

COMPARITIVE STUDY OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOR IN ONLINE AND TRADITIONAL METHOD OF BUYING FASHION

'The difficulty lies, not in finding a producer, but in finding a consumer'
-Book III on Consumption, Chapter IV, p 399

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Abstract: In general words the fashion industry is defined as a complex and continuously changing industry according to the consumer's demands, which is directly or indirectly influenced by the universal trends and clothing styles from all over the world. Due to the globalisation of all the markets, the range of products offered to the population is bigger and also gives the customers a wide variety of options to choose from.

Consumer Behaviour is the vital factor for successful marketing. It is categorised by variety of new points and is also based on many factors like interdisciplinary science which includes; genetical, and psychological anthropology, marketers, fashion researchers, retailers and the customer's status, background, preference, brand loyalty and such other factors.

In this article we will be comparing the behaviour of the consumers who purchase online and who purchase directly from the store.

Index Terms: Fashion, consumer behavior, marketing, brand, online. -

1.0 Introduction

Today's Fashion Industry is a rapidly growing and continuously changing industry in the whole world. The fashion industry in India currently is considered dynamic and successful. For the last few decades due to technological improvements and various other factors fashion industry in India is experiencing a boom due to increase in fashion consciousness.

Marketing is much more than creating a catchy phrase, and also has an important part of understanding the consumer behavior.

Consumer behavior research is the scientific study of the consumer's mind process's which they use to select, use and dispose the products and services that satisfy their wants. There is a popular recognition that consumer behavior is the key to successful marketing. In this way, the behavior of consumers has been characterized by a variety of views and interdisciplinary science.

The primary goal of marketing, carrying out business is to end up in selling products and earning profits. This can be done through many ways but the most commonly used methods are online shopping websites and traditional method of buying directly from the stores.

1.1 *Online shopping*

Now a days online shopping seems to be the easiest solution for the current world's busy life. Clearly there has been a notable change in the consumer's way of shopping within the past decade. Even though consumers still purchase from the physical store, the consumers still find the online shopping more convenient amidst their busy work schedule. Online shopping not only saves time but also offers a variety of choices so many international brands which the consumer might not be able to find in physical stores.

Unlike the physical stores, the products sold online have a brief description, clear pictures, and more importantly the reviews of consumers who have previously bought the same product, so that we can refer to all of them before buying the product this helps in making the purchase effective and adds value to the product quality.

2.0 *Primary factors*

In order to understand how consumer behavior affects marketing, it's important to understand the three factors that affect the consumer behavior: Psychological, personal, and social.

- *Psychological factors*

In their daily life, the consumer's buying decisions are influenced by various processes which are unique to their thought process. Psychological factors include the perception of a situation or need, the ability of the person to understand the information or the garment. Each person responds to the marketing message based on their attitudes or even based on the brand. These must be taken into consideration while creating campaigns or so on.

- *Personal factors*

These are the characteristics which are specific and varies from person to person and may not relate to other people within the same group. These may include characteristics like making decisions, their habits and interests, and opinions. When considering the personal factors, the decisions are also influenced by the age, gender, culture and even the background.

- *Social Factors*

The third factor has the most significant impact on the behavior of the consumer. Social influences are diverse and it may also include a person's family, social interaction, work communities, or any group of people. It also includes the social class which involves the income, their education level and even their living conditions.

2.1 *Secondary Factors*

- Demographic characteristics affects the type of clothing that individuals will consume fashion.
- Age still remains as one of the main factors influencing a person's buying behavior despite social changes which have taken place over time.

- Gender, also an important factor affecting the person's clothing choice. Gender also tends to be important since there are comparatively very few unisex fashion items.
- Occupation refers to the fact about how clothing can be chosen to reflect one's status either in profession or in living.
- Economic circumstances which tend to change in situations.
- Social class
- Role of peer pressure:

Peer is generally referred to as friend or siblings. They are that list of people that an individual keeps in mind when he/she purchases. Peer group are also considered to be important because, they influence and inform people about the specific products and brands.

1. They influence on attitudes, actions and thoughts of an individual.
 2. Influence the products purchasing decisions.
 3. Encourages people to buy new fashion.
- Stimuli: These are the environmental happenings that influence consumer behavior. The decision-making questions like What, Why, How, Where and When consumers purchases are influenced by three major factors namely:
 1. The id, which states the structure of personality that includes unconscious nature.
 2. The super ego, which refers to the individual's internal way of expressing the society's ethical codes of conduct and moral norms of the society.
 3. The ego, which is based on the principle of reality or may be defined as the consumer's conspicuous control.
 - The role of mass media affects the consumer's fashion by advertising products using famous celebrities, etc. this has a major role in the shaping the consumer's way of thinking too. But this also increases our fashion awareness by watching television or listening to radio.

