

**BUYING BEHAVIOUR AND PURCHASE DECISION TOWARDS BRANDED APPARELS
AMONG MALE CONSUMERS IN COIMBATORE DISTRICT, TAMIL NADU****Dr. B. Jeeva Rekha**Assistant Professor and Research Supervisor,
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Assistant Professor in Commerce, Annai Women's College, Karur District, Tamil Nadu**Abstract**

The Indian apparel Industry has been a remarkable success story and made India proud with its gigantic growth in recent times. The industry has grown at a delirious pace in last two decades creating huge volume of demand due to changing life style and concern for professionalism. Though professional treatment is inculcated in marketing the product of the Industry, still there is a gap in expectation and delivery. The success of retaining the employee depends on strategies to be framed to retain customers. The study reviewed the literature survey and explored the insights of previous studies undertaken by the researchers. The study examined the critical practices adopted by branded companies and its impact on customer retention. The aim of the study is to focus on the comprehensive insight is limited to men wear. The effect of buying behaviour, customer expectation and customer satisfaction on customer purchase decision is analysed. The analysis includes demographical study and simple ranking technique to observe the Buying Behaviour and Purchase Decision towards Branded Apparel Retail among Male Consumers in Coimbatore District

Introduction

The Indian economy stands out as one of the rapidly emerging economies globally, witnessing significant shifts in consumer preferences. The Indian apparel industry, being the second-largest contributor to the retail sector, has witnessed sustained growth, driven by rising incomes and increased exposure to international brands. Today, Indian consumers have become increasingly brand-conscious, using branded products as symbols of status and prominence. The apparel industry in India is highly influenced by evolving consumer preferences, spurred by rapid urbanization and higher disposable incomes. Consumers are now more fashion-conscious, with easy access to fashion trends and updates through various media channels. Fashion consumption patterns have evolved, with some individuals using fashion as a means of self-expression on a larger scale.

Each year, new fashion trends emerge globally, influencing clothing production and consumer preferences, especially among the youth who are willing to invest significantly in branded clothing.

There is a widespread perception that branded clothing offers superior quality and satisfaction, leading to a growing number of brand-loyal consumers willing to pay premium prices. The concept of being brand-conscious has gained immense popularity, particularly among the younger demographic, driven by increased income levels, enabling them to purchase from prominent clothing brands with a sense of fulfillment. As spending on apparel continues to rise among consumers, understanding the changing behavior of Indian consumers becomes crucial for apparel retailers. The market value of textile and apparel across India in the financial year 2022 was 80 billion U.S. dollars and this value was estimated to reach 190 billion U.S. dollars by 2026.

Need for studying Customer Buying Behavior

Consumer behavior encompasses the study of individuals' purchasing patterns, encompassing what, when, and why they buy. This holds true within the retail industry, including the apparel sector, where consumers may be either subjective or objective in their evaluation of brand offerings. Retail outlets not only offer products but also play a crucial role in aligning with customers' preferences. Factors such as store layout, ambiance, and the assistance provided by sales personnel significantly influence purchasing decisions. Moreover, consumers may choose specific products or brands not solely based on their functional benefits but also as a means of self-expression, reflecting aspects of their personality, financial status, or affiliations. Consumer behavior delves into the emotional and cognitive processes underlying product evaluation, purchase decisions, and post-consumption experiences. It encompasses the complex interplay of factors influencing individuals' selection, acquisition, utilization, and disposal of products, services, or ideas to fulfill their needs and desires, with implications for both the individual consumer and society at large.

Scope of the study

This study focuses on investigating consumer buying behavior towards branded apparel retailing specifically within Coimbatore District, Tamil Nadu. It encompasses an examination of various factors influencing consumer preferences and purchasing decisions, including brand perception, product quality, pricing strategies, promotional activities, cultural influences, and socio-economic factors unique to the District. Additionally, the research aims to explore different consumer segments based on demographic characteristics and analyze the entire purchase journey, from awareness to post-purchase experiences. By providing insights into the retail environment and conducting a comparative analysis between different types of branded apparel retailers, this study seeks to offer actionable recommendations for retailers and marketers to enhance their strategies and better meet the needs of consumers in Coimbatore District.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the vibrant retail landscape in Coimbatore District, Tamil Nadu, there exists a gap in understanding the intricacies of male consumer buying behavior towards branded apparel retailing. While the district boasts a diverse range of branded apparel retailers, ranging from domestic to international brands, little research has been conducted to comprehensively analyze the factors influencing consumer preferences and purchasing decisions within this context. Consequently, there is

