

Understanding Consumer Views on Branded Apparel

SUBMITTED BY PRINCE KUMAR

23GSOB2010403

UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF

Dr. MATHEW THOMAS

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GALGOTIAS UNIVERSITY

1.

Introduction:

This thesis investigates how consumers view the marketing of branded clothing, emphasizing the ways in which different marketing techniques affect consumer behavior, purchase choices, and brand loyalty. The study looks at how consumers make decisions about branded clothing based on advertising, product quality, price, sustainability, and overall brand image. It also emphasizes the growing importance of branding in the fashion industry. In order to create tactics that connect with target audiences and ultimately propel brand success, marketers must have a thorough understanding of these views.

1.1 The Study's Background

Clothing in today's ever-changing fashion industry is a representation of one's individuality, way of life, and social standing rather than just being comfortable or providing environmental protection. Branding, which has developed into a potent instrument for influencing consumer behavior, has played a significant influence in this shift in the function of clothing. In the fashion industry, branding encompasses more than simply logos and ads; it also refers to the symbolic and emotional bonds that customers have with brands and goods.

From locally produced, unbranded clothing to internationally renowned fashion names, the modern customer is overwhelmed with options. The value that customers attach to "branded apparel" has increased dramatically in the middle of this saturation. Branded apparel is frequently seen as a sign of excellence, wealth, social standing, and even cultural significance. Nike, Levi's, Zara, Gucci, and many other brands have developed unique identities that appeal to a wide range of consumer demographics, impacting not just what people wear but also how they feel about themselves while wearing it.

The rise in urbanization, rising disposable incomes, exposure to global culture, and the widespread use of digital media have all had a substantial impact on consumer tastes in emerging nations like India, where traditional clothing used to dominate fashion choices. Particularly among young people, brand awareness has never been higher. Consumers' fashion choices, which range from high-end couture to streetwear, are influenced by a variety of factors, including economic concerns, social influence, marketing impact, and personal taste.

Given these shifting dynamics, it is essential for marketers, fashion designers, retail strategists, and brand managers to comprehend how customers perceive branded clothing.

This knowledge aids in both forecasting consumer purchasing patterns and developing tactics that align with their goals.

1.2 The Study's Justification

Mass customization has replaced mass production in the fashion business.

Understanding how consumers perceive and feel about branded clothing is more important than ever as brands fight for

consumers' attention. Once thought to be a minor component of apparel, branding is now essential to the shopping experience. Consumers of today are knowledgeable, outspoken, and picky; they are no longer passive purchasers. They read reviews, compare labels, follow trends, and match their personal identities and ideals with the clothes they wear.

Even while branded clothing is widely available, there is still a dearth of research on the precise elements that shape customer perceptions, particularly in India. Why do buyers favor clothing that is branded? Is it the influence of celebrity culture, the quality, or the social appeal? What effects do age, education, and income levels have on these preferences? And how significant are user-generated content, influencer marketing, and online presence in light of the growing digitization of the fashion retail experience?

By conducting a targeted investigation on consumer views, emotional motivators, purchasing patterns, and sociodemographic factors pertaining to branded clothing, this study seeks to answer these questions.

Through the examination of source data and existing literature, the study aims to provide insightful information that advances both academic understanding and business operations.

1.3 Research Issue

Consumer behavior has become more erratic and dispersed in the setting of globalization and technological development. Consumer decision-making has become even more complex with the growth of fast fashion, e-commerce, and social media influencers. Some customers are influenced by sales, peer pressure, or shifting fashion trends, while others are brand loyal because of perceived quality or an emotional bond.

Furthermore, it's getting harder to tell branded apparel from non-branded apparel. The consuming ecosystem also includes factory stores, private labels, and fake items.

Understanding what branded clothing means to consumers today—how they perceive its worth, what influences their preference, and how this view differs across various consumer segments—thus forms the core problem of this study.

1.4 The Study's Objectives

The following particular goals are the focus of this study:

To investigate the elements affecting how consumers view branded clothing.

To examine how brand perception influences consumers' decisions to buy.

To research the preferences of consumers for branded and non-branded apparel.

To investigate how perceptions of branded clothing are influenced by demographics. To comprehend the emotional and psychological factors that influence consumers' decisions to wear branded apparel.

To assess how marketing tactics affect consumer perception. To determine the best places to buy branded clothing.

To offer clothing businesses strategic suggestions based on customer data.

1.5 The Study's Scope

Since urban and semi-urban youth make up a sizable portion of the fashion customer base, this study primarily focuses on consumers who actively participate in the garment market. Male and female participants of all income, educational, and occupational levels are included in the scope. The study excludes unbranded or exclusively regional traditional clothing and restricts its scope to branded clothing (including Indian and foreign brands). The study looks at how people buy products both online (e-commerce, brand websites, social media platforms) and offline (retail stores, malls, brand-exclusive stores).

1.6 Importance of the Research

The study's conclusions are important from an academic and practical standpoint. In terms of academia, it contributes to the corpus of research in the areas of fashion branding, consumer behavior, and marketing, especially in the Indian setting. In real life, the information will assist marketers and brand managers in better understanding their target audience, customizing their advertising tactics, and fostering greater client loyalty.

This study offers a timely and significant contribution to the development of more consumer-centric branding strategies, as local businesses aim to stay relevant while global brands aggressively expand into emerging regions. Additionally, it will help digital marketers, designers, merchants, and advertising agencies who want to match their efforts with changing customer expectations.

1.7 The thesis's structure

The structure of the thesis is as follows:

The study's background and introduction are given in Chapter 1. The goals and scope of the research are described in Chapter 2.

A thorough literature assessment based on earlier scholarly and commercial research is presented in Chapter 3.

The study approach used for data collecting and analysis is covered in Chapter 4. Key findings from the primary research are summarized in Chapter 5.

A thorough analysis and explanation of the results are given in Chapter 6.

2. Research Objectives

In today's highly competitive and diverse fashion sector, it is more crucial than ever to comprehend consumer perceptions. The primary objective of this study is to examine in detail how consumers view and evaluate branded apparel—not only as functional clothing items but also as symbols of identity, social status, and emotional fulfillment. Understanding the psychological, sociological, and economic elements impacting consumer preferences is crucial in an era of rapid brand proliferation, as the lines separating luxury, premium, and mass-market brands become increasingly blurred.

This study aims to give a comprehensive understanding of the complex decision-making processes involved in purchasing branded clothing by taking into account a range of internal and external factors that influence customer choices.

The study will also examine the effects of branding strategies, emotional ties, and demographic characteristics on consumer loyalty, value perception, and brand engagement. The following objectives are meant to guide the scope and depth of this investigation:

2.1 To Examine the Factors Influencing Consumer Perceptions of Branded Clothing

One of the core principles of consumer behavior research is the understanding of perception. Consumer perception is the term used to describe the mental representations and perceptions that consumers have of a brand as a result of different signals and stimuli. Peer reviews, advertising exposure, past experiences, product quality, and visual design are a few examples.

