

The Study of Customer Perception Towards the Influence of Colour in Marketing the Apparel

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ABSTRACT

Colour plays a crucial role in shaping consumer perception and influencing purchase decisions, especially in the apparel industry, where visual appeal is a primary factor. This study examines the impact of colour psychology on customer perception and buying behaviour towards apparel products, with specific reference to Generation Z consumers in the Puducherry region. The research aims to understand how different colours affect emotional responses, brand recall, and purchase intention among young consumers.

A descriptive research design was adopted for the study. Primary data were collected from 143 respondents using a structured questionnaire. Convenience sampling was employed, and the collected data were analysed using percentage analysis and appropriate statistical tools. The study focuses on identifying preferred colours, the psychological influence of colour during apparel selection, and the role of colour in both online and offline shopping environments.

The findings reveal that colour significantly influences consumers' apparel purchase decisions. Certain colours were found to evoke positive emotions, increase attention, and enhance brand recall, thereby encouraging purchase intention. The study also indicates that colour preferences vary based on demographic factors such as gender and usage context, with Gen Z consumers showing a strong inclination towards visually appealing and emotionally engaging colours. Additionally, colour was observed to play a stronger role in online shopping due to the absence of physical product interaction.

The study concludes that effective use of colour in apparel marketing can enhance customer attraction, brand positioning, and competitive advantage. The findings offer valuable insights for apparel retailers, designers, and marketers to develop colour-based marketing strategies aligned with consumer psychology.

INTRODUCTION

In the modern apparel industry, consumer buying behaviour is increasingly influenced by visual and emotional factors rather than functional attributes alone. Among these factors, colour plays a critical role in shaping first impressions, emotional responses, and overall customer perception. Apparel products are highly visual in nature, and colour is often the first element noticed by consumers when evaluating clothing. As markets become more competitive and consumers are exposed to a wide range of brands and styles, the strategic use of colour has become an essential tool in apparel marketing and branding.

Colour psychology examines how different colours influence human emotions, perceptions, and behavioural responses. In marketing contexts, colours are used to communicate meaning, attract attention, and influence decision-making processes. In the apparel sector, colour contributes to how a garment is perceived in terms of style, suitability, mood, and social acceptance. Consumers frequently associate colours with specific occasions, seasons, and personal identities,

which directly affects their purchase decisions. As a result, colour selection has become a key determinant of product success in the apparel market.

The relevance of colour psychology is particularly strong among Generation Z consumers. This generation is highly influenced by visual stimuli, trends, and digital content, especially through social media and online shopping platforms. Gen Z consumers tend to make faster purchasing decisions and place greater emphasis on aesthetic appeal compared to previous generations. With the rapid growth of online apparel retailing, colour presentation and visual accuracy have become even more important, as consumers rely primarily on images rather than physical product interaction.

Despite the growing importance of colour in apparel marketing, existing research on colour psychology and consumer behaviour remains limited in the Indian context, especially among Gen Z consumers in semi-urban regions. Cultural background, lifestyle, and regional preferences can significantly influence colour perception, making it necessary to study these factors within specific geographical settings. Puducherry represents a unique market with a mix of traditional and modern consumer preferences, making it an appropriate location for this study.

The purpose of this study is to examine customer perception towards the influence of colour in apparel marketing and to analyse how colour affects buying behaviour among Generation Z consumers in Puducherry. The study aims to identify preferred colours, understand the emotional and psychological impact of colour during apparel selection, and evaluate the role of colour in both online and offline shopping environments.

The scope of the study is confined to apparel products and focuses specifically on Generation Z consumers residing in Puducherry. The research considers demographic factors such as gender and usage context to understand variations in colour preference and perception. The findings of this study are expected to provide practical insights for apparel retailers, designers, and marketers to develop effective colour-based marketing strategies that align with consumer expectations and enhance brand appeal.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Primary Objective

- To examine the influence of colour psychology on customer perception and buying behaviour towards apparel products.

Secondary Objectives

- To identify colour preferences among Generation Z consumers in the apparel market.
- To analyse the emotional impact of colour during apparel selection.
- To assess the role of colour in influencing purchase intention and brand recall.
- To compare the influence of colour in online and offline apparel shopping environments.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Casas & Chinoperekweyi (2019) examined the influence of colour psychology on consumer buying behaviour in the apparel industry. The study found that colour significantly affects both emotional and rational decision-making of consumers. It highlighted that colour interpretations vary across cultures and directly influence brand perception and purchase intention. The authors concluded that inappropriate colour usage can negatively impact consumer response and brand recall. However, the study was largely conceptual and relied on secondary data, indicating a need for empirical research focused on specific consumer groups and regional markets.

