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A Study of Consumer Purchase Intent and Brand Loyalty in India

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Abstract

The fast-fashion industry has experienced substantial growth in recent years, driven by changing consumer preferences, increasing fashion consciousness, and the expansion of global retail brands. Despite Zara's strong presence and popularity in the Indian market, understanding the factors that influence consumer purchase intention and brand loyalty remains an important area of investigation. This study aims to examine the impact of brand perception, brand experience, and social influence on purchase intention and brand loyalty among Zara consumers in India. A quantitative research approach was adopted using a structured questionnaire administered to 120 respondents selected through convenience sampling. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques, including percentage analysis, correlation analysis, and hypothesis testing. The findings indicate that consumers generally perceive Zara as a premium and fashionable brand, which positively influences their purchase intention. The results further reveal that positive brand experiences contribute significantly to customer loyalty, while social influence, particularly through social media and peer recommendations, plays an important role in shaping purchasing decisions. Additionally, a strong positive relationship was observed between purchase intention and brand loyalty. The study contributes to the existing literature on consumer behavior in the premium fashion retail sector and provides practical insights for retailers seeking to enhance customer engagement and long-term loyalty. The findings suggest that strengthening brand image, improving customer experience, and leveraging digital marketing strategies can support sustainable growth and competitive advantage in the evolving fashion market.

Keywords: Brand Perception, Brand Experience, Purchase Intention, Brand Loyalty, Social Influence, Zara, Consumer Behavior, Fast Fashion, India.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

The fashion retail industry has undergone significant transformation due to globalization, technological advancements, and changing consumer preferences. In recent years, premium fast-fashion brands have gained considerable popularity by offering trendy apparel, rapid product turnover, and accessible luxury experiences. Among these brands, Zara has established a strong presence in international markets, including India, through its ability to combine contemporary fashion trends with perceived product quality and brand prestige.

Consumer purchase intention and brand loyalty have become critical areas of interest for marketers and researchers because they directly influence organizational performance and long-term competitiveness. Purchase intention reflects the likelihood that consumers will buy a particular brand, whereas brand loyalty represents a consumer's commitment

to repeatedly purchasing and recommending the brand. Various factors such as brand perception, shopping experience, social influence, and emotional attachment contribute to shaping these consumer behaviors. Understanding these determinants is particularly important in India's rapidly expanding fashion retail sector, where consumers are increasingly exposed to global fashion trends and digital marketing influences.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The Indian fashion market has become highly competitive due to the entry and expansion of international fast-fashion retailers. Although Zara enjoys strong brand recognition and popularity among urban consumers, maintaining customer loyalty and sustaining purchase intention remain ongoing challenges in a dynamic marketplace. Consumers today are influenced by multiple factors, including social media engagement, peer recommendations, store experiences, and perceptions of brand value. However, limited empirical evidence exists regarding how these factors collectively affect purchase intention and brand loyalty toward Zara in the Indian context. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate the relationship between consumer perceptions and loyalty behaviors to provide insights for both academic research and managerial decision-making.

1.3 Research Objectives

The study was conducted with the following objectives:

1. To examine the factors influencing consumer purchase intention toward Zara in India.
2. To analyze the relationship between brand perception and brand loyalty.
3. To evaluate the impact of brand experience and social influence on repeat purchase behavior and loyalty.

Research Hypotheses

H₀: Purchase intention positively influences brand loyalty among Zara consumers.

H₁: Purchase intention does not positively influence brand loyalty among Zara consumers.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on consumer behavior in the fast-fashion and premium fashion retail sectors. By examining the factors influencing purchase intention and brand loyalty, the research provides insights into how consumers perceive and engage with Zara in the Indian market. The findings may assist retail managers in designing effective branding, marketing, and customer engagement strategies to strengthen consumer relationships.