Analyzing the different aspects of consumer perception is the goal of this objective. On the one hand, intrinsic factors including personal beliefs, lifestyle preferences, prior product experiences, and character traits are essential. On the other hand, outside influences including peer recommendations, internet reviews, social media promotions, brand advertisements, and broader cultural narratives can have a significant impact on consumers' opinions of branded apparel.

We will look at the specific components listed below: perceived level of craftsmanship and product quality, including fabric kind, fit, and durability.

Brand heritage and credibility, highlighting the importance of a long-standing reputation in fostering trust.

Brands' emotional value and symbolic meaning are demonstrated by consumers' associations with feelings of success, elegance, modernity, or revolt.

Internet ratings, influencer endorsements, and viral marketing campaigns are examples of digital influence.

In order to achieve this goal, the study will attempt to identify the elements that most affect consumer perception and how businesses might modify their strategies to satisfy those expectations.

2.2 To Investigate the Impact of Brand Image on Consumer Purchase Decisions When a buyer is considering a purchase, brand image is one of the most crucial factors to take into account. It explains the range of perceptions, associations, and thoughts consumers have for a certain brand. Recurring business, trust, and emotional connections can all be encouraged by a good brand image.

This objective focuses on how brand image serves as a shortcut in customer evaluation, enabling customers to make decisions quickly in a congested market. We'll look at the efficacy of visual brand identifiers including logos, color schemes, and store aesthetics.

The effectiveness of brand positioning, which covers how businesses market themselves as upscale, opulent, or affordably priced.

connections between influencers and celebrities, as well as how the presence of well-known people affects the validity and appeal of a company.

the growing importance of ethical branding, especially in relation to sustainability, fair labor standards, and transparency.

Reputation management: how businesses respond to criticism or disagreements affects customer confidence. This objective will facilitate the study of how both

favorable and unfavorable brand perceptions affect long-term brand equity, consumer loyalty, and willingness to pay more.

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2.3 To Investigate Preferences for Branded vs. Non-Branded Clothing

In a market where both branded and non-branded clothing options are readily available, consumers usually find it difficult to choose between affordability and status, or between quality and price. The objective of this mission is to comprehend why consumers choose branded apparel over generic or unbranded alternatives, or vice versa.

The analysis will address the following topics:

The degree to which consumers think that branded apparel provides better fit, quality, and durability. how much brand loyalty there is and how emotional attachment affects recurring business.

Wearing branded clothing for significant occasions (weddings, job interviews) as opposed to unbranded clothing for daily use is an example of situational purchase behavior. the importance of affordability, particularly for those in the middle and lower income brackets. the consequences of counterfeit brand availability and awareness, and whether these lower the perceived value of authentic brands.

This objective seeks to determine whether genuine benefits or emotional and symbolic cues are the main drivers of the perceived value of branded clothing.

2.4 to look into how people's perceptions of branded clothing are influenced by demographic factors

Demographic variables have a big impact on consumer preferences. This objective will investigate the ways in which age,

gender, income, education, occupation, geography, and other characteristics impact attitudes and perceptions of branded apparel.

In terms of brand preferences, fashion awareness, and trend sensitivity, the study will examine how younger consumers (Gen Z and Millennials) vary from previous

generations. gender differences, with a focus on purchasing patterns, brand loyalty, and level of interest in fashion.

the effect of education and awareness levels on brand criticality and informed purchasing.

How income levels affect how branded clothing is perceived in terms of accessibility and value.

Consumer behavior in both urban and rural locations, particularly in relation to brand recognition, spending power, and access to retail or online platforms.

Finding out the tastes and behavioral patterns of different consumer groups would provide a more targeted and segmented approach to branding.

2.5 To Identify the Psychological and Emotional Elements Affecting Branded Clothes Choices

Fashion encompasses much more than just clothing; it also involves storytelling,

symbolism, and identity creation.

Examining the psychological and emotional aspects that influence consumers' choices when buying branded apparel is the aim of this study.

The study will evaluate how consumers convey their uniqueness, charisma, and confidence through their wardrobe choices, as well as the role that self-image plays.

The impact of peer pressure and the desire to "fit in" on fashion choices is known as social comparison theory.

Especially in social or online settings (such as Instagram or TikTok), the brand is utilized as a status indicator.

Emotional indicators like nostalgia, aspiration, and belonging that give consumers a feeling of kinship with specific businesses.

People purchase fast fashion goods that influencers or celebrities endorse because they are afraid of losing out.

This objective will help to explain why certain brands, even when their actual product offers are similar to those of less well-known or generic competitors, are able to create powerful sentiments of emotional resonance and appeal to consumers' lives.

2.6 To Evaluate the Impact of Marketing Strategies on Consumer Perception

Marketing has evolved from simple product promotion to a complex ecosystem that encompasses brand narrative, community building, and interactive engagement. This objective assesses how different marketing strategies affect consumers' perceptions and comprehensions of branded apparel.

The primary focus will be on the successful use of social media to target younger audiences, including influencer partnerships, reels, and viral content.

the effectiveness of traditional media, such as television and print, in building long-lasting brand recognition.

the importance of visual consistency and digital user experience across websites, mobile apps, and e-commerce platforms.

How customer service, in-store branding, and immersive retail environments influence perceptions.

The impact on customer excitement and retention of limited-edition releases, loyalty programs, incentive systems, and flash sales.

This objective will enable clothing firms to identify the marketing expenditures that have the greatest impact on sales and brand perception.

2.7 To Provide Clothing Companies With Advice Based on Consumer Insights

This final goal, which expands on the knowledge gathered from the previous aims, is to offer strategic counsel and practical insights to fashion companies seeking to satisfy consumer demands and expectations.

The recommendations' primary focus will be on the following: developing unique branding strategies for different demographic groups based on psychographic segmentation.

strengthening relationships between brands and customers through interactive, community-driven marketing.

incorporating a message of sustainability and ethics into core business principles to appeal to ethical customers.

Maintaining aspirational appeal while offering moderately priced, fashionable goods to price-conscious consumers.

Creating multichannel retail experiences that combine the convenience of online buying with the sentimental connection of in-store purchases.

Employing data analytics, social listening, and user feedback to continuously enhance solutions.

Closing the gap between consumer expectations and brand fulfillment will ultimately enable clothing companies to cultivate loyal, emotionally connected, and value-driven customers.

3. Literature Review:

The literature study offers a thorough summary of the scholarly ideas and theories that serve as the basis for examining how consumers interpret branded clothing. In order to contextualize the factors impacting customer preferences and decision-making, it draws on previously conducted research in the domains of marketing, consumer behavior, fashion psychology, and brand management. This chapter aids in understanding current trends, identifying information gaps, and laying forth the theoretical framework for the ongoing study.

