

CONSUMER PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS CLOTHING: A REVIEW PAPER

Dhama Aditi¹, Dr. Joshi Uma²

Research Scholar, Associate Professor

V.M.L.G College, Ghaziabad, U.P

C.C.S. University, Meerut, U.P

Abstract

“A book is judged by its cover and people judge others on the basis of their behavior”. Similarly, in the business world, a person’s appearance is important for building a positive impression in the market. Therefore, coming up with the right appearance and positive impression at the very first sight are two essential parts to be successful in business as there may not be a second chance. “Textile differentiates man from animal”. So, wearing perfect clothes is a significant part of one’s personality.

Keywords: Apparel, buying behaviour, purchase decision, product attributes

Introduction

Clothing is a form of non- verbal communication. It helps to establish the identity of an individual. It can give important information about the one’s occupation, origin, personality, opinion, taste and current moods, lifestyle, interest, social and personal relationship of the weaver. People in almost all societies have worn clothes since prehistoric times. The main function of clothing is to form a layer that protects the body against unsuitable physical environment clothing can protect against many other harmful things that might injure the human body. Many theories have been originated as to why human began wear clothes. It includes three major theories (modesty, adornment, protection).

Clothing serves as a symbol of role and status of the individual in society it obtains for the wearer, the rewards, as recognition, approvals and identification (Horns, 1975). Consumers use different forms of clothing to differentiate themselves symbolically from other consumers. Clothing selection criteria of consumers are influenced by various factors like demographic location, fashion industry, cultural, socio psychological and physical (Kaveh et al, 2016).

The apparel retail industry consists of the sale of all men’s wear, women’s wear and children’s wear. The men’s and women’s wear market includes men's active wear, casual wear, essentials, formal wear, formal wear-occasion and outer wear. The children’s wear market includes baby clothing, boy’s active wear, boy’s casual wear, boy’s essentials, boy’s formal wear, boy’s formal wear-occasion, boy’s outerwear, girl’s active wear, girl’s casual wear, girl’s essentials, girl’s formal wear-occasion, girl’s outer wear and toddler clothing (Chandra, P., 1998).

APPLICATIONS OF CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR

There are four main applications of consumer buying behaviour:

- The foremost application is for marketing strategy—i.e., for making better marketing campaigns. For example, by understanding that consumers are more receptive to food advertising when they are hungry, we learn to schedule snack advertisements late in the afternoon. By understanding that new products are usually initially adopted by a few consumers and only spread later, and then only gradually, to the rest of the population, we learn that (1) companies that introduce new products must be well financed so that they can stay afloat until their products become a commercial success and (2) it is important to please initial customers, since they will in turn influence many subsequent customers' brand choices.
- A second application is public policy. In the 1980s, Accutane, a near miracle cure for acne, was introduced. Unfortunately, Accutane resulted in severe birth defects if taken by pregnant women. Although physicians were instructed to warn their female patients of this, a number still became pregnant while taking the drug. To get consumers' attention, the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) took the step of requiring that very graphic pictures of deformed babies be shown on the medicine containers.
- Social marketing involves getting ideas across to consumers rather than selling something. Marty Fishbein, a marketing professor, went on sabbatical to work for the Centers for Disease Control trying to reduce the incidence of transmission of diseases through illegal drug use. The best solution, obviously, would be if we could get illegal drug users to stop. This, however, was deemed to be infeasible. It was also determined that the practice of sharing needles was too ingrained in the drug culture to be stopped. As a result, using knowledge of consumer attitudes, Dr. Fishbein created a campaign that encouraged the cleaning of needles in bleach before sharing them, a goal that was believed to be more realistic.
- As a final benefit, studying consumer behavior should make better consumers. Common sense suggests, for example, that if you buy a 64 liquid ounce bottle of laundry detergent, you should pay less per ounce than if you bought two 32 ounce bottles. In practice, however, you often pay a size premium by buying the larger quantity. In other words, in this case, knowing this fact will sensitize you to the need to check the unit cost labels to determine if you are really getting a bargain.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Studying consumer behaviour is a scientific process that covers the process of consumers to choose, secure and dispose the goods and services which satisfies their needs (Anderson, Fell, Smith, Hansen, & Gomon, 2005). Gupta and Rana (2017) emphasized on the importance of consumer behaviour. The authors stated that in order to get in touch with consumers at the right time, it is vital that marketers must recognize behaviour of consumer initially and then appropriately decide the message, followed by accurate frequency and time management to make certain success. The familiarity of consumer behaviour is a major concept to understand

marketing strategy to satisfy the need of consumer. Tauber (1972) acknowledges 'learning about new trends' is taken as an ingredient in the group of 'personal needs'.

