

# **A Study on the Attributes Influencing the Purchasing Behaviour of Apparel Consumer in Organized Retail with Special Reference to Max Retail Division**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*The field of retailing has come across several stages and substantial changes over the years. This study has highlighted on psychological and economical aspects of purchasing behaviour of customer. It was conducted at MAX Retail Outlet, Coimbatore to study the factors influencing the buyer behaviour in apparel retail stores. It was confined only to Max customers at Coimbatore City. The primary data has been collected through survey on 200 customers at MAX using structured questionnaire and convenience sampling. Data was analysed using Percentage analysis, Descriptive analysis, Case Summary and Correlation. The study revealed that quality, price, appeal, brand and variety are the main factors influencing apparel buying behaviour. The findings will enable the scope for further research in understanding the attribute influences the purchase decision of the consumers with e-retail.*

**Keywords:** Purchasing behaviour – apparel – retail – stores –buyers.

## **INTRODUCTION:**

India has occupied a notable position in global retail ranking and attracted foreign investment through high market potential, low economic risk and moderate political risk. The market is expected to grow as world's third largest consumer economy by achieving US\$ 400 billion in consumption by 2025, according to a study by Boston Consulting Group.

Retailers play a dominant role in marketing and perform various functions like storing, breaking bulk, holding stock, as a channel of communication, storage, advertising, and certain additional services. It is now widely recognized that the Internet's power, scope and interactivity provide retailers with the potential to transform their customers' shopping experience [Evanschitzky et al,2004; Wolfinbarger and Gilly, 2003], and in so doing, strengthen their own competitive positions [ Doherty & Ellis-Chadwick, 2009; Levenburg, 2005]. Hence this has made this sector challenging to understand and gauge the buying behavior to retain them.

The Indian retail sector is encountering a tremendous transformation which is categorized in to two segments such as organized and unorganized with the later contributing the larger share of retail market. Now the organized retail sector is contagious up very fast. The emergence of different formats in the retail sector has necessitated for a drastic change in the consumers lifestyle. The evident increase in consumerist bustle is colossal which has already chipped out a money making recess for the retail sector of Indian economy.

Indian apparel industry holds a second place in contributing to retail sector after food and grocery is sighted with some huge shifts. Arrival of international brands into market, changes the preferences of consumers to shift from unbranded to brand. As India is being dominated with larger young population this has made the country a highly lucrative market, which is accustomed to fashion conscious due to mass media and social media penetration.

Many Indian corporate companies have jumped into the bandwagon. Fashion and apparel product categories are way different than other product categories. The way customers contemplate the decision to buy or not to buy is also different. Psychological satisfaction of buying a product in vogue is more important than utility factors (Hari Shankar Prasad, 2014).

Max is a fashion retail company opening around 50 stores across the country. Max is a division of Life Style International Pvt. Ltd., which is a part of the US \$ 1 billion Landmark Group. Max caters to the mid market section of the population. Max retails private label clothing for men, women and children as well as footwear and home accessories.

An analysis is to be performed not only on the existing customers but also on the former customers so that corrective actions may be instigated to retain current customers. Periodical customer satisfaction audit program would provide a meaningful insight into the customer attitude and their behaviour and also would form the basis for developing appropriate strategies to retain relationship (Md. Mazedul Islam et al, 2014).

Purchasing behaviour of consumer is influenced by individuals own personality traits. These personality trait do not remain the same but changes with life cycle. The frequent change in life style with changing fashion preference of consumers is fed by the newer retail offerings coming from organized retails where apparel gets utmost importance for the customer to purchase. Consumer buyer behaviour is also influenced by the key sets of quality, price, variety, appeal and brand. This study aimed at identifying attributes influencing buyer behaviour and in shaping products to serve customers.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW:**

Radhakrishnan and Shylajan (2007) has proposed a conceptual model and considered the influence of various marketing and demographic factors on consumer's habitual buying behavior towards branded products.

Dolekoglu (2008) The main determining factor affecting consumer buying behavior are quality, price, trust, availability of alternative packaging frequent advertisement, sales promotion, imitations, availability, brand image, prestige, freshness and habits.

Ravilochanan (2012) A research effort is undertaken with the specific objective of analyzing buyer behavior in different retail outlets aimed to identify the factor that influence the buyer behavior of the customer with the status of customer experience in this format of retail business could accessed which would also serve the purpose of determining relative strength of each of the retail stores.

Aniruddha Akarte (2012) Study of consumer buying behaviour related to Indian environment and highlights the factors that highly influence consumer involvement in fashion clothing. Major factors that affect shopping stimulation among fashion shoppers are simulation/trial facilities, brand reputation, personalization possibilities and store attractiveness in reference to products and services, brand value, and price. The major factors affecting purchase intentions of consumer towards fashion apparel in reference to socio cultural determinants and perceived values associated with the product.