Rajain & Rathee (2019) analysed the role of colour in influencing consumer behaviour through an online survey. The study revealed that colour plays a significant role in attracting customer attention and enhancing brand recall during purchase decisions. Blue was identified as the most preferred colour, while yellow was the least preferred. The research also found significant differences in colour preferences between genders. Although the study confirmed the impact of

colour on buying behaviour, it did not focus on a specific product category such as apparel or target Generation Z consumers, leaving scope for further focused research.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

The study adopted a **descriptive research design** to examine customer perception towards the influence of colour in apparel marketing. This design was considered appropriate as it enables systematic description and analysis of consumer attitudes, preferences, and buying behaviour related to colour. The study focused on **Generation Z consumers** residing in the **Puducherry region** and aimed to capture their responses in both online and offline apparel shopping contexts.

Data Collection Tool

Primary data were collected using a **structured questionnaire**. The questionnaire consisted of close-ended questions designed to gather information on demographic details, colour preferences, emotional response to colours, influence of colour on purchase decisions, and brand recall. The tool was framed to ensure clarity, simplicity, and relevance to the study objectives.

Procedures

The questionnaire was administered directly to respondents through offline distribution and online sharing. **Convenience sampling** was used to select respondents based on accessibility and willingness to participate. A total of **143 valid responses** were collected over a period of one month. Prior to data collection, respondents were informed about the purpose of the study, and confidentiality of responses was assured to ensure unbiased participation.

Analysis Methods

The collected data were coded and analysed using **Microsoft Excel and SPSS**. **Percentage analysis** was employed to understand demographic profiles and general colour preferences. Appropriate statistical techniques were applied to examine relationships between colour perception and buying behaviour, and the results were presented in the form of tables and interpretations for meaningful analysis.

PREFERRED COLOURS FOR APPAREL PURCHASE

Colour	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Blue	49	34
Black	37	26
White	26	18
Red	17	12
Other Colours	14	10
Total	143	100

TABLE.01

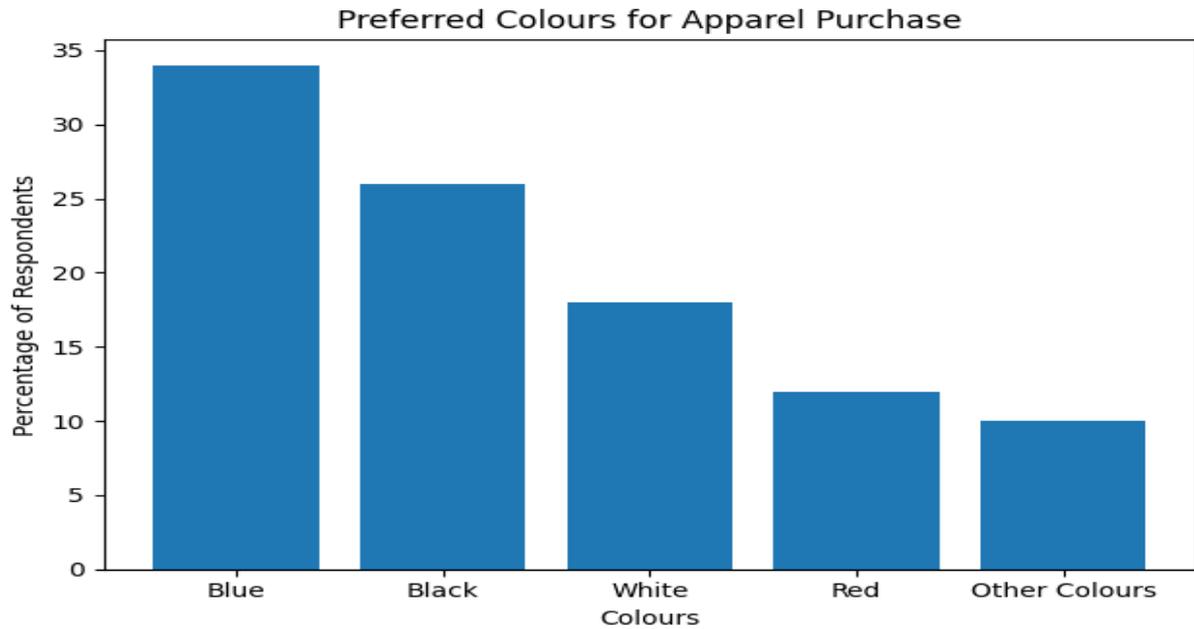


CHART.01

INFLUENCE OF COLOUR ON APPAREL PURCHASE DECISION

Level of Influence	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strong Influence	59	41
Moderate Influence	53	37
Low Influence	31	22
Total	143	100

