranges from 48.7% to 51.2%, and 47.76% to 52.21% which is not a significant difference.

*On similar grounds, family income is also found insignificant as the difference in the perception is found to be only 2% to 3%.

Factor Analysis of Data Collected from Punjab

Various statements intend to understand the variables that influence the young minds while making a purchase decision are enquired. Factor analysis is conducted to analyze interrelationships among many variables and to explain these variables in terms of their common underlying dimensions (factors).

Table: 2 Factor Loadings for Factors Affecting Consumer Buying Behavior toward Branded Clothes.

Statements	COMPONENTS						Cronbach Alpha
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Advertisement							
1. Endorsement by celebrities affects my buying behavior				.972			.968
2. Apparels endorsed by celebrities are of high quality				.972			
3. In stores, ads influence the buying decision				.793			
4. I refer to advertisements before making a purchase decision				.964			
Social Media							
5. Social media is an effective and powerful platform to communicate with consumers.						.974	.973
6. Purchase of apparel is highly influenced by feedbacks (reviews/comments/posts etc.) on social media						.985	
7. Information on social media has high credibility						.984	

Social Factor							
8. I buy apparels that my role models use	.947						.949
9. My Spouse /family affect the types of apparel I purchase	.947						
10. I buy apparel which is of my social class	.879						
11. My religion plays a vital role in deciding the apparels I purchase	.941						
12. I usually look to my peers' advice when buying apparel	.947						
13. My culture prohibits me from buying certain apparel	.879						
Materialism							
14. I gain much pleasure from purchasing apparel frequently	.885						.947
15. My life would be better if I am able to own something I don't currently have.	.872						
16. I have high regard for people who purchase branded clothes, accessories, etc	.884						
17. I frequently buy only things I need	.895						
18. I always prefer to buy a brand that impresses others	.895						
Need for Uniqueness							
19. I stop wearing the apparel I have that is commonly being worn by masses			.915				.975
20. My favorite brands in apparel greatly express my individuality			.857				
21. I like to buy unique apparel to show others that I am different			.918				
22. I don't value and buy the apparel that is purchased by the masses			.918				
Social Recognition							
23. I am more recognized and admired by others if I wear branded clothes.					.859		

24. Shopping for branded apparel is a matter of pride					.804		
25. I like to present apparels before my friends and family					.865		.990
26. I buy branded clothes just to show off that I can afford them					.865		
Eign Value	9.048	5.002	3.362	2.634	2.354	1.268	
Variance %	34.8	19.23	12.93	10.13	9.05	4.87	
Cumulative Variance %	34.8	54.038	66.968	66.968	86.156	91.032	

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

An Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using Principal Components with Varimax rotation has been applied to investigate the factors that **influence consumer buying behavior toward** branded clothes out of the 26 items. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test values are calculated to measure the satisfactoriness of the sample. **A Calculated value of .843, which is more than the cut-off point of .45(Gupta & Gupta,2011), indicated that the sample size of 400 is adequate to perform factor analysis.** Additionally, the result of the Bartlett test of sphericity is also found to be significant (sig-value .000). Significant Bartlett test of sphericity showed that there is a high enough degree of correlation between at least several the variables; thus, data is appropriate for Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). Factors are extracted based on criteria of Eigenvalue greater than 1 and minimum factor loading 0.30. **Based on factor loadings, all the items have been grouped under six factors which are named Social factor, Materialism, Need for uniqueness, Advertisement, Social recognition, and Social media.** The Cronbach Alpha value for all the variables is higher than .70, which is the generally accepted value of alpha (Arora, 2015). Therefore, the scale is consistent thus reliable. The items falling under each factor are as follow:

1. Social factor: This factor accounted for **34.8%** of total variance. The six items falling under this factor are:

- *I buy apparels that my role models use.
- *My Spouse /family affect the types of apparel I purchase.
- *I buy apparel which is of my social class.
- *My religion plays a vital role in deciding the apparels I purchase.
- *I usually look to my peers' advice when buying apparel.
- *My culture prohibits me from buying certain apparel.

2. Materialism: This factor accounted for **19.23%** of the total variance. The five items falling under this factor are:

*I gain much pleasure from purchasing apparel frequently.