Ramkrishna Prasad (2012) the apparel buying consumers prefer latest designs than other attributes viz., value, diversity, demand, credibility, concern and referral groups. The consumer's demographic and psychographic profile makes it challenging for the retailers to choose their required style and retail format. The technology enabled the consumers with colossal familiarity hence they look for huge variety of quality products, offering special services, pleasant ambience and store services. The outlets must create high level of trust in maintaining relationships and loyalty with customers.

Balanaga Gurunathan, Krishnakumar (2013) this study investigates the apparel buying behavior of Indian consumers under five dimensions viz., consumer characteristics, reference groups, store attributes, promotion and product attributes. The results indicate that the store attributes promotion and reference groups are the major dimensions of apparel buying behavior. To enhance the store image the stores can develop several new strategies on branding and loyalty programmes.

Srivastava Mukta (2013), the apparel industry in India is divided on the basis of fashion, climate, region, culture and fiscal factors. The fast changing trends in lifestyle of consumer have contributed largely to the growth and development of organized retail formats in India. This growth is being driven by the number of factors such as increases in disposable income, increasing special moments and occasion, growth in fashion increasingly become a form of self-expression.

Ankita Batra (2014) the study focused at finding the factors affecting consumer preferences related to organized retail outlet. The 6 factors identified as most significant influence on consumer preferences are availability and variety, ambience, service, price, promotions and quality. By indulgent people's psychology behind their visits, retailers can make profitable marketing and retail management decisions.

Hari Shankar Prasad (2014) Apparel retailers play a dominant role in retail revolution. The apparel and fashion product holds shorter life cycle and high product turnover. Hence the consumer behavior towards these products is entirely different. Psychological satisfaction plays a vital role when compared to utility satisfaction, which influences more in apparel purchase decision. Customers give more importance for convenience of pick and choice, family shopping under one roof, latest designs, availability of options and low priority for advertisements and trusting the outlets blindly.

Claudio De Mattos et al (2015) the main purpose of the paper is to identify consumer decision making styles based on Sproles & Kendall’s (1986) framework in a large emerging market for international apparel brands. An online questionnaire-based survey with individual Indian consumers was conducted. The findings had brought into light that there is a significant difference between male and female consumers on brand and quality consciousness as well as occupational groups for brand loyalty. As brand and quality play a dominant role the retailers should make necessary efforts to communicate about the brand value of the international brands in the Indian market.

Niklas Eriksson et al (2017) this study focuses on studying the relationship between young consumers’ decision-making styles and their propensity to shop clothing online with a smartphone. The Consumer Styles Inventory (CSI) is used as base for a survey with young adult students. The results indicate that four out of eight CSI measurements, namely brand consciousness, fashion consciousness, impulsiveness and recreational shopping behavior, positively correlate with the respondents’ frequency to look at and/or buy clothing online with a smartphone.

Ankit Katrodia et al (2018) the data was collected from 700 respondents of 7 selective malls situated at Durban with 100 each. The results revealed that there is a significance influence of factors such as services, sales dynamics and accessibility on consumer buying behavior. The psychological factors like popularity, image of the malls along with payment flexibility and billing facility attract customers in the malls. Apart from the above mentioned a few other factors like safety and security, temperature, atmosphere, parking area and brand reputation also influences the consumer visit at shopping malls whereas the demographic profile of the respondents viz., age, gender, occupation, monthly income and educational qualification had not significant influence on consumer visit to malls and buying behaviour.

**METHOLODOGY:**

Primary data have been used for analysis and it has been collected through Survey method. The structured Questionnaire was prepared after gathering preliminary information about the consumers. Secondary data had been collected from the Articles, Journals, and websites. The sampling unit was customers visiting Max Retail Division Brookfield’s Mall Coimbatore. The sample size is 200 customers. Convenience sampling method was adopted the sample being drawn from that part of the population which is close to hand. The data collected was analyzed with statistical tools namely Percentage analysis, Descriptive analysis, Case Summary, Correlations.

**FINDINGS AND DICUSSION:**

**Profile of the Respondents:**

The percentage analysis revealed that 49 % of respondents fall under the category of male ,51% of respondents fall under the category of female .It is conclude that majority 51% of respondents are females. 40% of the respondents fall under the category age of 18-23 years, 38% of the respondents fall under the category age of 24-29 years. 54% of the respondents are married.