3.1 The Fashion Industry's View of Branding

In crowded and cutthroat industries, branding is a crucial strategy for product

differentiation, particularly in the fashion sector. A brand is more than just a name or symbol, according to Aaker (1996). It stands for a collection of material and

immaterial connections that are intended to increase customer confidence and emotional involvement. Branding generates perceived value, lifestyle appeal, and cultural significance in the fashion industry, since items frequently share similar functions.

The six elements that make up a cohesive brand identity are physical attributes,

personality, culture, relationships, reflection, and self-image, according to Kapferer's 2008 Brand Identity Prism. These components aid fashion firms in creating a unique personality and lifestyle narrative, such as eco-consciousness (Patagonia), streetwise

revolt (Supreme), or elegance (Chanel). These personas appeal to particular customer groups and are employed to arouse feelings, create exclusivity, and foster enduring loyalty.

In order to establish more profound psychological connections, fashion branding frequently makes use of visual aesthetics, narrative, sensory experiences, and symbols.

According to research by Tungate (2008), customers frequently view fashion labels as status symbols and cultural icons rather than just items, which increases their symbolic value.

3.2 Brand Image and Consumer Perception

The process by which people convert brand stimuli—like packaging, logos, prices, and promotional content—into significant impressions is known as consumer perception.

Perception is a selective, subjective process that is influenced by a person's

surroundings, prior experiences, and psychological makeup, according to Schiffman and Kanuk (2009).

According to Keller (1993), a brand's image is the collection of associations and attitudes that consumers have about it. Customer loyalty is strengthened, brand

recall is enhanced, and purchasing behavior is influenced by a positive brand image.

Style, exclusivity, perceived status, and lifestyle compatibility all play a role in this picture of clothing.

According to several research (Keller, 2001; Hanzae & Andervazh, 2012), customers select brands not just for their product qualities but also for their reputation, emotional resonance, and social desirability. In summary, a strong brand image lowers the perceived risk of making a transaction.

conveys reliability and quality.

provides emotional and psychological comfort.

In high-involvement purchases like fashion, where buyers seek not just practical utility but also social acceptance and self-expression, these linkages become especially significant.

3.3 Elements Influencing Consumer Perceptions of Branded Clothing

A complicated interaction between social circumstances, personal preferences, and market stimuli shapes consumer attitudes toward branded apparel. Academic

research has identified a number of important elements, including:

Perceived Quality: According to Zeithaml (1988), a major factor influencing consumer choice is perceived quality, which is frequently deduced from brand names, reputation, and price. Most people believe that branded clothing offers better design, craftsmanship, and durability.

Price Sensitivity: When customers lack adequate product knowledge, they tend to associate higher costs with higher quality (Dodds et al., 1991). However, value-

conscious buyers might put affordability ahead of status, according to Lichtenstein et al. (1993).

Social Influence: Reference groups frequently influence fashion choices (Bearden & Etzel, 1982). People, particularly teenagers and young adults, are influenced by peer pressure, social acceptance, and cultural conventions to purchase branded clothing that conforms to social standards.

Advertising and Celebrity Endorsements: According to Erdogan (1999), celebrities provide brands aspirational value, which increases their appeal and legitimacy.

Celebrity culture and parasocial relationships—one-sided emotional connections—are being used more and more in fashion marketing to sway customer choices.

Brand Familiarity and Heritage: According to Aaker (1991), consumers are more likely to trust brands that have a solid history and a solid track record of quality.

Reputations that have been developed over many years are advantageous to heritage businesses like Ralph Lauren and Levi's.

Fashion Innovativeness: In order to demonstrate their individuality and trend

leadership, consumers who identify as early adopters or fashion innovators are more inclined to try branded clothing (Goldsmith et al., 1999).

3.4 Branded Clothing's Emotional and Psychological Aspects

Identity, emotion, and psychological motivation are all intricately linked to fashion. Clothing is a communication tool for social placement and an extension of the self, in contrast to functional objects.

Solomon (1983) famously described clothes as a "second skin"—a means by which people control perceptions and construct their identities. In particular, branded clothing has emotional value since it gives one a sense of community and boosts self-esteem.

When connected to exclusivity or luxury, it becomes a status symbol. It provides emotional solace by fostering trust and familiarity.

Park et al. (2006) discovered that brand advocacy and repeat business are strongly influenced by emotional brand connection. Customers develop emotional bonds with brands that reflect their values, goals, or way of life.

According to Escalas and Bettman (2005), brands assist customers in creating their ideal or true self-concept. For instance,

a person might dress in Gucci to represent luxury or Nike to convey athleticism. In this way, wearing branded clothing becomes a storytelling tool that conveys a person's identity or aspirations.

The influence of dopamine-driven excitement is further shown by recent studies; when people buy for branded products, especially limited-edition or exclusive items, they frequently feel a "rush."

3.5 The Impact of Demographics on Brand Perception

The following demographic factors are important in determining how various population segments perceive and engage with fashion brands:

Age: According to Bakewell & Mitchell (2003), younger consumers—Gen Z and Millennials—tend to be more social media-influenced, brand-aware, and trend-conscious. Comfort, tradition, or usefulness may be more important to older generations than fashion.

Gender: Women are more involved in choosing clothing, frequently giving aesthetics and emotional fulfillment more weight (Noble et al., 2006). Conversely, men can be more interested in a brand's fit, utility, and longevity.

Income & Education: Bian & Forsythe (2012) point out that consumers who earn more money are more likely to be brand conscious and to buy from luxury or premium markets.

In the meanwhile, shoppers on a tight budget frequently look for branded goods that are on sale or used.

Occupation: Students may prefer labels that represent youth culture or peer alignment, while working professionals may choose branded apparel to increase credibility.

Location (Rural vs. Urban): Urban customers are more likely to favor international trends, have better access to branded stores, and are exposed to more brands. Digital access is bridging the divide between rural and urban consumers, who may rely more on functional or local preferences.

3.6 The Effects of E-Commerce and Digital Media

The way that customers engage with fashion firms has changed significantly in the digital age. Interactive, graphic, and influencer-led storytelling on digital platforms

have essentially supplanted or enhanced traditional marketing. Particularly for Gen Z customers, social media sites like Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and Pinterest act as fashion discovery engines, as explained by Kaplan & Haenlein (2010).

Users of these platforms can: Find trends. Keep up with celebs and influencers.

Examine ratings and reviews.

Create brand communities by sharing your personal style.

According to Djafarova & Rushworth (2017), when it comes to influencing people's opinions about fashion, micro-influencers—those with smaller, devoted followings—are more trusted than star influencers.

Additionally, e-commerce platforms provide 24/7 convenience, AI-driven recommendations, and customized purchasing experiences.