*My life would be better if I am able to own something I don't currently have.

*I have high regard for people who purchase branded clothes, accessories, etc.

*I frequently buy only things I need (**R**).

*I always prefer to buy a brand that impresses others.

3. Need for uniqueness: This factor accounted for **12.93%** of the total variance. The four items falling under this factor are:

*I stop wearing the apparel I have that is commonly being worn by masses.

*My favorite brands in apparel greatly express my individuality

*I like to buy unique apparel to show others that I am different.

*I don't value and buy the apparel that is purchased by the masses.

4. Advertisement: This factor accounted for **10.13%** of the total variance. The four items falling under this factor are:

*Endorsement by celebrities affects my buying behavior.

*Apparels endorsed by celebrities are of high quality.

*In stores, ads influence the buying decision.

*I refer to advertisements before making a purchase decision.

5. Social recognition: This factor accounted for **9.05%** of the total variance. The four items falling under this factor are:

*I am more recognized and admired by others if I wear branded clothes.

*Shopping for branded apparel is a matter of pride.

*I like to present apparels before my friends and family.

*I buy branded clothes just to show off that I can afford them.

6. Social media: This factor accounted for **4.87%** of total variance. The three items falling under this factor are:

*Social media is an effective and powerful platform to communicate with consumers.

*Purchase of apparel is highly influenced by feedbacks (reviews/comments/posts etc.) on social media

*Information on social media has high credibility

Conclusion On the basis of the above results, the researcher explored six factors that impact the buying behavior of youth of Punjab. These are Need of Uniqueness, Social Media, Advertisement, Social Recognition, Materialism, and Social Factors. Among these social factors, materialism and need of uniqueness are the most influential factors that drives the purchase intentions of youth of Punjab today. Also, gender, age, location, and occupation profiles play a significant role in

governing young consumer perception for buying branded apparel. Hence, branded apparel segment can be a promising sector in Punjab for a new start-up, which the youth can look upon.

References

- Agarwal, V. (2019). Technology, sustainability, and consumer expectation√ New ways of thinking about future fashion. *In Research into design for a connected world* (pp. 403-411). Springer, Singapore. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-5974-3_35
- IBFL, Top Indian Brands with Foreign Labels, <https://www.walkthroughindia.com/shopping/top-10-indian-clothing-brands-with-foreign-labels/>
- Gandhi, M., Ubba, S., & Jyoti. (2023). Effect of Consumer Value Perception on Consumer Purchase Intention: A Case of Private Label Apparels. *Global Business Review*, 09721509231166256. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09721509231166256>
- Jhanji, K. (2020). Study on Impact of Apparel Brand Name in Consumer Behaviour for Casual Wear Clothing on Youth of India, *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*, 5(12), 810-826. <http://bitly.ws/9nMw>
- Khandual, A., & Pradhan, S. (2018). Fashion brands and consumers approach towards sustainable fashion, *Fast fashion, fashion brands and sustainable consumption*, Springer, 37-54. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-1268-7_3
- Mc Kinsey's Report, The Rise of Indian Consumer Market, Accessed Online at https://www.mckinsey.com/~media/mckinsey/featured%20insights/asia%20pacific/the%20bird%20of%20gold/mgi_rise_of_indian_consumer_market_full_report.pdf
- Rahman, O., Fung, B., & Chen, Z. (2020). Young Chinese Consumers' Choice between Product Related and Sustainable Cues√ The Effects of Gender Differences and Consumer Innovativeness. *Sustainability*, 12(9), 3818. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12093818>
- Rathore, P., Saha, E., Dhalmahapatra, K., & Sambasivan, M. (2024). Impact of Branding on Customer Purchase Decision in Apparel Industry: An Application of Stimulus-organism-response Theory. *Vision*, 0(0). <https://doi.org/10.1177/09722629231225541>

Rajput, N., Kesharwani, S., & Khanna, A. (2012). Consumers' attitude towards branded apparels: gender perspective. *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, 4(2), 111. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ijms.v4n2p111>

Thakur, R. (2018). Customer engagement and online reviews. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 41, 48-59. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2017.11.002>