



CUSTOMERS' PREFERENCE FOR APPAREL BRANDS WHEN SHOPPING ONLINE- A STUDY

Dr. S. Cecily

Principal, Meenakshi Ammal Arts and Science College, Uthiramerur – 603406

ABSTRACT

In today's technology-driven society, client preferences have shifted substantially with majority of the age group between 18 and 30 years preferring to buy garments online. The fashion companies, in particular, are given a high priority when it comes to buying by the majority of teens and this fact has prompted numerous online shopping websites to cater to the youth market. The purpose of this study is to articulate customers' perceptions about online buying with particular emphasis on Apparel Brands.

KEY WORDS: *E-Commerce, Online Shopping, Preference, Perception.*

INTRODUCTION

The internet is transforming the way customers shop and purchase items and it has grown to become a worldwide phenomenon. Numerous businesses have begun to utilise the internet in order to reduce marketing costs, consequently lowering the price of their products and services in order to compete in the highly competitive marketplaces. Additionally, businesses utilise the internet to transmit, communicate and publish information.

Due to the various advantages and benefits, an increasing number of consumers now choose online shopping to traditional shopping. In recent years, the buyer's decision-making process has shifted substantially. Buyers perform thorough research online before meeting a sales representative. Additionally, buyers are making more direct purchases online, using their smartphone and bypassing conventional brick-and-mortar businesses entirely. The internet has significantly simplified and accelerated the process of conducting business. It has resulted in a shift in how individuals do business with a fast rising global trend toward online buying or e-commerce. E-commerce thus facilitates market the product, solicit feedback and perform customer satisfaction surveys. Customers utilise the internet not just to purchase products online, but also to compare prices, product characteristics and the after-sale support they will receive from certain retailers. Experts are optimistic about the future of online commerce. Additionally to the enormous potential of present and future e-commerce customers, it is a boon. It has been more than two decades since the emergence of business-to-customer e-commerce. Electronic commerce scholars and practitioners are

continually striving to get a better understanding of customer behaviour in cyberspace.

ONLINE SHOPPING AND E-COMMERCE IN INDIA

The rapid growth of e-commerce in India over the last two decades and rising internet and mobile phone penetration has changed the way we communicated and do business. Electronic commerce is a relatively new concept. It is heavily reliant on the internet and mobile phone revolutions to fundamentally alter how businesses interact with their customers at the moment. The industry of online fashion retailing is booming. Numerous sites have popped up in recent years, all vying for a piece of an extremely satisfying retail pie. Additionally, this competition has resulted in both small and large businesses innovating in order to stay ahead of a ferocious pack.

Additionally, the segment is attracting capital. According to a report published by consultancy Technopak titled 'Apparel E-tailing in India,' the country's \$130 million apparel "e-retailing space" has attracted investments totaling \$70 million, or 40% of the total funding received by Indian online retailers over the last two years. Increased customer-driven purchases in durables and electronics, apparel and accessories as well as traditional products such as books and audio-visual are expected to drive growth. The birth and growth of the internet has been the century's most significant events. E-commerce in India has come a long way since its timid beginnings in the 1999-2000 period to a point where anyone can sell and find anything online, from high-end products to meagre peanuts.



The majority of businesses use the internet to showcase their product line and services in order to make them accessible to a global market and to reach out to a larger range of their audience. The apparel brands are making significant investments in online shopping capabilities and interactive features to complement their apps and websites. Retailers and manufacturers are rushing to release new products in order to keep up with fast fashion leaders such as Zara, H&M, and Forever 21, which release new fashions on a weekly or biweekly basis. There are a lot of reasons why customers today prefer shopping online:

1. **Convenience** - The convenience is the biggest perk. Where else can you comfortably shop at midnight while in your pajamas? There are no lines to wait in or shop assistants to wait on to help you with your purchases and you can do your shopping in minutes. Online shops give us the opportunity to shop 24/7 and also reward us with a 'no pollution' shopping experience. There is no better place to buy informational products like e-books, which are available to you instantly as soon as the payment goes through. Downloadable items purchased online eliminate the need for any kind of material goods at all, as well, which helps the environment!
2. **You can send gifts more easily** - Sending gifts to relatives and friends is easy, no matter where they are. Now, there is no need to make distance an excuse for not sending a gift on occasions like birthdays, weddings, anniversaries, Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day and so forth.
3. **Price comparisons** - Comparing and researching products and their prices is so much easier online. Also, we have the ability to share information and reviews with other shoppers who have firsthand experience with a product or retailer.
4. **No crowds** - People hate crowds when shopping. Especially during festivals or special events there can be such a huge headache. Also, it tends to be more chaotic when there are more crowds out and this sometimes makes us feel rush or hurried. Parking also becomes a huge issue. All of these problems can be avoided when you shop online.
5. **No need to travel** - People don't usually like to move a lot to get what they want. Of course, nothing can compete with experience of going to a cloth boutique and buying what you want, but normally people just don't want to travel. Customers don't usually live near the shops they would want to visit, but today they have an option to visit the shop online.

CUSTOMER BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS PURCHASE OF ONLINE APPAREL

The phrase "customer attitude towards online shopping" refers to a person's psychological condition when it comes to buying purchases online. The term "online purchasing behaviour" refers to the act of purchasing goods online. The process of internet shopping is similar to that of conventional purchasing. Prior to making a final purchase, the client is inundated with a variety of factors that limit or affect the buyer's ultimate decision.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objective of the research study is to investigate customer behavior toward purchasing online apparel, which in turn provides e-marketer with a constructional framework for their e-business strategies. The specific objectives of this research are:

1. To study and determine the level of customer awareness about online buying.
2. To identify the various factors which motivate a customer preference of online shopping
3. To estimate the preference of apparel brands by the customers
4. To analyze the problem customers face during online shopping.