Virtual try-ons are made possible by augmented reality (AR) technologies, which assist customers in seeing clothing before making a purchase. Customer evaluations and outfit-of-the-day posts are examples of user-generated content (UGC), which boosts the relatability and authenticity of brands.

Furthermore, the emergence of fast fashion online retailers such as SHEIN and Zara Online has trained customers to anticipate regular new releases, limited-time deals, and affordable prices—all of which influence customer loyalty and brand perceptions.

3.7 Extra Point to Remember: Consumer Preferences and Shopping Channels The preferred shopping platforms for branded clothing are becoming a more significant field of research. Customers' experiences and impressions of brands can be greatly influenced by where they purchase. Research indicates that: Convenience, variety, and regular discounts make online shopping—like that of Myntra, Amazon Fashion, and Ajio—appealing.

Touch-and-feel experiences, trial alternatives, and individualized service are why offline retail stores—like malls or exclusive brand outlets—are preferred.

Price-conscious consumers who yet want branded quality are drawn to factory outlets.

Shoppers Stop and Pantaloons are examples of multi-brand stores that provide exposure to and comparison of several brands in one location.

Among customers who care about the environment, thrift and second-hand stores are becoming more and more popular.

4. Research Design and Methodology

This chapter describes the exploration strategy and gives a thorough explanation of the study's design, prosecution, and analysis. The exploration design,

data collection instruments, fieldwork perpetration, data analysis ways, and sample plan are all covered.

Colorful Research Design Types and Their explanation

Descriptive and exploratory exploration designs are combined in this study

Consumer opinions are measured and trends across colorful demographic groups are examined using descriptive exploration.

Exploratory exploration is used to gain a introductory understanding of unanticipated consumer actions and causes that may not be well explained by current ideas. It aids in figuring out how .

Consumers feel about ingrained vesture in terms of cost, fashion, artificer, and image.

It facilitates the identification of the stations and cerebral rudiments that affect brand preferences.

logic By employing both strategies, the study can offer a comprehensive grasp of the subject by first examining broad stations(exploratory)

and also measuring and examining the connections between significant factors(descriptive).

ii. styles and Tools for Collecting Data

1. Data Gathering Instrument The core data was gathered via an online check that actors tone- administered using Google Forms. logic provident and time-effective.

fluently accessible to a lesser number of individualities.

encourages open communication by icing sequestration and comfort. Sufficient in online literacy settings after the COVID-19 outbreak.

2. The Survey The structured questionnaire was divided into four main sections The explanation behind the examinations The following were intended to be captured by the questions, which aligned with the study's objects Demographic information o Brand inclinations and copping trends Factors that affect perception(e.g., price, quality, and brand image)

Digital media, peer pressure, and advertising

b. Question Sequencing

Section A Demographics(Age, Gender, Income, and Education)

Buy Trends(Repeated Purchases, Brand Preference overNon-Brands) in Section B. Section C Brand Perception(Likert assigns a standing to products grounded on

their quality, responsibility, and design) Section D Conduct and consequences(emotional, peer, and social media factors)

b. Types of Scale Used

While stations and comprehensions are measured using 5- point Likert scales,

which go from explosively agree to explosively differ, questions about brand preferen es and geste are multiple- choice.

Ordinal scales are used to measure demographic traits including gender, income, and educational attainment.

d. The Appendix Note The entire check is accessible in dupe form. Section A Demographic Information

Age range

under 18, 18 – 24, 25 – 34, 35 – 44, and 45 times of age and up Gender

☐ Other ☐ Wishing to remain anonymous ☐ manly ☐ womanish

3. Educational Level

High academy, university, PhD, and other Make a yearly payment(in original currency)

lower than 10,000 ☐ 10,000 – 25,000 ☐ 25,001 – 50,000 ☐ 50,001 – 75,000

☐ further than 75,000

Section B Patterns of Purchase

5. How frequently do you buy ingrained apparel?

More frequently than not, infrequently, and noway

Which clothes markers are your pets?(corroborate anything material.)

☐ National brands(analogous to original request brands) ☐

Retail brands(analogous to private markers) ☐ Global luxury brands(similar as Gucci, Nike, and Zara) ☐ Unbranded or general apparel

Where do you frequently buy ingrained vesture?

☐ operations and platforms for online

shopping runners on social media Combining online and offline ☐ In- store

Section C Brand Perception

Make use of a Likert scale with five points; one represents strong disagreement and five represents strong agreement.

8. In my opinion, ingrained vesture is superior tonon-branded vesture.

9. I am willing to pay further for ingrained apparel.

10. Brand image influences my wardrobe choices.

11. I feel more confident when I wear ingrained vesture.

12. My ingrained apparel reflects my social status.

13. I believe that ingrained vesture fits better and lasts longer.

14. I buy ingrained vesture when there are deals or abatements. Section D Factors Affecting Purchase Choices

15. My classmates and peers have an impact on the clothes brands I choose.

16. My decision to buy ingrained vesture is told by social media announcements.

17. Influencer or celebrity signatures affect my perception of a clothes brand.

iii. produce and organize an illustration plan

1. Target Population Urban guests between the periods of 18 and 45 who buy or are considering coping ingrained apparel.

The sample frame consists of internet druggies who set

up the bean link via dispatch, social media, and pupil/ fashion communities.

3. Testing Units Particular guests who meet the addition criteria.

Testing fashion Not likely Realistic slice was used because of availability issues and resource limitations.

5. Sample Size A aggregate of 37 responses were collected for the final analysis.

6. Response Rate The check entered over 90 of responses because to its clear instructions, targeted distribution, and brief donation.

iv. Examining

1. How and Where Fieldwork Was Performed Google Forms was used for all online fieldwork. The bean link was transferred via university mailing lists and Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp social media groups.

Discussion boards for online fashion Time frame around three weeks

2. Pretesting Phase To find problems with language, clarity, and association, a airman check was administered to 15 actors. After entering feedback, the check was completed in lower than five twinkles, with questions reorganized and specialized language simplified.

Data Interpretation and Analysis

The original step was to prepare and reuse the data. Data was imported from Google Forms into Microsoft Excel and anatomized using SPSS.

Twenty responses were removed because they were duplicates, incorrect, or deficient.

A Likert scale with a range of 1 to 5 was used to numerically decode the replies for logical purposes.

2. Problems with

Editing Repliers who declined to answer voluntary demographic questions were retain ed for analysis unless there was a significant data gap. veritably little editing was necessary because of the questionnaire's regular structure.

3. Conventional ways in Statistics

Use descriptive statistics(mean, chance, and frequence) andcross-tabulation to compare responses across demographic groups.

still, use correlation analysis and the ki-square test for significance testing to assess correlations between perceptual factors, If available.

4. The explanation for the statistical findings Using descriptive and correlational analysis, one can more understand consumer sentiments and the correlations between variables.. For evaluating hypotheses based on demographic differences, chi-square and cross- tabulation are helpful techniques.