a need to investigate the key determinants shaping consumer behavior towards branded apparel retailing in Coimbatore District, including brand perception, product quality, pricing strategies, promotional activities, cultural influences, and socio-economic factors. Additionally, exploring the role of the retail environment and understanding the purchase journey of male consumers can provide valuable insights for retailers and marketers seeking to enhance their strategies and effectively cater to the needs and preferences of male consumers in this geographic area.

Objectives of the study

- To study the buying patterns and decision-making processes for branded men's apparel in Coimbatore District
- To determine which store attributes, influence consumers' purchase decisions and the factors that guide their choice of retail outlets.

Research Methodology

This study is systematically organized and scientifically analyzed the data. Both descriptive and empirical analyses are simultaneously employed to derive results based on the objectives of the study.

Sampling

The multi-stage sampling procedure has been adopted to choose the sample consumers. In the first stage, the Coimbatore District was *purposively* selected, as it has diverse population and the location familiarity of the researcher.

In the second stage, there are 39 male specific branded apparel retail stores in Coimbatore District. Based on simple random sampling, 10 stores have been selected for the survey.

In the third stage, quota sampling has been used for the study. There are four age categories involved for an indepth study viz., Gen Z, Millennials, Gen X and Boomers (including I and II). Total sample size is derived upto 100 samples among the 10 branded shops as stated below:

Table – 1.2
Determination of sample size under quota sampling (For 10 stores)

Age strata	Sample Respondents
Gen Z	25
Millennials	25
Gen X	25
Boomers	25
Total	100

Brand Chosen for the study

- ✓ **Allen Solly:** Known for its stylish, casual wear with a focus on modern designs.
- ✓ **Louis Philippe:** Offers premium, formal wear with a reputation for quality and sophistication.
- ✓ **Van Heusen:** Provides a mix of formal and casual apparel, known for its comfortable and versatile clothing.
- ✓ **Trends:** Offers a wide range of trendy and affordable men's apparel, focusing on current fashion.
- ✓ **Raymonds:** Renowned for its premium fabrics and formal wear, also known for its classic and traditional styles.
- ✓ **Ramraj:** Popular for traditional and semi-formal wear, especially dhotis and shirts with a focus on comfort.
- ✓ **Polo Classic:** Provides a blend of casual and semi-formal wear with a classic and timeless style.
- ✓ **Peter England:** Offers a wide range of affordable formal and casual wear, known for its value for money.
- ✓ **Jack & Jones:** Known for its contemporary, casual fashion with a focus on jeans and casual wear.
- ✓ **Indian Terrain:** Features casual and smart-casual apparel with a focus on outdoor and rugged styles

Limitations of the study

- Coimbatore District consists of customers with urban, semi urban and rural background. The results derived from the analysis may or may not be suitable for other Metropolitan cities.
- This study has targeted male respondents only. Findings and suggestions are given to the retail stores for promoting male customer specific branded retail apparels.
- Money and time constraints impose major limitations to the study and forced to restrict the respondents with in a stipulated time.
- The study covers only branded apparel retail businesses. The results obtained from the study may or may not be applicable for other type of trade.

Review of Literature

Kumar and Sharma (2021) conducted a comprehensive study on consumer preferences for branded apparel in India, focusing specifically on male consumers. The research is designed to uncover the underlying factors that drive purchasing decisions in this demographic. Through a detailed analysis, the study highlights three critical elements that significantly influence consumer choices: brand loyalty, perceived quality, and the impact of marketing strategies.