3.0- *How has the stay-at-home economy changed fashion?*

The recent trend of buying stuff by staying at home has pulled so many consumers at a high rate by using digital devices to buy food, clothes, etc.

The practice of skipping the shops and staying at home to surf through the latest trends on your phone or such other devices has revolutionised the fashion world, despite there being an obvious drawback of not being able to try the clothes on when you are at home and the clothes are either in the store or in warehouse. The customers can select at least three products which can be delivered in reusable, resealable, and returnable box which in the sense, once they have tried the clothes, they can send back the clothes which didn't fit them properly.

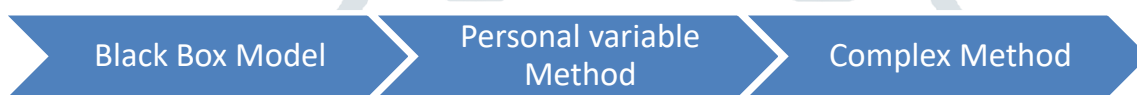
This is explicitly based on the concept of encouraging the customers to experience the same benefits they would get in a store, right by staying at home.

This may seem like the fashion industry has improved a lot but in the other aspect it undeniably brings out the fact that, these improvements make the customers very lazy.

At the end of the day, this leads to a situation where the visual merchandise displays, the store interior decorations are no longer used or effective other than for posting pictures of the stores online so as to attract the customers to buy the products online.

3.1 *Consumer Behavior Model*

By the means of conducting many research, surveys and observation; several models have been developed that supports and explains the reasons why consumers make decisions. This includes the three types namely:



- **Black Box Model**

This is based on external stimulus-response referring to something that triggers the consumer to make decisions to buy the product which are influenced by many factors which includes marketing messages, product availability, price and promotions.

- **Personal Variable Method**

In this model, the consumers tend to make decisions based on internal factors like their individual opinions, personal beliefs, values, culture and tradition, own goals or such other individual influence.

- **Complex Method**

This being the third consumer model, takes into consideration both the influences\variables namely internal or external.

3.2 *Impact of Social Network*

- **Consumer loyalty**

The social network has become the most common place where the consumers flock to show their brand loyalty towards their favourite brands, etc.

For instance, Consumers using Zara, Tommy Hilfiger, iPhone, etc leave no chance to flaunt of their trendy garments or gadgets in social media either through hashtag posts or even the increased follower counts or ads.

- These websites take this as a chance to share or retweet the customer posts then relay these ideas to people all over their network

- Thus, when one person decides to use hashtags or write about some particular brand on Instagram, Facebook or such social media pages, it leaves a huge impact on the brand's popularity or even the other brand's popularity.

This is because humans have the tendency to believe or follow the information suggested by their friends or peers rather than reading them on some brand websites.

- One another feature is that, the brands have official Instagram or Facebook pages through which they can directly interact with customers and people.
- The recent trend is about having official app. Now we have the option of availing discounts and offers by installing the official application in play store.

For Instance, We have the option of availing 25% discount on the products in myntra when we order it by installing the app.

4.0 *Survey*

Based on this topic a survey was conducted asking customers their opinions towards online shopping and in store shopping and the findings are;

What's your gender?

40 responses

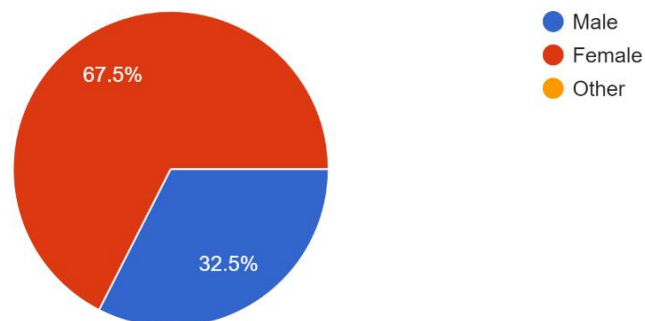


Fig: 1.0

What's your age?

40 responses

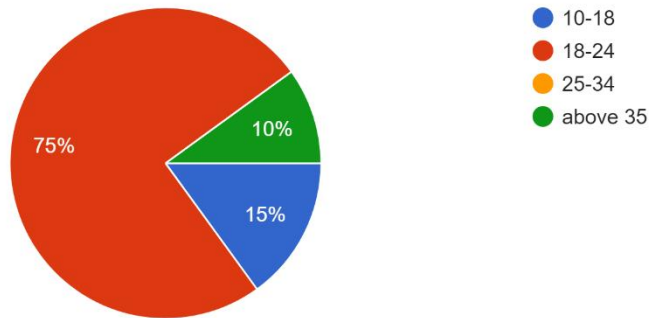


Fig: 1.1

What is your current occupation?