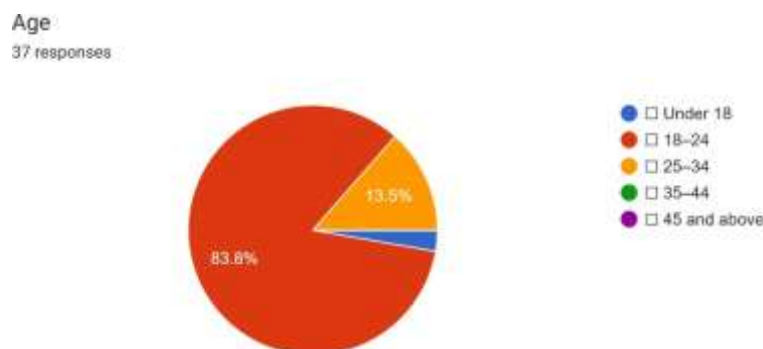
5. Data Interpretation and Findings Discussion

The study's original objectives and questions will be taken into consideration when interpreting the key findings. These include differences in perception by wealth, age, or gender, whether or not buyers think branded clothing is of higher quality, and how social influence influences purchasing decisions.

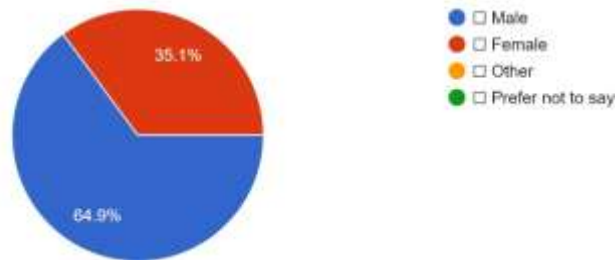
Charts, graphs, and tables will be used to explain each conclusion, and references to pertinent research from the literature study will be included.

6. Charts, Graphs, and Summary Tables: To facilitate discussion and comprehension, tables and graphs are incorporated throughout the thesis body.

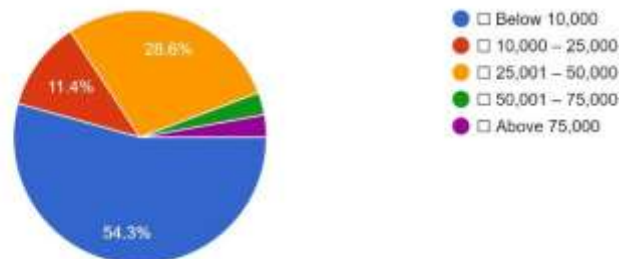
Section A: Demographic Information



Gender
37 responses

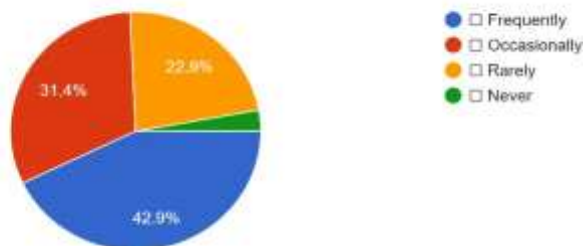


Monthly Income (in local currency)
35 responses



Section B: Patterns of Purchase

How often do you purchase branded clothing?
35 responses



What type of apparel brands do you prefer?

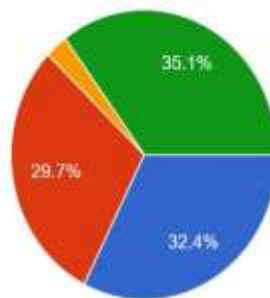
37 responses



- International luxury brands (e.g., Gucci, Nike, Zara)
- National brands (e.g., local market brands)
- Store brands (e.g., private labels)
- Non-branded or generic clothing

Where do you usually shop for branded apparel?

37 responses

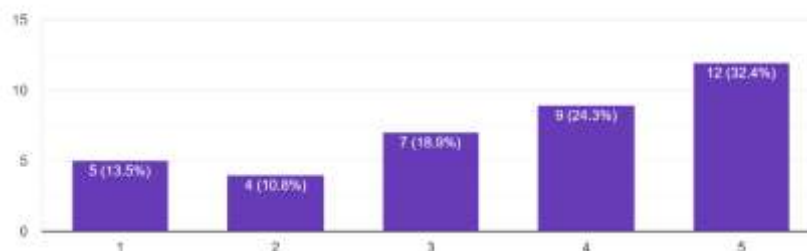


- In-store
- Online shopping websites/apps
- Through social media pages
- Mixed (both online and offline)

Section C: Brand Perception

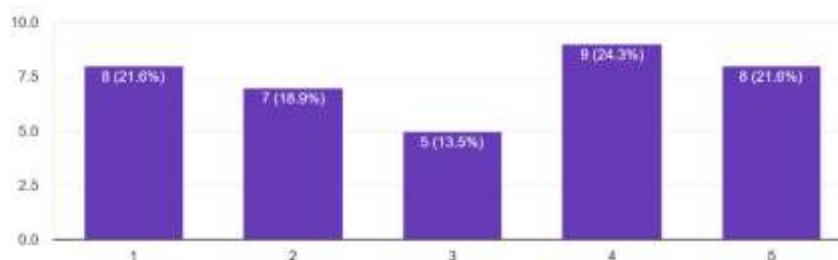
I believe branded clothes are of higher quality than non-branded clothes.

37 responses



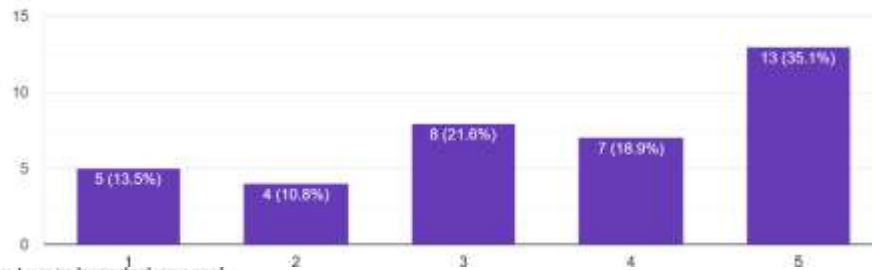
I am willing to pay more for branded clothing.

37 responses



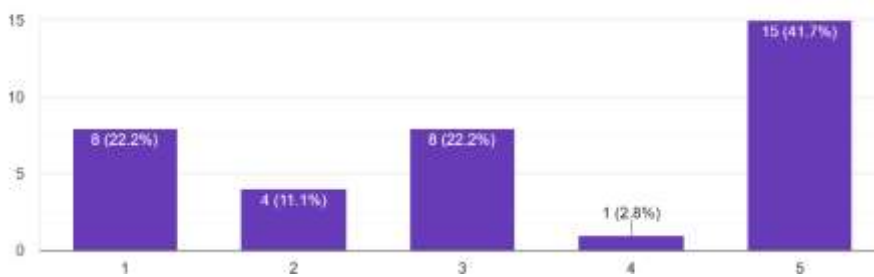
Brand image influences my clothing choices.