TABLE 02

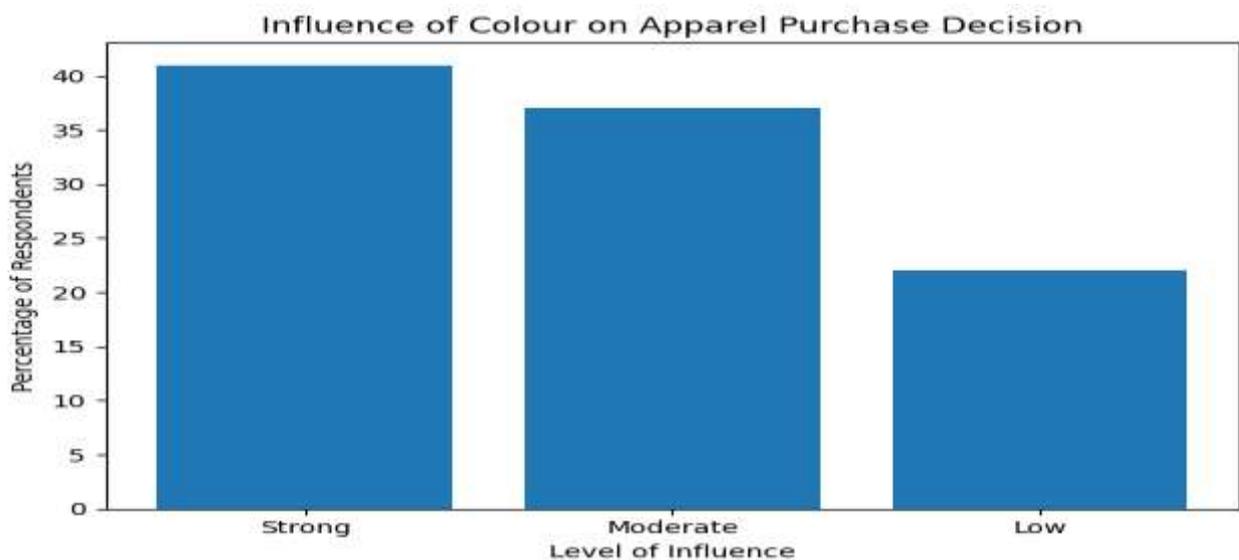


CHART.02

IMPACT OF COLOUR ON BRAND RECALL

Impact Level	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
High Impact	56	39
Medium Impact	63	44
Low Impact	24	17
Total	143	100

TABLE.03

CHART.04

COLOUR INFLUENCE IN ONLINE AND OFFLINE SHOPPING



Shopping Mode	High Influence	Moderate Influence	Low Influence
Online	62	15	6
Offline	31	21	8