Arnold and Reynolds (2003) illustrate that 'idea shopping' is classified as one motive category, which refers to 'shopping to keep up with trends and new fashions, and to witness latest products and innovations'. Lots of consumers do shopping to know the most recent trends, new goods or existing innovations. Studies are needed with large random sample size on youth for wearing apparel to generalize the results (Chen & Hong, 2002). Goswami (2007) states that youth as a separate potential segment in India for consumption has not been much focused.

Krishna and Shylajan (2007), Tanwar (2015), Gaur and Gupta (2016) and Khare (2016) put efforts to understand the habitual buying behaviour of branded items. Researchers made a conceptual model giving significance to demographic variables. But the identification of factors to understand consumer behaviour towards purchase of brand apparel remains untouched. Sahay and Sharma (2010) highlighted that further research was needed on consumer behaviour of youth across different products.

Seock and Bailey (2008) state that future studies must account for consumption of youth for different products from different geographical areas. Consumer need satisfaction is a must for gaining loyalty of the brand. A study conducted by Chatterjee, Shainesh, and Sravanan (2014) also presented a distinct function of customer loyalty in the perspective of the telecom industry in which interaction effect and not the direct effect of loyalty and past usage forecast the usage of customers in the telecom industry. For example, Zara, a small Spanish local brand, has achieved a fashion icon status in apparel brands in 2001. It is probably the most innovative and devastating retailer across the globe as stated by LVMH fashion director, Daniel Piette, with more than 2,000 plus stores.

Zhang, Li, Gong, and Wu (2002) and Dickson, Lennon, Montalto, Shen, and Zhang (2004) focused on the importance of style as a purchase parameter while making any decision. Cowart and Goldsmith (2007) declared style as one of the major motives behind any purchase of apparel. Style of apparel will come out of an available variety of the product where a variety of selection is considered as driving force for the purchase decision of apparel (Park & Cho, 2012). Today's customer is quite price-sensitive, especially in developing countries like India. Financial aspect has its own importance in making a purchase decision. Despite good brand name, good comfort and style, price acts as a key decision-maker in apparel purchase (Iwanow, McEachern, & Jeffrey, 2005; Summers, Belleau, & Xu, 2006). To get a product of your choice of colour, style, design with ample variety in suitable price is itself a big deal, but when it is conveniently not available the whole exercise will not help. Xu and Paulins (2005) in their study showed the impact of online shopping where the product of choice is conveniently available. Another aspect which is vital in the purchase decision of apparel is brand association (Park & Srinivasan, 1994).

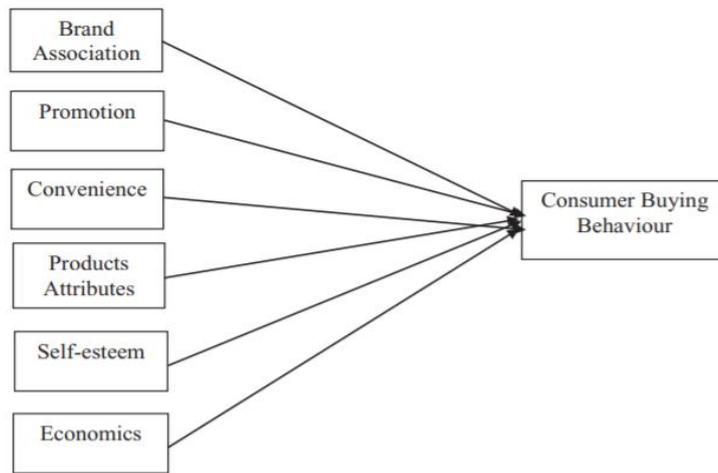
Lijander, Polsa, and Van Riel (2009) revealed store image as a risk reducer, whereas Ha, Kwon, and Lennon (2007) has focused on in-store advertisement as a big promoter for the sales of apparel. Backstrom and Johansson (2006) also laid emphasis for in-store advertisement and in-store experience which drives a