37 responses



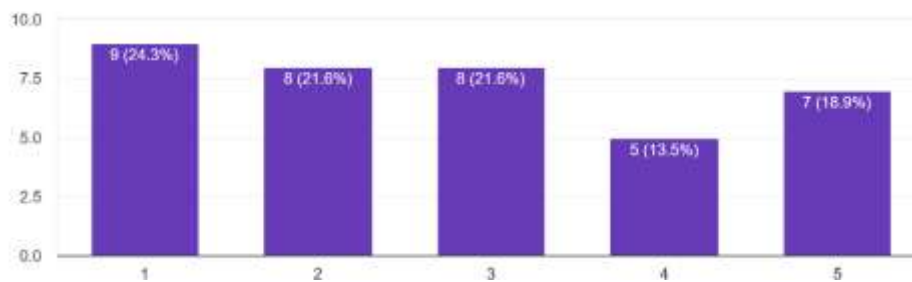
I feel more confident when I wear branded apparel.

36 responses



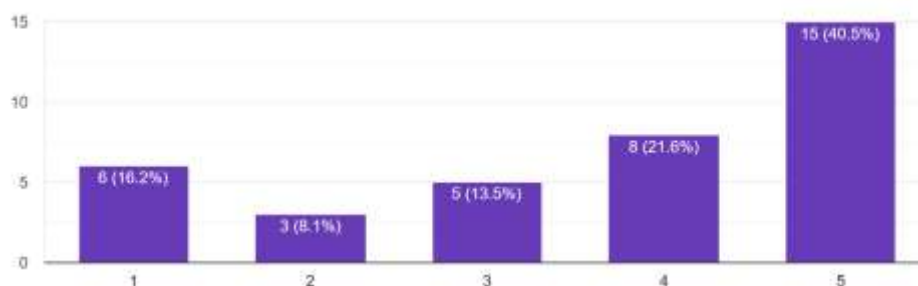
Branded clothing reflects my social status.

37 responses



I trust branded clothes to last longer and fit better.

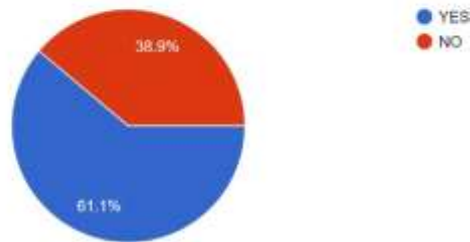
37 responses



Section D: Elements Influencing Buying Decisions

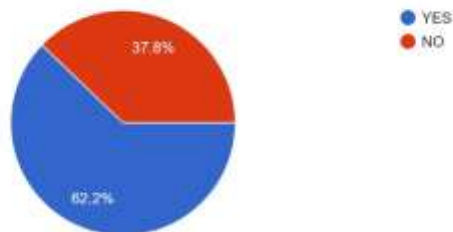
My friends and peers influence my clothing brand choices.

36 responses



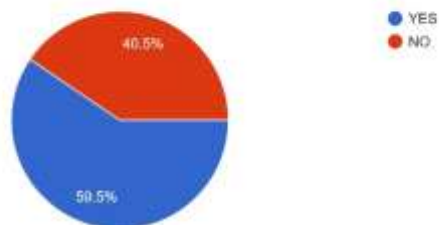
I am influenced by social media advertisements when choosing branded apparel.

37 responses



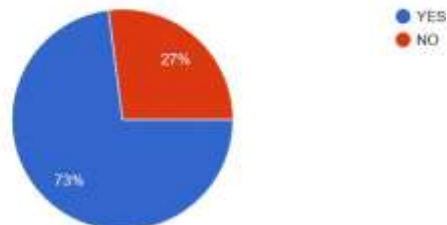
Celebrity/influencer endorsements impact my perception of a clothing brand.

37 responses



I follow fashion trends promoted by brands online.

37 responses



5. Key Findings:

The study presents a number of important conclusions about how consumers view the promotion of branded clothing:

1. Young consumers choose national brands at all costs.

According to the survey, most participants, who are mostly between the ages of 18 and 24, strongly favor domestic clothing labels over luxury foreign names or unbranded substitutes. This pattern suggests that consumers are becoming more conscious of and receptive to domestic brands, most likely as a result of the combination of these labels' rising quality, cost, and accessibility.

Despite being aspirational, international luxury brands are frequently seen as pricey and inaccessible by the general public, especially by low-income students or young professionals. Conversely, generic or non-branded apparel is frequently viewed as lacking in quality, style, or trendiness. As a middle-ground option for customers looking for affordability and some degree of social or style recognition, national brands seem to find a balance between price and perceived brand value. Because it highlights the necessity of increasing national brands' exposure and trust, particularly among younger demographics, this insight can be very significant for marketers and brand strategists working in the fashion industry.

2. Divergent Views on the Quality of Branded Clothing

Responses on the question of whether branded apparel is better than non-branded apparel differed greatly. Others expressed skepticism or neutrality, suggesting that the brand name alone is not a universal signal of quality for customers today, even though some participants thought that branded clothes offered greater quality.

The growing availability of locally made or non-branded clothing that is just as durable and stylish as branded items but costs far less may be the cause of this gap. Consumer trust in brand quality may also be impacted by prior experiences with branded products, such as wear and tear, fading colors, or inconsistent sizes.

As a result, even if brand identity is still important, businesses must continuously provide high-quality products to support increasing price points. In the absence of noticeable qualitative advantages, many consumers—particularly in developing nations—may favor affordable options that satisfy their practical requirements.

3. Positive Effects of Branded Clothing on Social Perception and Self-Image

The psychological effect that branded apparel has on consumer behavior is another important finding from the study. Wearing branded clothing made several people feel more self-assured and socially validated. For them, brands represent prestige, individuality, and self-expression; they are more than just labels.

The 18–24 age range, which is quite active on social media and sensitive to peer opinions, is where this tendency is most noticeable. According to the findings, wearing branded apparel might help people project a desired image or status in their social surroundings, so acting as a tool for identity building.

Additionally, a number of respondents admitted that wearing branded clothing affects how other people see them and fosters a feeling of appreciation or belonging in social situations. This demonstrates how brands are social tools that influence group dynamics and consumer confidence in addition to being economic entities.

4. Social Media and Influencer Culture Have a Big Impact on Customer Decisions

Digital platforms have a significant impact on customer purchase habits, according to the poll. Most respondents agreed that

their perceptions and choices of clothing labels are directly influenced by social media ads, fashion influencers, and celebrity endorsements.