1.5 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The scope of the study is limited to consumers who are familiar with Zara and have awareness of its products and brand image within India. The research focuses specifically on examining purchase intention and brand loyalty by considering factors such as brand perception, brand experience, and social influence. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire and analyzed using quantitative research techniques.

Despite its contributions, the study has certain limitations. The sample size was restricted to 120 respondents and was selected using convenience sampling. The study concentrated solely on Zara and did not include comparative analysis with other fast-fashion brands operating in India.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Summary of Previous Research

Consumer purchase intention and brand loyalty have been widely examined in marketing and consumer behavior literature, particularly within the fashion and retail sectors. Previous studies suggest that consumers' perceptions of a brand significantly influence their purchasing decisions and long-term commitment toward a brand. Researchers have consistently identified brand image, perceived quality, trust, and customer satisfaction as important drivers of purchase intention and loyalty.

Several studies on fashion retail brands have reported that consumers are more likely to purchase products from brands that are perceived as fashionable, reliable, and socially desirable. Positive brand perception creates favorable attitudes among consumers, thereby increasing their willingness to purchase and recommend the brand to others.

Research on brand experience highlights the importance of customer interactions with a brand across various touchpoints, including product quality, store atmosphere, visual merchandising, and service encounters.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The present study is grounded in the **Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)**, proposed by Icek Ajzen. According to this theory, an individual's behavioral intention is influenced by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Behavioral intention serves as an immediate predictor of actual behavior.

Within the context of this research, brand perception and brand experience contribute to the formation of positive consumer attitudes toward Zara. Social influence, including recommendations from peers, family members, and social media influencers, represents the subjective norm component of the theory. These factors collectively shape consumers' purchase intentions, which subsequently influence their loyalty toward the brand.

Conceptual Framework

Brand Perception —► Brand Experience —► Social Influence —► Purchase Intention —► Brand Loyalty

2.3 Identification of Research Gaps

- Most previous studies have focused on Western markets, with limited research on the Indian premium fast-fashion sector.
- Limited empirical evidence is available on the impact of social media and influencer marketing on consumer loyalty toward international fast-fashion brands in India.
- Therefore, there is a need for an integrated study that examines the combined influence of these factors on consumer behavior in the Indian fast-fashion market.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The present study adopted a **quantitative research approach** to investigate the factors influencing consumer purchase intention and brand loyalty toward Zara in India. A **descriptive research design** was employed to systematically examine consumer perceptions, attitudes, and behavioral intentions. This approach was considered appropriate because it facilitates the collection and analysis of numerical data from a large group of respondents, enabling objective evaluation of the relationships among the study variables.

3.2 Population and Sample

The target population comprised consumers in India who were familiar with Zara and had awareness of its products, brand image, and retail presence. The study focused on individuals from diverse demographic backgrounds, including students, employed professionals, and fashion-conscious consumers residing in metropolitan, tier-2, and tier-3 cities.

A total of **120 respondents** participated in the study. The selected sample provided sufficient data to analyze consumer attitudes and purchasing behavior related to Zara within the Indian fashion retail market.

3.3 Sampling Technique

The study utilized a **non-probability convenience sampling technique**. Respondents were selected based on their accessibility, willingness to participate, and familiarity with the Zara brand. This sampling method was chosen because it allowed efficient data collection within the available time and resource constraints. Although convenience sampling

may limit the generalizability of findings, it remains widely used in consumer behavior research for exploratory and descriptive investigations.

3.4 Data Collection Methods

The study primarily relied on **primary data collection**. Data were gathered through a structured online questionnaire distributed using Google Forms.

In addition to primary data, **secondary information** was obtained from academic journals, books, research articles, industry reports, and relevant online sources.

3.5 Instruments Used

A structured questionnaire served as the primary research instrument. The questionnaire consisted of **25 items** divided into two sections:

- **Demographic Information:** Questions related to age, gender, occupation, income level, and place of residence.
- **Study Variables:** Statements measuring brand perception, brand experience, social influence, purchase intention, and brand loyalty.
- Significance Testing using p-values

The analysis facilitated the identification of associations between purchase intention and brand loyalty as well as the influence of brand perception and brand experience on consumer behavior.