METHODOLOGY

In order to identify and gain insight into the most essential characteristics that online consumers consider when making clothes purchases on the internet, a survey was conducted. To further improve customer awareness and increase the effectiveness of their online marketing strategy, the findings of this research will be provided in the form of a simplification for online garment purchases. It was necessary to collect primary data through the use of a structured questionnaire, which was closed ended and had questions that were meant to evaluate respondents' levels of satisfaction while keeping the study's objectives in mind. Secondary data was obtained through websites as well as from a few research publications that were linked to this issue. The complete data collection process is carried out in order to get insight into the purchasing habits of clients who make purchases of online clothes. The number of participants in my project is 100.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the study on 70 respondents chosen for the field survey, the Cronbach's alpha is computed to evaluate the internal consistency among the variables studied. The results are presented in Table-1.

Table-1: Reliability Analysis results

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.938	23

Source: Primary Data

An alpha value of 0.938 was obtained from the data in Table-1 for the 23 questions used to construct the survey and shows that there is good internal consistency among the survey items.

T-TEST RESULTS

The Sample T Test compares the means of two independent groups in order to determine whether there is

statistical evidence that the associated population means are significantly different. The Sample T Test is a parametric test. This test is also known as: Sample t Test. To analyze the gender wise significant difference in the perception of the customers, independent sample t-test is applied and results are shown in Table-2.

Table-2: Results of Independent Sample t-test

Independent Samples Test										
		Levine's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Employment Type Of Respondent	Equal variances assumed	.224	.638	-1.376	68	.173	-.337	.245	-.825	.151
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.382	67.638	.172	-.337	.244	-.823	.150

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation

Ho: There is no significant difference in the perception of male and female customers on purchasing apparel online.

H1: There is significant difference in the perception of male and female customers on purchasing apparel online.

P=.173 which is greater than .05 then we have to accept Ho. Hence, it is proved that there is no significance difference in the perception of male and female customers on purchasing

apparel online.

Results of Chi-square Test

The relationship between location of the consumers and choice of garment brands through online purchasing is investigated using Chi-square test. Results are given in Table-3.

Table-3: Chi-square test results

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.558 ^a	4	.816
Likelihood Ratio	1.570	4	.814
Linear-by-Linear Association	.682	1	.409
N of Valid Cases	70		

a. 4 cells (40.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.94.

Source: Primary Data



Interpretation

Null Hypothesis (Ho)

Ho: There is no significant association in between locality of the customers and preference on apparel brands through online shopping.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1)

H1: There exists a significant association between locality of the customers and preference on apparel brands through online shopping

Hence, it is concluded from the table that there is no significant association between locality of the customers and preference on apparel brands through online shopping. Since

the analysis revealed that the asymptomatic significance level was .816 which is greater than .05 accept Ho and reject H1.

RESULTS OF CROSS TABULATION

The results on gender wise amount of transaction done through online shopping for the purchase of apparel brands is analyzed and presented in Table-4. From the results, it is clear that majority of the customers from both male and female category have opined that they shop below Rs.2500 through online shopping. Overall, majority of the customers are doing online shopping in the range of less than Rs.3000 for the purchase of apparel brands.

Table-4: Cross Tabulation Results

		Count				Total
		Amount of transaction done through online shopping				
		below 2500	2500-3000	3000-3500	above 3500	
Gender type of respondent	Male	17	6	11	0	34
	Female	15	11	3	7	36
Total		32	17	14	7	70

Source: Primary Data

Results of ANOVA test

The ANOVA test is applied to analyze whether there is

a significant difference in the amount of transaction done through online shopping. Results are presented in Table-5.

Table-5: ANOVA Test results

ANOVA					
Gender type of respondent					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.506	4	.126	.484	.747
Within Groups	16.980	65	.261		
Total	17.486	69			

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation

Ho: There is no significant difference in the amount of transaction done through online shopping.

H1: There is a significant difference in the amount of transaction done through online shopping.

P=.747 which is greater than .05 so we have to accept Ho. Hence, it is concluded that there is no significant difference in the amount of transaction done through online shopping.

which saves them time while also making them feel more comfortable with their purchase.

- ❖ I believe that the consumer should be made aware of the fact that one of the security features of using credit cards and debit cards is that they can be used in the event of a disagreement.
- ❖ It demonstrates that online purchasers are safeguarded against fraudulent use of a credit card or debit card, which is important.

FINDINGS & SUGGESTIONS

- ❖ The survey reveals that reviews are extremely popular among those between the ages of 15-20, with more than half of the sample population falling into this category.
- ❖ The purchase of online clothes, on the other hand, has an impact on individuals because they believe that online purchases are safe and they choose for doorstep delivery,

CONCLUSION

According to the research, online shopping is becoming more popular and is becoming a trend. This is due to the value proposition it provides to customers, which includes convenience, 24*7 shopping, doorstep delivery, a broad product selection and an ever-expanding range of unique and



unusual gift suggestions. The convenience, cost-effectiveness and safety of online purchasing can be enhanced if the buyer takes certain steps before making a purchase. Customers must exercise extreme caution when dealing with bogus shopping websites and the steep discounts promised by them on fashion brands.

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