This research supports the notion that consumers of today—Gen Z and millennials in particular—are closely linked to online communities where trend cycles, visual appeal, and social proof influence purchasing decisions. Influencer marketing works well because it can produce relatable and aspirational material, something that traditional advertising frequently can't do.

Additionally, brand engagement on sites like YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok enables people to engage with brands in unique and creative ways in addition to finding new products. As a result, clothing companies that disregard influencer partnerships and digital storytelling risk losing touch with a sizable and powerful consumer base.

5. Despite being brand aware, consumers are still quite price sensitive.

Even though the data shows a high demand for branded apparel, many respondents said they would be reluctant to pay more for it. This implies that while brands are significant, price is still a key consideration when making a final purchase.

Due to their modest salaries, the majority of consumers in this sample group consider value for money when making purchases. If the pricing does not fit their budget or expectations, they are less likely to buy, even if the brand is viewed as having prestige or quality.

The significance of smart pricing and promotions for fashion firms seeking to enter or grow in cost-sensitive areas is highlighted by this behavior. Providing student

discounts, reasonably priced collections, or bundling techniques can boost sales while preserving company identity.

6. Online shopping is growing, but physical stores are still popular.

According to the poll results, those who prefer in-store shopping and those who favor online platforms for buying branded clothing are split almost evenly. The chance to touch and feel the product, try on clothes for size and fit, and get instant satisfaction from same-day purchases were among the advantages mentioned by a sizable portion of respondents who said they shopped in physical retail stores.

Simultaneously, an increasing percentage of the sample reported using online shopping platforms and applications to buy branded clothing. This decision was influenced by a number of considerations, including home delivery, convenience, regular discounts, and access to a greater range of products.

Building trust with online buyers is also greatly aided by product recommendations and reviews.

This dual trend speaks to a change in consumer behavior where a brand's sales plan must include both digital and physical touchpoints. The diverse buying habits of

contemporary consumers are more likely to be satisfied by brands that take a hybrid or "phygital" (physical + digital) approach, such as having an online presence backed by physical stores.

Online shopping will also probably become increasingly significant over time for younger populations, such as those between the ages of 18 and 24, due to their

digital-native behaviors. Nonetheless, brand immersion and emotional involvement

are still provided by in-store experiences, which are more difficult to duplicate online.

6. **Discussion:**

The results of the study are interpreted in this chapter in light of the theoretical frameworks and body of existing literature that have been examined in previous

chapters. It investigates how customers view branded clothing, what influences their choices, and how different demographic characteristics affect these opinions. The data's insights are examined rigorously in order to draw insightful conclusions, paying particular emphasis to the usefulness of the findings for clothing companies and fashion marketers.

6.1 Knowing How Customers View Branded Clothing

According to the study's findings, buyers typically view branded clothing as being of higher quality, more stylish, and more dependable than local or non-branded alternatives. This lends credence to the research discussed in Chapter 3, where Zeithaml (1988) and Keller (1993) shown that branding raises the sense of value and reliability. Respondents commonly linked branded apparel to better fit, durability, and fabric quality, indicating that perceived quality plays a key role in fostering favorable brand sentiments.

It's interesting to see that perception was also influenced by emotional connection. Customers frequently reported feeling more self-assured and accepted by others when they wore branded apparel.

This supports Solomon's (1983) idea that clothing serves as a "second skin" and that clothing choices are influenced by social identity and self-concept. One recurring subject was the idea that wearing branded clothing reflects one's social standing and sense of style.

6.2 The Impact of Symbolism and Brand Image

Consumer behavior was found to be significantly influenced by brand image. Respondents were attracted to brands' visual identities, including their packaging and logos, as well as the principles they stand for. Brands that were seen as inclusive, eco- friendly, sophisticated, or opulent were more likely to be preferred.

This result is consistent with Kapferer's (2008) Brand Identity Prism, which describes how consumer attachment is influenced by brand personality and culture. The study's participants frequently chose companies that reflected the lifestyle or personality they wanted to emulate, suggesting that symbolic significance is a key factor in brand loyalty.

Influencer marketing and celebrity endorsements also had a significant impact on how consumers saw the brand. Celebrities wearing branded clothing greatly affected

consumers, especially younger ones, by giving the brand an air of exclusivity, trendiness, and popularity. Erdogan's (1999) research on the aspirational value of celebrity endorsements is consistent with this.

6.3 The Impact of Demographics on Brand Perception

According to the analysis, consumer perceptions of branded clothing were highly influenced by demographic factors:

Age: Brand consciousness was stronger among younger customers, particularly those aged 18 to 25. They were more likely to be affected by digital media, follow trends, and look for social affirmation. This validates research on age-based fashion behavior by Bakewell and Mitchell (2003).

Gender: When it came to fashion choices, female respondents were more involved and placed more value on aesthetics, brand identity, and emotional fulfillment. On the other hand, men tended to favor brand quality and reputation. These results are consistent with those of Noble et al. (2006), who noted comparable gender-based variations in clothing purchasing patterns.

Income: People with higher incomes were more inclined to shop directly from brand retailers or at upscale establishments and demonstrated greater brand loyalty.

Discounted online platforms were preferred by lower-income groups, demonstrating a balance between price sensitivity and brand desire.

Education and Occupation: Professionals with higher levels of education were more likely to understand ethical fashion, sustainability concerns, and branding tactics.

Additionally, they indicated a greater preference for brands based on values as opposed to just pricing.

Urban vs. Rural Divide: Urban customers were more open to a wider range of fashion labels, both online and offline, and they tended to be more daring with their looks.

Customers from rural or small towns, on the other hand, relied mostly on multi- brand retail chains or e-commerce and were

more brand aware despite having less access.

6.4 Preferences for Branded vs. Non-Branded Clothing

Even though branded clothing is highly preferred, a sizable portion of the populace still buys local or non-branded clothing. The following were the main justifications given:

Affordability: Non-branded clothing is frequently less expensive and provides similar comfort and design value.

Accessibility: Not all branded clothing is readily offered by local retailers or in smaller locations.

Situational Use: While many customers choose non-branded clothing for daily wear, many favor branded clothing for special events.

These results are consistent with the situational consumer behavior model, which holds that context, money, and need all influence what people decide to buy (Engel, Blackwell & Miniard, 1995). It also backs up the idea put forth by Lichtenstein et al. (1993) that value for money can occasionally take precedence over brand prestige.

6.5 Purchase Channels and Shopping Behavior

The preferred platforms that customers use to purchase branded apparel were also investigated in the study. The results reveal a wide variety of preferences:

Online shopping: Due to their convenience, variety, and savings, sites like Myntra, Amazon, and Ajio were preferred.

Brand Stores: Customers who valued in-person trials, touch-and-feel experiences, and unique collections favored physical stores.