40 responses

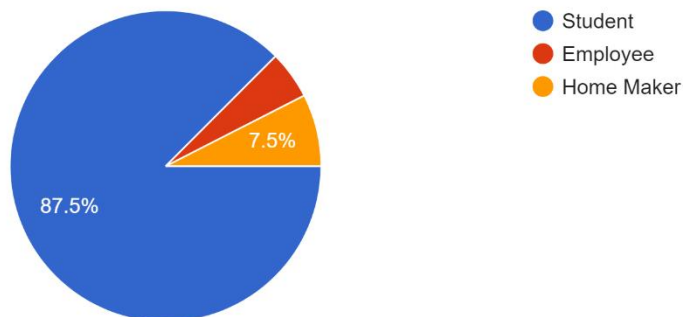


Fig: 1.2

What is your current monthly income?

40 responses

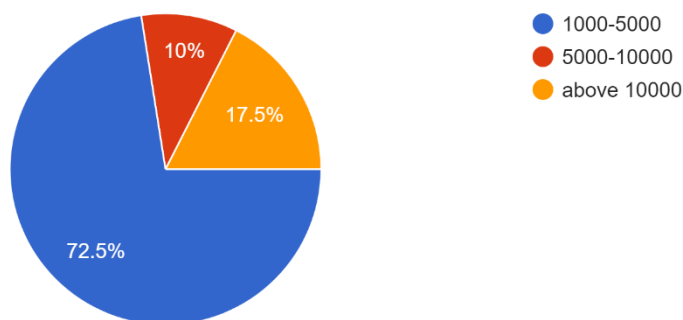


Fig: 1.3

On average, how often do you shop on-line ?

40 responses

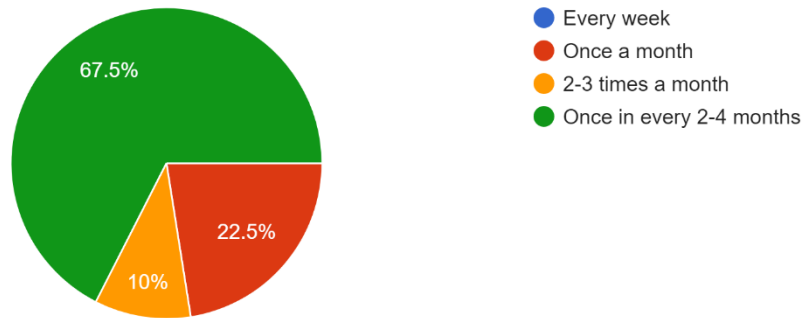


Fig: 1.4

Why are you choosing to shop on-line?

40 responses

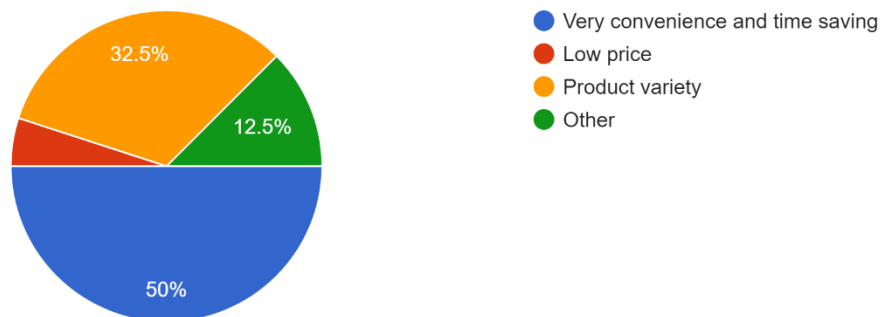


Fig: 1.5

Which one matters you the most while shopping on-line ?

40 responses

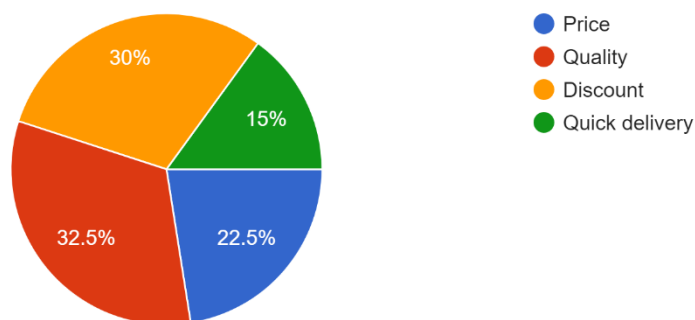


Fig: 1.6

How often do you go to the shops directly?