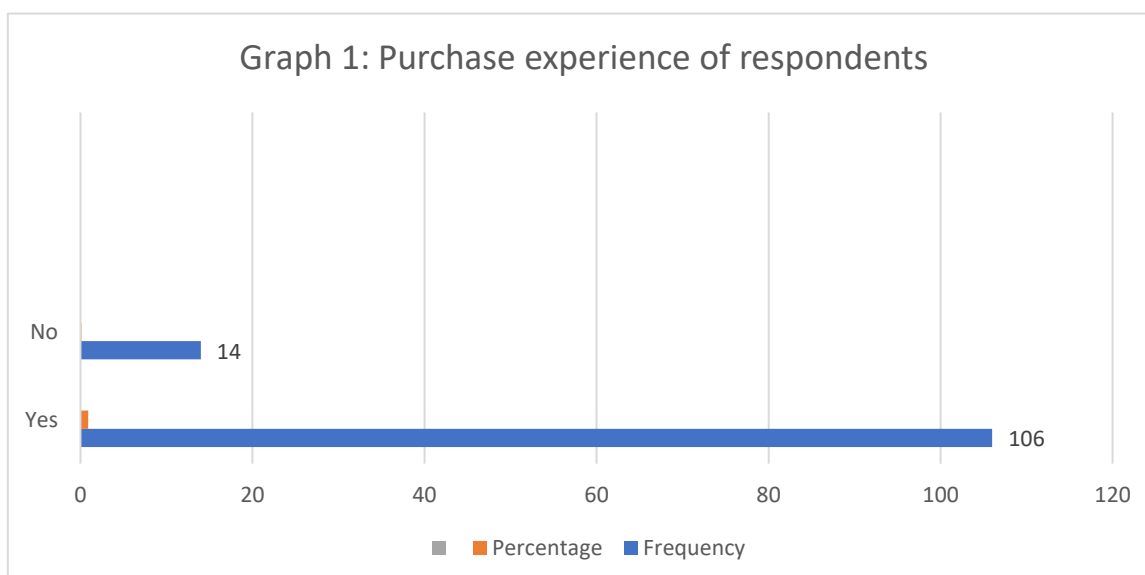
Data Analysis and Interpretation

4.1 Introduction

The data was collected by formulating a structured questionnaire which consists of 25 questions which were distributed among the consumers and those who are aware of Zara. A total number of 120 valid responses were collected and used for analysis.

Purchase experience of respondents

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	106	88.33%
No	14	11.67%
Total	120	100%