customer to buy any apparel. Not only in-store advertisements but the outdoor advertisements also have a crucial impact on customer's mind. Paulins and Geistfeld (2003), Hustvedt and Dickson (2009) and Narang (2011) in their studies argued that advertisements were among the major factors which led to any purchase decision among the buyers. Celebrity endorsement is one of the forms of advertising and has a significant impact on the buyer's mind (Chan, Ng, & Luk, 2003; Choi, Lee, & Kim, 2005; Fernandez, 2009; Tantisenepong, Gorton, & White, 2012). Park and Cho (2012) and Wolny and Mueller (2013) elaborated upon the impact of word of mouth (WOM) on the purchase decision, especially in case of appeals. WOM from friends or a relative may be in the form of online or offline mode which helps decide to purchase, and sometimes it is a major factor. Convenience regarding the exchange and durability has shown the importance for purchase decision of apparel (Dawson & Kim, 2010; Joung & Park-Poaps, 2013).

THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

A theory provides a researcher with a constructive set of ideas that facilitate making sense of a phenomenon. It can also be termed as something that can be proved or disproved. A number of different approaches have been adopted in the study. Various theories or models on consumer behaviour provide an overview of the purchase decision. The economic theory of Alfred Marshall focuses upon the minimum expenditure, but focuses upon those items which provide maximum utility. Maslow (1973) in his hierarchy of needs specified that behaviour of an individual is determined by the strongest need at one point in time. Consumer needs have priority, initially, primary needs are to be fulfilled then consumer goes for satisfying the secondary needs. The purchasing course of action and behaviour is administered by various kinds of driving forces or motivation. The driving forces encourage consumers into action and starts with a need or desire. It is a force that drives to take action and a mental phenomenon.

Kotler (2003) supported Maslow's theory of motivation to understand the consumer needs and suggested that the objectives of marketing professionals can be achieved if the consumer purchase behaviour is studied significantly. The expectation–confirmation theory (Oliver, 1980) confirms that in case perceived performance meets up the anticipation, confirmation is created and the consumers need to get satisfied. Kotler (2003) states that contented consumer may recommend others and will purchase the same products due to the interactive relationships. Nicosia (1966) model also explains the significance of interactive association in the form of preference, attitude and motivation, thus connecting company and consumer. Chae, Black, and Heitmeyer (2005) states that culture as an external factor has a significant influence on lifestyle and adjustment to the environment, and it affects the motives and choices when they go for shopping. Lifestyle is also an important factor towards the purchase decision and has been tested by Mishra, Dash, and Dianne (2014). The consumers of apparel brands are likely to give consideration to substantial properties and traits of the apparel which consist of quality and fit (Kaiser, 1998).



Brand Association:

Brand association can be explained as knowledge, awareness and passion of a group as consumer towards the brand. Impression of brand association is the vital source of information to explain the passion of consumers towards a particular brand. Researchers efforts show brand association contribute significant impact in recognizing consumer choice, priorities and intention to pay the cost for passion to brand (Agarwal & Rao, 1996; Park & Srinivasan, 1994; Yoo, Donthu, & Lee, 2000). H1: Dimensions of brand association as country of origin, in-store ads and store image attract consumer to purchase branded apparels.

Promotion:

Substantial efforts have been put forward by producers and retailers to give ultimate value to apparels for drawing attention of consumers. The promotional strategies such as friends, salesperson suggestion, celebrity intervention and discount scheme are followed to ameliorate the instant rate of purchase in consumers. The social learning theory emphasizes on the positive role of stimulus in reinforcing the positive consumer behaviour towards purchase. Celebrity interventions such as celebrityowned brands and celebrity–anchored brands are found as turnaround for branded apparel markets. Promotional strategies attract the consumer for purchase of branded apparels (Sheu, 2010). H2: Promotional strategies such as celebrity interventions, discount schemes, salespersons opinions and friend suggestions give direction to consumer for purchase of branded apparels.

Convenience:

Convenience delivers a considerable role in drawing attention of consumer towards purchase of apparels. The findings of Zhang et al. (2002) on convenience reveal that its factor durability delivers a significant role in the purchase of branded apparels in China. Researchers had made the use of consumer style inventory designed by Sproles and Kendall (1986) in the research study. In another study by Langley, Durkcaz, and Tanase (2013), it was found that in United Kingdom, 52 per cent consumers prefer to purchase the apparels which assure them durability. H3: Convenience factors such as fit, durability and exchange draw the attention of consumer in purchase of apparel.