40 responses

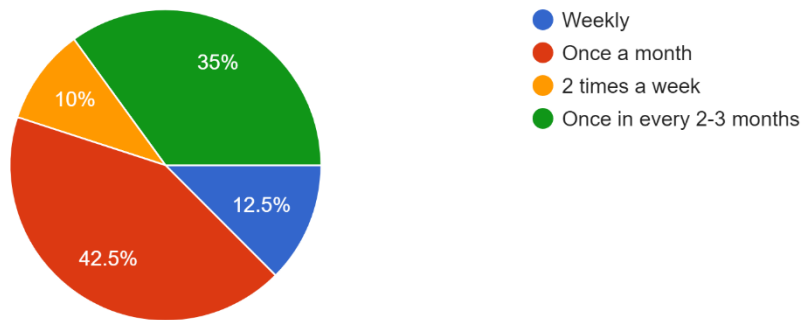


Fig: 1.7

Why do you prefer physical store?

40 responses

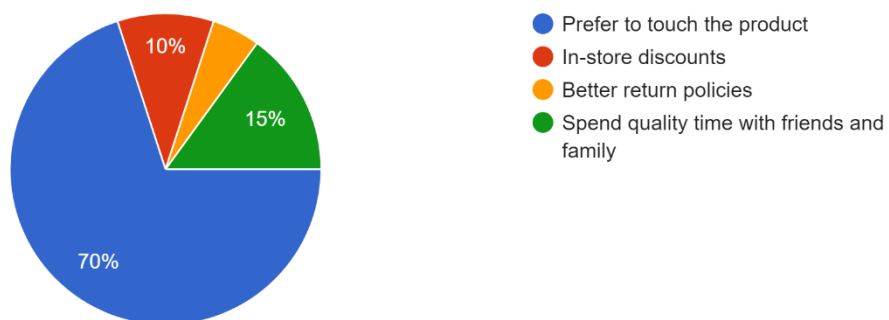


Fig: 1.8

Which method of purchasing do you prefer?

40 responses

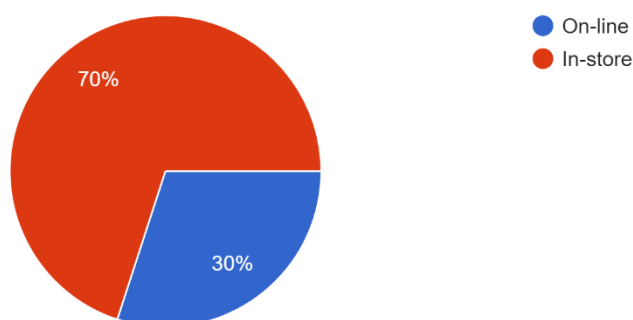


Fig: 1.9

Survey Results

The survey is based on the opinion of 40 respondents, in which 67% (27) are female and the rest are male (fig 1.0)

This survey is overall based upon the major opinion of the teenage boys and girls. (fig 1.1)

As stated before, most of the respondents are teenagers and are mostly comprised of students going to college or high school. (fig 1.2)

Most of the respondents tend to be students and mostly get a minimum pocket money allowance ranging from 1000 to 5000 which can be considered as their monthly income so as to determine their purchasing power (fig 1.3)

As stated before now a day's people tend to always stay in touch with internet and stuff, they are often exposed to online products and buy online clothing and accessories at least once in 2-4 months. (fig 1.4)

Online shopping is obviously the most convenient option where the consumer can save the cost of transport, traffic and time. Some people also tend to shop online so as to get a variety of options including international stuff. (fig 1.5)

The survey has also revealed the fact that most of the consumers tend to prefer online shopping to get discount coupons, free gifts which they can get by downloading the app or shopping for the first time or even during special occasions. (fig 1.6)

From the survey conducted, it can also be known that there are equally number of people who go to physical stores. This includes the majority opinion of teenagers and people above age of 35 who are married or employed. (fig 1.7)

This might seem old but still all consumers of whatever age they may be, they still tend to buy the product by touching and seeing it directly.

As of concerned in the area of fashion clothing shopping, the most important factor is the type of material and its quality, most of the time the fabric is not as the same as we see in the picture description in the website. (fig 1.8)

To sum up the overall opinion, most of the respondents prefer to buy the garments and other fashion accessories directly from the store in order to ensure better quality and value to the price of the product. (fig 1.9)

The Wrap Up

The purchase done by consumers is influenced by various factors. The consumers are more influenced by their friends, family, magazines, celebrities, etc. The main criteria's which effect the buying behaviour towards fashion apparels are the quality, comfort, brand. Even though all the demographic factors like gender, age, occupation and monthly income don't have any big impact on buying

behaviour of consumers towards fashion apparels. To finally wrap up the whole article, it can be concluded that online shopping is suitable to the current life style but still people prefer to directly go to the store and buy the product after seeing it directly.

Online stores are preferred at certain events when we are in a hurry while, traditional method is highly preferred to buy products in bulk or at high cost.

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