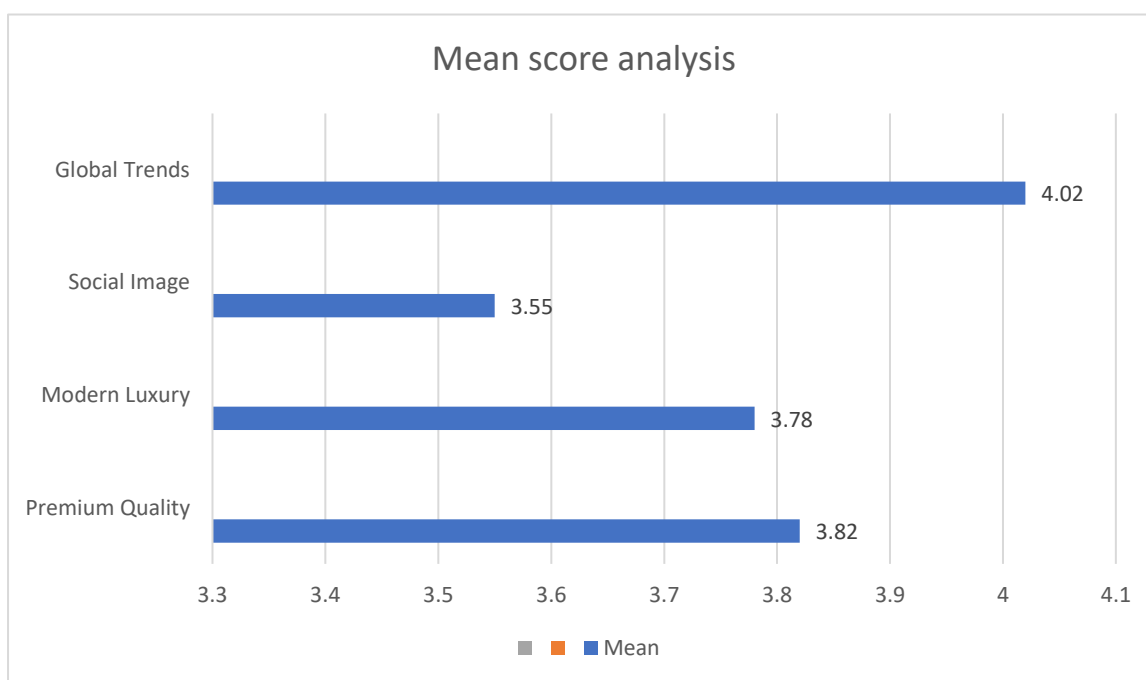


Interpretation: The above table shows that 88.33% of purchased Zara products either from E – commerce or by visiting offline stores, while only 11.67% of the respondents have not purchased from Zara. This indicates that the majority of respondents are aware and are familiar with Zara and have actual purchase experience. This usually strengthens the reliability of responses for analysing purchase intention and brand loyalty. This also indicates that Zara has strong brand penetration among respondents.

Mean score – brand perception

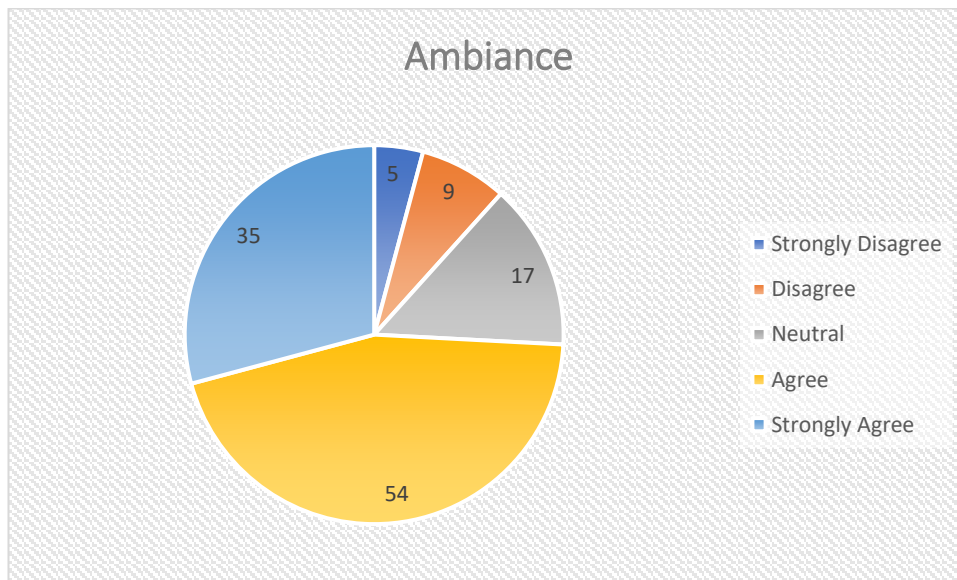
	Mean	Interpretation
Premium quality	3.82	High agreement
Modern luxury	3.78	High agreement
Social image	3.55	Moderate agreement
Global trends	4.02	Strong agreement
Brand consistency	3.79	High agreement

Interpretation: the highest mean score is for “Zara reflects global fashion trends” indicating trendiness is the strongest perception. All variables show high agreement, confirming strong brand perception.