Self-esteem:

Self –esteem in the terms of branded apparel such as comfort, variety and style were found as determinants of purchase of apparels (Banister & Hogg, 2004). Rosa, Garbarino, and Malter (2006) state that self-esteem affects consumers association with apparel and turn them towards purchase behaviour. H4: Self-esteem factors such as style, variety, comfort and brand name affects consumer towards purchase of apparels.

Product Attributes:

Chae et al. (2005) state that comfort draws the attention of female consumers in the purchase of brand apparels. Tong and Hawley (2009) found brand equity as determinant of self-esteem. Consumer social cognitive about brand, design style, price, colour and country of origin also affect consumer purchase behaviour towards brand apparels. Social cognitive theory describes that self-regulation and self-efficacy determines the lifestyles of the consumers. The product attributes such as colour and fabric influence the purchase behaviour of consumer. Jamal and Goode (2001) state that brandconscious consumer has deliberation on product attribute while buying branded products. H5: Product attributes such as fabric and colour affects the consumer in purchase of apparels.

Economics: Economy in price drives the consumer to purchase apparels if the prices are found as per consumer interest (Gönsch, Klein, Neugebauer, & Steinhardt, 2013). If the prices are more than consumer expectation, consumer shows his unwillingness to purchase of apparels (Zeithaml, 1998). H6: Economic factor such as pricing affects the purchase of apparel behaviour. In light of the earlier facts, the consumer buying behaviour model is proposed in Figure 1. The major ground of consumer shopping orientation is that consumer takes various approaches to the act of shopping. Hence, the present study examines different shopping motivations that consumers take up and how these styles relate to purchase intentions (Gehrt, Rajan, Shainesh, Czerwinski, & O'Brien, 2012). The different driving forces to be studied in the present study are brand association, promotion, convenience, self-esteem, product attributes and economics or pricing. There is presence of various global brands in the Indian apparel market and these brands are assumed to be offering quality to the consumer. In the present study, branded apparel is also explored as driving force towards apparel purchase among the youth. The preliminary points for doing evaluations are the favoured product attributes which can be done to compare and evaluate the products available, then enable the consumer to shortlist among various alternatives and finally decide about the purchase. Lack of adequate research work on consumers' buying behaviour, specifically for apparel in India, has brought forth this study. So the final hypothesis can be concluded as H: Brand association, promotion, convenience, self-esteem, product attributes and economics influence the consumer buying behaviour.

Conclusion

From the above stated details, it is concluded that the buying behavior is not only concerned with what they buy but when, where and how often they buy the products and services. There are various factors like social, personal, cultural, psychological and fashion which influence their buying decision process. Consumer buying behavior is very important and useful topic for further search because it enables the

manufacturers/designers/entrepreneurs to understand and predict the behavior of consumer in the marketplace.

References

- [1] Aaker, D. A. (1991). *Managing brand equity: Capitalizing on the value of a brand name*. New York, NY and Canada: Maxwell Macmillan.
- [2] Agarwal, M. K., & Rao, V. R. (1996). An empirical comparison of consumer-based measures of brand equity. *Marketing Letters*, 7(3), 237–247.
- [3] Anderson, R. C., Fell, D., Smith, R. L., Hansen, E. N., & Gomon, S. (2005). Current consumer behaviour research in forest products. *Forest Products Journal*, 55(1), 21.
- [4] Backstrom, K., & Johansson, U. (2006). Creating and consuming experiences in retail store environments: Comparing retailer and consumer perspectives. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 13(6), 417–430
- [5] Fan, J. X., & Xiao, J. J. (1998). Consumer decision making styles of young adult Chinese. *The Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 32(2), 275–294.
- [6] Horn, M.J. and Gurel , L.M. (1968) : *The Second Skin-An Interdisciplinary study of clothing* Boston Houghton Mifflin company, 17-58.
- [7] Isabel, J. G. and Graeme, R. S. (2015). Communicating culture: an examination of the buying behaviour of ‘tweenage’ girls and the key societal communicating factors influencing the buying process of fashion clothing. *Journal of targeting, measurement and analysis for marketing*, 14(2), 101–114.
- [8] Kaveh, P., Setayesh, S., Arash, K. and Pejvak, O. (2016). *Consumer Behavior Research: A Synthesis of the Recent Literature*. SAGE, 1–9.