Factory Outlets: A lot of respondents talked about going to brand factory outlets to get deals that combine affordability and brand value.

Multi-brand stores and shopping malls were viewed as convenient locations to compare various brands and take advantage of special seasonal discounts.

Social Media & Influencer Links: Instagram shops or brand links in influencer posts were even used by some customers to make direct purchases.

This illustrates the hybrid character of contemporary shopping, as customers switch between online and offline settings with ease depending on factors like affordability, trust, and convenience. It is consistent with research by Djafarova & Rushworth (2017), who observe that social commerce is increasingly influencing fashion purchases.

6.6 Emotional and Psychological Factors

Throughout the investigation, the emotional and psychological aspects of customer behavior were increasingly apparent. Customers frequently characterized branded apparel as: A way to express oneself.

A means of gaining admiration or social acceptability. a boost to self-esteem in public.

The self-congruity theory (Sirgy, 1986), which holds that consumers favor brands that represent their ideal or true self-image, is supported by these perceptions. A

subliminal drive to fit in with social standards and expectations is also evident in the respondents' fear of criticism for dressing in "unbranded" apparel.

Another emotional motivator, particularly for the younger participants, was FOMO (fear of missing out). Flash sales, limited edition drops, and popular brand

partnerships fueled a sense of urgency and desire that prompted customers to buy more quickly.

6.7 Brand Communication and Marketing Influence

It was believed that marketing and advertising tactics had a significant impact on how

consumers perceived products. Respondents responded especially well to: Campaigns for social media marketing
Influencer partnerships

Flash sales and seasonal promotions Sustainability claims and brand narratives

Brands that successfully conveyed their values—such as body positivity, ethical sourcing, and environmental consciousness—were more likely to develop strong emotional bonds with their customers. Positive opinions were also significantly influenced by visual branding, which includes attractive logos, visually appealing websites, and high-quality photographs.

Additionally, customers valued personalized marketing and loyalty programs, indicating a rising inclination toward relationship-based branding over transactional approaches.

6.8 Consequences for Marketers and Fashion Brands

Several useful conclusions arise from the knowledge gained from this study:

To forge closer ties with their customers, brands need to prioritize emotional branding in addition to product quality.

To properly personalize messages, marketing campaigns must be segmented depending on demographics, including age, gender, and income level.

Having a digital presence is now essential. To remain relevant, brands need to make investments in e-commerce platforms, influencer relationships, and social media.

Urban, educated consumers are increasingly making decisions based on sustainability and ethical branding.

Brands may reach a larger audience by providing a hybrid buying experience that blends offline service with online ease.

7. Conclusion:

Examining the complex and multidimensional landscape of consumer perceptions toward branded apparel was the aim of the current study. In a time when fashion has evolved from a strictly functional requirement to a symbolic expression of identity, it is imperative for academics and professionals in the fashion business to understand what influences consumers to pick or avoid branded goods. Through a combination of theoretical understandings, a comprehensive literature review, and the analysis of primary data collected through surveys, this study elucidates the psychological, emotional, social, and demographic factors that influence customer behavior in the apparel sector.

7.1 Important Results Overview

The survey found that customers' opinions about brands are very important when making decisions, especially in a market where a lot of fashion labels are vying for consumers' attention. Consumers think that branded apparel is more stylish, long-lasting, high-status, and of superior quality. Rather than being based solely on rational assessments, these relationships are often driven by emotional bonds such as self-expression, aspiration, and social affinity.

Brand image has a big impact on purchasing behavior. Customers tend to favor brands that align with their values, lifestyle, and personality. Celebrity endorsements, social media presence, and digital storytelling all help to raise brand perception and exposure.

In particular, younger demographics like Gen Z and Millennials are greatly influenced by social media influencers and trends on platforms like Instagram and TikTok.

Another crucial insight is the importance of value for money in consumer decision-making. Although many respondents indicated a preference for branded clothing due to perceived quality and status, a significant percentage also cited price sensitivity as a contributing factor. Sometimes consumers switch between branded and non-branded goods according to factors like availability, cost, or the situation.

The study also found that demographic characteristics including age, gender, income, and education have a significant impact on consumer attitudes. Customers who were worried about costs, for example, preferred to look for used branded products or value deals, whereas higher-income groups were more likely to be brand loyal.

The survey also examined consumers' shopping habits and found that they purchase branded apparel from a variety of sources, including malls, factory outlets, internet marketplaces, multi-brand retail establishments, and outlets for exclusive

brands.

People who appreciate touch-and-feel experiences still prefer in-store shopping, but the emergence of e-commerce has revolutionized fashion consumption by offering convenience, variety, and price comparisons.

7.2 Theory and Practice Implications

From a theoretical standpoint, this study validates concepts from theories of consumer behavior, branding, and identity. In addition to acting as product identifiers, it supports the idea that brands have symbolic significance that influences social positioning, emotional well-being, and self-concept.

Additionally, the findings support theories like Keller's Brand Equity model and Kapferer's Brand identification Prism that emphasize the importance of brand identification, customer experience, and brand loyalty.

Practically speaking, fashion companies and merchants might apply the information to personalize their client interactions, product lines, and advertising campaigns.

Businesses should focus on building emotional connections using a variety of strategies, such as user-generated content, personalized advertising, collaboration with relevant influencers, and consistency across online and physical brand touchpoints. To please brand-aware yet price-sensitive customers, it is also essential to offer seasonal discounts, loyalty programs, and flexible pricing structures.

7.3 Limitations of the Study

Like every research, this study has limitations. First of all, the statistics may not accurately reflect the variety of consumer perspectives across the country or the globe because it was limited to a single geographic area. Second, most responses were self-reported, which could introduce bias due to questions that were interpreted incorrectly or that were deemed socially acceptable. Lastly, the findings' long-term validity would be limited since consumer preferences may shift rapidly due to the regular changes in fashion trends.

7.4 Prospects for Further Research

As sustainability, ethical fashion, and digital fashion (such virtual try-ons) gain popularity, future study might look into longitudinal studies that track changes in consumer perceptions over time. This would build on the foundation this study laid. Additionally, qualitative techniques like focus groups and in-depth interviews might provide deeper emotional and psychological insights on brand attachment. Insightful global perspectives on fashion branding would also be obtained by include cross-cultural comparisons in the study.

7.5 In conclusion

Consuming branded apparel ultimately comes down to wearing more than simply clothes—it's about wearing meaning. These days, fashion companies convey stories, create identities, and act as emotional anchors. Customers can convey who they are, what they value, and how they want to be perceived by wearing a brand, especially in modern marketplaces. As branding evolves in the digital age, companies who are effective in understanding and emotionally connecting with their customers will continue to thrive.

By delving into consumer ideas and feelings, this study aims to not only reveal how consumers view branded apparel but also provide guidance on how businesses may establish a more genuine and meaningful connection with their target market.

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