Zara store ambiance enhances shopping experience

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	5	4.17%
Disagree	9	7.5%
Neutral	17	14.17%
Agree	54	45%
Strongly Agree	35	29.17%
Total	120	100%

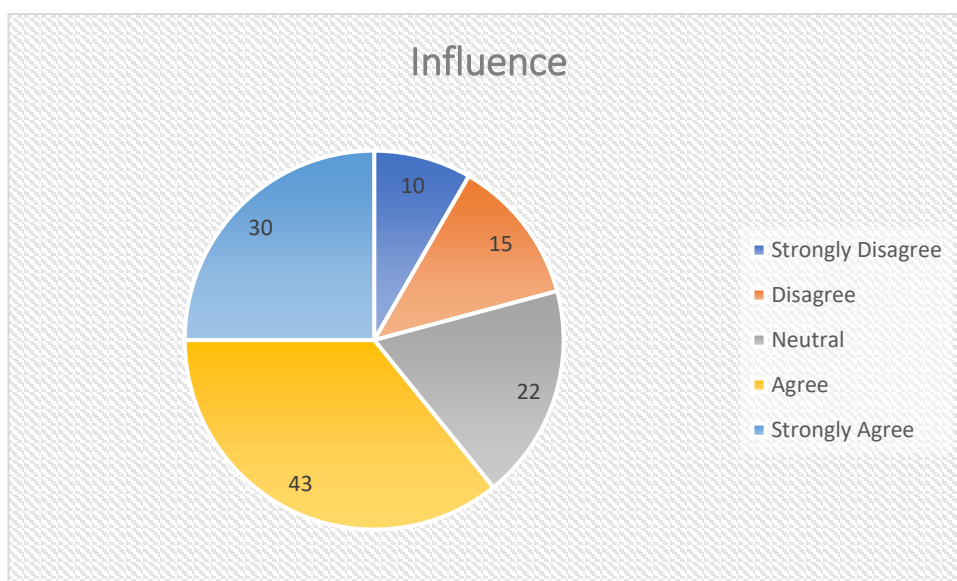


Interpretation: most respondents agree that store ambiance enhances experience. Zara's premium store layout contributes to brand perception and loyalty.

Social media influences my Zara purchases

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	10	8.33%
Disagree	15	12.5%
Neutral	22	18.33%
Agree	43	35.83%
Strongly Agree	30	25%
Total	120	100%

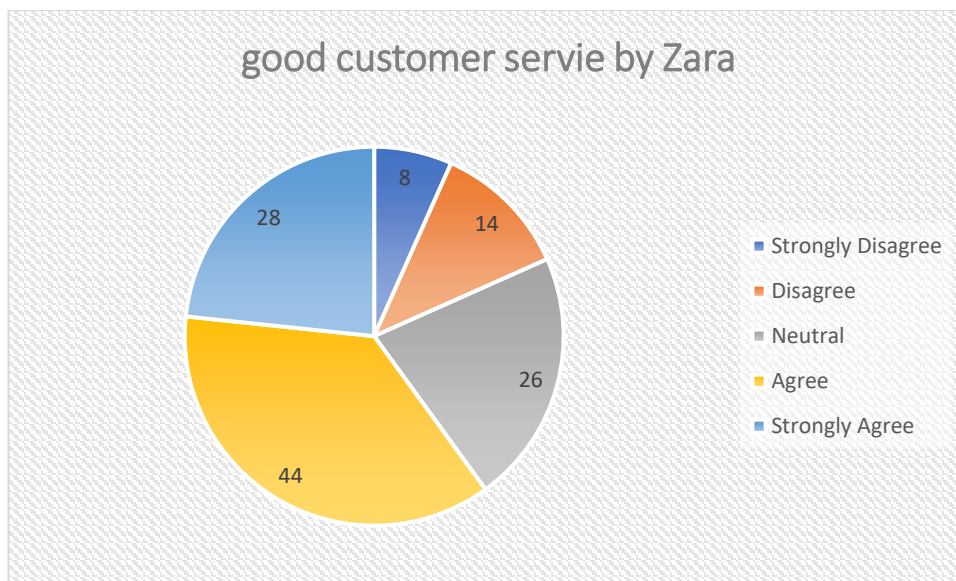
Interpretation: social media significantly influences Zara purchases. Influencers impact buying behavior.