TABLE 04

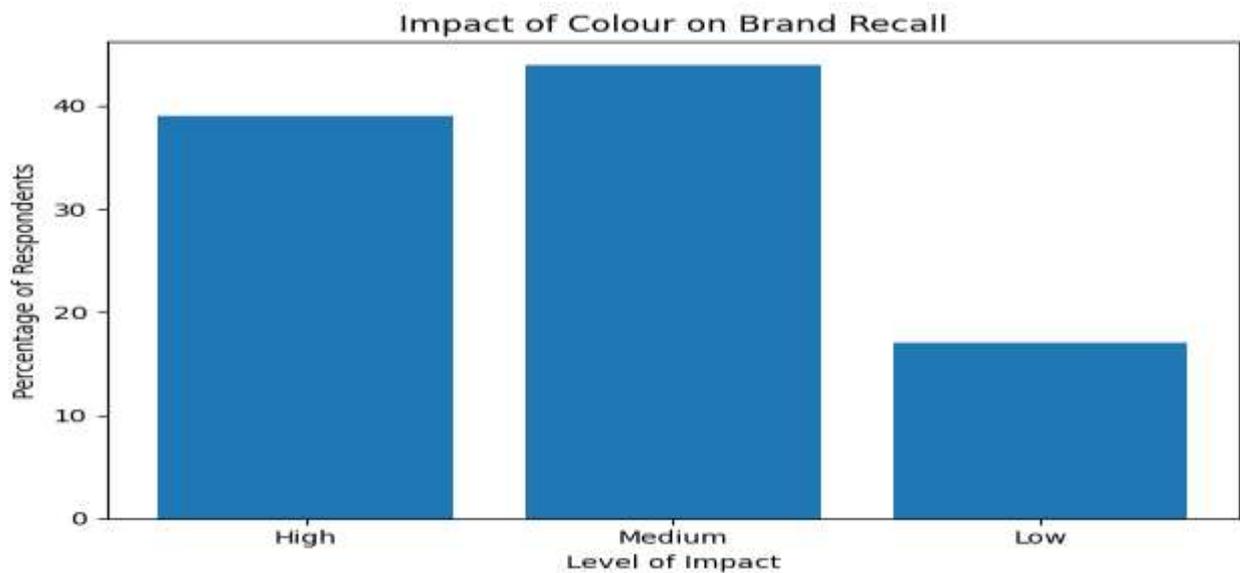


CHART.04

INTERPRETATION

The bar chart illustrates the impact of colour on brand recall among respondents. A majority of the respondents (44%) reported a medium level of impact, indicating that colour plays a noticeable role in helping consumers remember apparel brands. Additionally, a substantial proportion of respondents (39%) perceived a high impact of colour on brand recall, suggesting that effective colour usage can strongly enhance brand recognition and memory. In contrast, only 17% of respondents indicated a low impact, implying that for a smaller segment of consumers, brand recall is influenced more by factors other than colour.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that colour is an important visual element in reinforcing brand recall in the apparel market. The combined high and medium responses highlight that strategic colour selection can improve brand visibility and memorability, particularly among Generation Z consumers who are highly responsive to visual cues. This underscores the importance of consistent and appealing colour usage in branding and marketing communications to strengthen consumer recall and brand association.

FINDINGS

- The study reveals that colour has a significant influence on apparel purchase decisions among Generation Z consumers, confirming the importance of visual appeal in the buying process.
- Blue and black emerged as the most preferred colours, indicating a strong preference for cool and neutral tones in apparel selection.
- A majority of respondents reported high to moderate impact of colour on brand recall, demonstrating that colour plays an important role in enhancing brand recognition and memorability.
- Colour influence was found to be stronger in online shopping environments compared to offline shopping, as consumers rely more on visual cues in the absence of physical product evaluation.
- Demographic analysis showed minor variations in colour perception across gender and age groups, but overall colour preference trends remained consistent among respondents.
- The findings suggest that strategic use of colour can positively influence emotional response, leading to increased purchase intention and customer engagement.

SUGGESTIONS

- Apparel brands should strategically use preferred colours such as blue and black in product design and branding to align with Generation Z consumer preferences.
- Marketers are advised to focus on colour consistency across online platforms, including websites and social media, to enhance brand recall and visual identity.
- Online apparel retailers should invest in high-quality colour presentation and accurate product images, as colour influence is stronger in digital shopping environments.
- Brands may experiment with colour combinations rather than single colours to evoke positive emotional responses and increase consumer engagement.
- Retailers should consider periodic assessment of colour trends, as consumer preferences may change over time due to fashion cycles and cultural influences.
- Visual merchandising strategies in offline stores should use colour coordination and display themes to attract attention and improve the overall shopping experience.

CONCLUSION

The study examined the influence of colour psychology on customer perception and buying behaviour in the apparel industry, with particular focus on Generation Z consumers. The findings indicate that colour plays a vital role in shaping emotional responses, enhancing brand recall, and influencing purchase decisions. Apparel being a highly visual product category, colour serves as a key factor in attracting consumer attention and forming positive brand associations.

The results show a clear preference for cool and neutral colours such as blue and black, highlighting their effectiveness in apparel marketing. Furthermore, the influence of colour was found to be stronger in online shopping environments, where consumers depend heavily on visual presentation due to the absence of physical product evaluation. Overall, the study emphasizes that strategic and consistent use of colour can improve customer engagement, strengthen brand positioning, and support competitive advantage. The insights gained from this research contribute to existing literature on colour psychology and offer practical guidance for apparel marketers and retailers operating in similar consumer markets.