Ravi and Prasad (2020) delve into the influence of brand image on consumer purchasing behavior within urban India, with a specific focus on cities like Coimbatore. The study investigates how a brand's image—encompassing its reputation, perceived prestige, and overall market positioning—shapes consumer trust and influences buying decisions for men's apparel. The authors find that a strong and positive brand image significantly enhances consumer trust, which in turn impacts purchasing behavior. Consumers are more likely to choose brands they perceive as having a reputable image, as this association fosters a sense of reliability and quality. The study highlights that in urban settings, including Coimbatore, the brand image not only affects immediate purchasing decisions but also contributes to long-term brand loyalty. This effect is amplified by the growing role of digital media and

advertising in shaping consumer perceptions, further solidifying the importance of maintaining a favorable brand image in a competitive market.

Analysis & Observations

Demographic Profile

The researcher has collected 100 sample respondents with the demographic details such as Age, Educational Level, Occupation and Income with the analysis as below;

Table 1.1
Demographic Profile

Demographic Factors	Categories	No. of Sample Respondents	Percentage (in %)
Age	Below 20 years	22	22
	21-40	34	34
	41-60	24	24
	Above 60	20	20
Educational level	School level	6	6
	Diploma	13	13
	Graduate	39	39
	Post Graduate	28	28
	Professional	14	14
Occupation	Students	20	20
	Private Employee	32	32
	Government Employee	26	26
	Businessmen	21	21
	Others	1	1
Income	Below Rs.25,000	18	18
	Rs.25,001- Rs,50,000	26	26
	Rs.50,001-Rs.75,000	17	17
	Rs.75,001- Rs.1, 00,000	14	14
	Above Rs.1, 00,000	20	20

The above table clearly shows that the highest 34% of the sample respondents belong to the age

group of 21 to 40 years; 39% of the sample respondents have educational level with graduate category; highest 32 % of the sample respondents were employed in private jobs and highest 26% of the same respondents belong to the income level of Rs.25,001- Rs,50,000.

Buying Behaviour and Purchase Decisions

Today consumers have become more demanding, desire for world class products as well as experiential shopping. Thus, the swing in consumer behaviour charms world's biggest players in these emerging markets. The weightage on buying behaviour and purchase decisions of the sample respondent are measured by simple ranking technique as below;

Table 1.2
Buying Behaviour and Purchase Decisions

Statement	Ranking
Purchase decisions are influenced by fashion consciousness.	II
Preference to wear and try before purchase influences your purchase decisions	V
Store image has influenced your purchase decisions of apparels.	VIII
Preference to use favorite brand regularly	VII
Prefer to buy branded apparels in view of its socio-economic value.	IV
Eco-friendly fabrics such as organic cotton, jute, silk etc. Influence purchase decisions	I
Receiving or giving branded apparels as gift influences purchase decisions	X
Emotional feelings are important while purchasing apparels	IX
Ethical practices of business are important to buy branded apparels	VI
Preference to purchase apparel that highlights personality traits.	III

The table above clearly shows that through the customers move towards branded apparels Eco-friendly fabrics such as organic cotton, jute, silk etc influence the purchase decisions with ranking I; Fashion Consciousness with Rank II; Purchase apparel that highlights personality traits with ranking III; Socio-economic value with rank IV; Preference to wear and try before purchase influences as ranking V; Ethical practices of business with rank VI; Preference to use favorite brand regularly as rank VII; Store image as VIII; Emotional feelings as IX and receiving or giving branded apparels as gift influences purchase decisions as rank X.

Recommendations

As per the observations from the study it is advisable make available with culture based ethnic and traditional wears to capture the minds of age groups above 60 years. Similarly, they can display more clothes for teen agers. The retail stores have to concentrate more towards professional wears also. It is recommended that the retails shops should concentrate to sell cloths to all occupation level to increase the sales. It is also concluded that the purchase of high income groups are less in Coimbatore District when compared to middle income groups. Hence, the wearing pattern for middle income groups can be improved.

The table with buying behaviour and purchase decisions shows clearly the statement with 10 rankings in Coimbatore District. This ranking schedule may change as per the sample respondents and period of the study.

Conclusion

The study explored the factors contributing to customer's preference, customer's expectation, customer's satisfaction and customer's purchase behaviour. The study mainly focuses on men's apparel and data collected from respondents in Coimbatore District. It considers variables like customer's preference, customer's expectation, customer's satisfaction and customer's purchase behaviour.

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