Zara provides good customer service

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	8	6.67%
Disagree	14	11.67%
Neutral	26	21.67%
Agree	44	36.67%
Strongly Agree	28	23.33%
Total	120	100%

Interpretation: respondents show moderate agreement regarding customer service. This suggests improvement opportunities in service quality.



4. Results and Findings

4.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

A total of **120 valid responses** were collected and analyzed for the study. Respondents represented different demographic categories, including age groups, occupations, income levels, and geographic locations.

Table 6: Correlation Analysis

Variables	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Significance (p)
Purchase Intention and Brand Loyalty	0.724	0.000

4.4 Hypothesis Testing Results

Table 7: Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Statement	result	Decision
H ₀	Purchase intention positively influences brand loyalty among Zara consumers.	Significant ($p \leq 0.05$)	Accepted
H ₁	Purchase intention does not positively influence brand loyalty among Zara consumers.		Rejected

4.5 Summary of Statistical Results

The statistical analysis included frequency distributions, percentage analysis, correlation analysis, and hypothesis testing. The results obtained from these analyses are presented in Tables 1–7.

5.3 Findings

- **Brand perception significantly influences purchase intention toward Zara.** Consumers perceive Zara as a premium, fashionable, and aspirational brand, which positively affects their willingness to purchase.
- **Zara is strongly associated with global fashion trends and modern luxury.** This perception enhances its attractiveness among consumers and strengthens its market position in the premium fashion segment.
- **Social media and influencer marketing play a crucial role in shaping consumer purchase decisions.** Respondents indicated that digital content, influencers, and peer recommendations significantly impact their preference for Zara.
- **Brand perception has a positive relationship with brand loyalty.** Consumers who perceive Zara as a high-quality and trendy brand are more likely to continue purchasing and recommend the brand to others.

Suggestions

1. Strengthen Digital Marketing and Influencer Collaborations: The study revealed that social media and influencer marketing significantly influence consumer purchase decisions. Zara should collaborate with fashion influencers, lifestyle bloggers, and content creators to enhance brand visibility among young consumers. Regular engagement through social media campaigns, fashion reels, and interactive content can strengthen brand perception and attract potential customers. This strategy will help Zara maintain relevance in the highly competitive fashion industry.

2. Enhance Customer Service Experience: Although respondents expressed satisfaction with Zara's products and store environment, customer service received comparatively lower ratings. Zara should invest in staff training programs to improve customer interaction, responsiveness, and personalized assistance. Well-trained employees can create a more satisfying shopping experience, leading to higher customer retention and stronger brand loyalty. Improved service quality can also encourage positive word-of-mouth promotion.

3. Develop Customer Loyalty and Reward Programs: The findings indicate that consumers who frequently purchase Zara products demonstrate higher levels of brand loyalty. Introducing a structured loyalty program offering exclusive discounts, early access to new collections, and personalized rewards can encourage repeat purchases. Such programs can help Zara build long-term relationships with customers while increasing customer lifetime value and retention rates.

CONCLUSION

The study examined consumer purchase intention and brand loyalty toward Zara in India. The findings indicate that Zara is perceived as a premium fast – fashion brand offering trendy and high – quality products. Brand perception significantly influences purchase intention, while brand experience contributes to loyalty.

Social influence also plays an important role in shaping consumer behavior. Consumers influenced by social media and peers show higher purchase intention. The study also found that consumers are willing to pay premium prices for Zara products, confirming strong brand positioning.

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