

A STUDY OF CUSTOMERS BUYING BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS APPAREL IN AKOLA DISTRICT

Nikita Dattatray Borde

Dept. of Business Administration, & Research, Shri Sant Gajanan Maharaj College of Engineering, Shegaon
nborde68@gmail.com

Dr. M. A. Dande

Dept. of Business Administration, & Research, Shri Sant Gajanan Maharaj College of Engineering, Shegaon
madande@ssgmce.ac.in

Abstract

This research attempts to understand the buying behavior of customers towards garments in the Akola District and aims to identify the main factors that influence purchase decisions. The quantitative research survey covered 300 respondents of different age, income, and occupational stratus vis-a-vis structured questionnaire on the research subject. The findings reveal that quality (75%) followed by price (60%) are the most influencing purchase decisions, whereas brand image and social influence influence it. The demographic variables show a moderate relationship with buying behavior, wherein younger consumers (18-25 years) emphasize more on fashion and style while their older counterparts (45-60 years) solely look for quality and durability. This makes interesting recommendations for apparel retailers and manufacturers, such as that of quality assurance, competitive pricing, strong branding, and demographic based segmentation of the market. This study also academically contributes to the literature on consumer behaviour-as well as delivering applicable marketing strategies credibly directed toward the Akola District apparel market.

Keywords: Customer Buying Behaviour, Apparels, Akola District, Quality, Price, Brand Reputation, Social Influence, Demographic Factors, Consumer Behavior, Marketing Strategies

Introduction

This apparel industry is oriented to a dynamic competition due to consumer preference shifts, fashion changes, and other marketing factors considered. To form effective marketing strategies and initiation of customer demands, having a clear idea about customer buying behavior is crucial from the viewpoint of retailers and manufacturers. The present research is dedicated to analyzing apparel purchases in Akola District based on the environment surrounding demographic, psychological, and social factors.

Customer buying behavior is one of the multifactorial influences: quality, price, brand name, fashion trends, and social influence. On the other hand, demographic factors such as age, income, and occupation determine consumers' preferences. Young consumers vigorously pursue styles and trends; older consumers want the longevity and quality of their apparel.

A quantitative approach is used in the research, which was conducted through a structured questionnaire surveying 300 consumers for apparel in Akola District. The findings will offer apparel retailers and manufacturers valuable insight into revising marketing strategies, improving product supply, and enhancing customer satisfaction. By assessing the consumer behavior of this area, the sector can effectively segment its market for branding exposure and fine-tune its pricing strategies to get and keep customers.

The study expands the horizon of literature on consumer behavior and becomes a reference for the institutions working in the Akola District's apparel market. The importance of aligning business plans with consumer expectations for sustainable growth and competitive advantage in the fashion retail sector is emphasized here.

Literature Review:

2013: Factors Influencing Apparel Buying Behaviour

A study conducted in 2013 titled Factors Influencing Apparel Buying Behaviour in India: A Measurement Model explored the various elements that impact a consumer's decision-making process while purchasing apparel. The study identified multiple factors such as individual characteristics, reference groups, store attributes, promotional offers, and product attributes. It was found that consumer preferences were shaped by their personal experiences, brand loyalty, and external influences such as peer recommendations and advertisements. The study also suggested that store ambiance and customer service played a crucial role in influencing repeat purchases, highlighting the importance of in-store experience.

2014: Brand Image and Advertising Strategies in Apparel Purchases

The research highlighted that brand image plays a significant role in influencing consumer preferences, as customers tend to trust and prefer brands that maintain a consistent reputation for high quality and reasonable pricing. The study further explored the role of price perception in shaping consumer decisions. It found that affordability, combined with perceived value for money, was a key factor in purchasing behavior. Consumers were more likely to choose apparel brands that offered durable products at competitive prices, ensuring a balance between cost and quality. The study identified television commercials as a powerful medium for brand promotion, reaching a broad audience and creating strong brand recall.

2017: Consumer Buying Behavior Towards Fashion Apparels

A research study conducted in Ludhiana in 2017 analyzed the purchasing patterns of consumers regarding fashion apparel. The study found that younger consumers were more inclined towards branded and fashionable clothing due to their exposure to social media and changing fashion trends. Women, in particular, were found to be more brand-conscious and were influenced by advertisements and celebrity endorsements. The study also pointed out that while offline shopping was still the preferred mode of purchase, the rise of e-commerce platforms had started influencing consumer choices, especially in urban areas. However, concerns regarding product quality, size mismatches, and the inability to physically examine products were some of the barriers to online apparel shopping at that time.

2018: A Study on Consumer Buying Behavior for Branded Apparels

In 2018, a study focusing on branded apparel purchasing behavior in India highlighted the importance of brand image, product quality, and promotional offers in influencing customer decisions. The study revealed that consumers associated well-known brands with higher quality, durability, and social status. Discounts and promotional offers were also found to be major factors in attracting customers, as price sensitivity played a crucial role in purchase decisions. Moreover, the study emphasized that brand loyalty was stronger among consumers who had positive past experiences with a particular brand, leading them to make repeat purchases despite the availability of lower-priced alternatives.

2019: Brand Loyalty and the Rise of Digital Influence in Rural Maharashtra

Kulkarni et al. (2019) found that brand loyalty among rural consumers in Maharashtra was lower than in urban areas, as rural buyers were more price-sensitive and preferred local retailers over branded showrooms. However, the increasing penetration of smartphones and digital advertisements was gradually influencing their purchasing decisions. Exposure to online promotions and product information was making branded apparel more appealing, creating new opportunities for brands to expand in rural markets. The study suggested that with the right digital marketing strategies and competitive pricing, brands could cultivate loyalty among rural consumers over time.

2021: Changing Consumer Preferences in the Digital Era

A study conducted in 2021 focused on the shift in consumer preferences towards online apparel shopping. The increasing penetration of smartphones and internet accessibility had significantly influenced buying behaviour, making online shopping more convenient and popular. The research found that factors such as ease of access, time-saving benefits, multiple payment options, and a wider variety of choices were attracting consumers to online platforms. However, the study also noted that trust issues related to product quality, return policies, and delayed deliveries were still deterrents for many consumers. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the adoption of online shopping, as consumers preferred contactless transactions over visiting physical stores.

2022: Consumer Perception Towards Online Apparel Shopping

A research study conducted in Indore in 2022 explored the factors influencing consumer perception towards online apparel shopping. The findings indicated that brand reputation, user reviews, and the availability of return and exchange policies played a critical role in purchase decisions. The study also highlighted that digital advertisements and influencer marketing were increasingly shaping consumer preferences, particularly among younger age groups. Additionally, it was observed that consumers in tier-2 and tier-3 cities were gradually adopting online shopping, although offline stores still remained a significant part of their shopping habits due to trust and familiarity.

2024: Recent Trends and Preferences in the Indian Fashion Retail Industry

A recent study conducted in 2024 examined the latest trends and consumer preferences in the Indian fashion retail sector. The study found that sustainability and ethical fashion had started gaining importance among consumers, especially among millennial and Gen Z. Many consumers were now considering factors such as eco-friendly materials, fair trade practices, and corporate social responsibility initiatives before making their purchase decisions. Additionally, the rise of omnichannel shopping, where consumers combine online research with in-store experiences, was becoming a dominant trend. The study also noted that hyper-personalization, such as AI-driven recommendations and customized shopping experiences, was shaping the future of apparel retail.

Research Methodology:

Objective:

1. To observe the varying factors that play a role in the purchase decision of clothes such as quality, price, brand image, fashion trends as well as social influence.
2. To examine how demographic variables such as age, sex, income, occupation, and education influence a consumer's preference for an article of clothing and their behavior when purchasing it.
3. To analyze the role of digital marketing and social media in influencing apparel purchasing patterns across different consumer segments.

Analysis and Interpretation:

4. To evaluate preferences for online versus offline shopping among customers and the factors driving them.

5. To investigate the contribution of brand loyalty and customer satisfaction toward a repeat purchase of apparel.

6. To suggest apparel retailers and manufacturers how to better market their products through improved quality and pricing strategies as well as market segmentation in Akola District.

Data Collection Method

Primary method of data collection:

(Respondents :Businessman ,youths, Salaried people.)

- Interviews with questionnaires
- Open-ended questions
- Closed-ended questions
- Observations

Secondary method of data collection

- Existing reports
- Market analysis

Internet/Books/Journals and other written data

Research Type: Descriptive Research

Sampling Method: Convenience Sampling

Sample size: 100 (No of Respondents)

Collection of data through : Google form

Customers Buying Behavior Towards Apprels - A study						
Counts in %						
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
Top apparel factor?	20	36	28	20	6	100
Pay more for brand?	2	18	28	32	20	100
Price consideration frequency?	6	10	32	34	18	100
Age influences apparel?	6	10	32	30	22	100
Behavior changes with age?	4	18	24	30	24	100
Purchase satisfaction level?	4	22	30	24	20	100
Income affects spending?	0	14	34	42	10	100
Social media influence?	4	8	38	34	16	100
Online reviews impact?	0	20				

Analysis and Data:



The bar graph shows that most customers have a neutral (30.4%) or agreeing (30.4%) stance on factors influencing their apparel purchases. A moderate number of respondents disagreed (16.8%) or strongly agreed (16.8%), while only a small percentage (5.7%) strongly disagreed. This indicates that while factors like brand, price, and social media influence buying behaviour, most customers have a balanced perspective rather than extreme opinions.

Conclusion:

The study on customer buying behaviour towards apparel in the Akola district highlights key factors that influence purchasing decisions, including price, quality, brand reputation, fashion trends, and digital influence. The findings indicate that while affordability and quality remain primary concerns, brand loyalty and peer influence also play a significant role in shaping consumer preferences.

The research reveals a growing preference for online shopping due to convenience and access to a wider range of products, but offline stores still hold importance, especially for customers who prioritize the touch-and-feel experience before purchase. Demographic factors such as age, gender, income, and occupation significantly impact shopping behavior, with younger consumers being more brand-conscious and trend-driven, whereas older consumers prioritize durability and comfort.

Additionally, post-purchase behaviour suggests that customer satisfaction is influenced by factors like return policies, customer service, and product durability. The study underscores the need for apparel retailers to adopt a balanced approach, integrating both online and offline strategies to cater to diverse consumer preferences. Overall, the findings provide valuable insights for apparel brands and retailers in Akola to refine their marketing strategies, improve customer

engagement, and enhance the shopping experience to drive sales and customer loyalty.

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