47% of respondents were Professionals. 20% were Students, 50% of the respondents were undergraduates while 39% were Postgraduates. 40% of the respondents fall under the monthly income category of Rs.10000-15000, 33% of respondents fall under the monthly income category of Rs. 15000-20000. 17% of respondents reside in towns while 67% reside in city. 20% of respondents were middle of the month buyers, 52% of the respondents were convenience buyers while 9% of respondents were special occasion buyers.

**Case Summary:**

**Gender wise analysis:** Female customers have higher satisfaction on all variables than the male as evident from table 1

**Table No 1:**

Gender		Quality	Price	Appeal	Brand	Variety
Male	N	98	98	98	98	98
	Mean	2.15	2.00	2.00	2.14	2.23
	Std. Deviation	.770	.467	.561	.514	.566

<b>Gender</b>		<b>Quality</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>Appeal</b>	<b>Brand</b>	<b>Variety</b>
Female	N	102	102	102	102	102
	Mean	2.21	2.16	2.25	2.27	2.30
	Std. Deviation	.544	.571	.645	.563	.638
<b>Total</b>	N	200	200	200	200	200
	Mean	2.18	2.08	2.13	2.21	2.26
	Std. Deviation	.664	.527	.616	.543	.603

**Age Wise Analysis:** Customers aged between 24-29 years have higher satisfaction in quality, price, appeal, brand and variety than other age category as revealed by the table 2.

**Table No 2:**

<b>Age</b>		<b>Quality</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>Appeal</b>	<b>Brand</b>	<b>Variety</b>
Lessthan18 years	N	8	8	8	8	8
	Mean	2.07	2.06	2.04	2.22	2.31
	Std. Deviation	.465	.933	.628	.674	.884
18-23 years	N	80	80	80	80	80
	Mean	2.29	2.03	2.10	2.10	2.19
	Std. Deviation	.810	.462	.547	.539	.587
24-29	N	77	77	77	77	77
	Mean	2.10	2.15	2.20	2.32	2.36
	Std. Deviation	.533	.553	.649	.535	.554
30-35	N	23	23	23	23	23
	Mean	2.16	2.09	1.97	2.29	2.26
	Std. Deviation	.529	.503	.611	.486	.767
Above35 years	N	12	12	12	12	12
	Mean	2.08	1.96	2.19	2.00	2.08
	Std. Deviation	.674	.509	.834	.511	.417
<b>Total</b>	N	200	200	200	200	200
	Mean	2.18	2.08	2.13	2.21	2.26
	Std. Deviation	.664	.527	.616	.543	.603

**Monthly Income Wise Analysis:** Customers with income level up to 10000 and 10000 to 15000 it was found that they have high satisfaction with variety whereas 15000 to 20000 they have high satisfaction on quality and above 20000 again happy with variety aspect as evident from table 3.

**Table No 3:**

<b>Monthly Income</b>		<b>Quality</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>Appeal</b>	<b>Brand</b>	<b>Variety</b>
up to 10000	N	26	26	26	26	26
	Mean	2.18	1.91	2.14	2.13	2.19
	Std. Deviation	.613	.490	.598	.549	.708
10000-15000	N	75	75	75	75	75
	Mean	2.13	2.07	2.17	2.25	2.28
	Std. Deviation	.603	.516	.652	.509	.508
15000-20000	N	66	66	66	66	66
	Mean	2.27	2.08	2.06	2.19	2.23
	Std. Deviation	.800	.526	.576	.610	.640
Above 20000	N	18	18	18	18	18
	Mean	2.27	2.29	2.20	2.26	2.44
	Std. Deviation	.544	.614	.706	.511	.725
<b>Total</b>	N	185	185	185	185	185
	Mean	2.20	2.07	2.13	2.21	2.27
	Std. Deviation	.675	.530	.621	.550	.608

**Correlation:**

The correlation matrix table 4 displays the correlation for each pair of variables:

It is evident from the table given below that quality, price, appeal, brand and variety influence each other while purchasing a retail product.

**Table No 4:**

		Quality	Price	Appeal	Brand	Variety
Quality	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N	200				
Price	Pearson Correlation	.354**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000				
	N	200	200			
Appeal	Pearson Correlation	.365**	.347**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000			
	N	200	200	200		
Brand	Pearson Correlation	.248**	.439**	.364**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		
	N	200	200	200	200	
Variety	Pearson Correlation	.220**	.273**	.367**	.563**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.000	.000	.000	
	N	200	200	200	200	
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)						

**CONCLUSION:**

Among the entire respondents the people with age group 24-29 years have higher satisfaction in quality, price, appeal, brand and variety than other age category. At the same time respondents with income level up to 10000, 10000 to 15000 and above 20000 are happy with variety being offered at the retail outlets whereas the remaining income category is happy with quality aspect.

Even if the modern era calls for e-outlet purchases the customers who visits to outlets are equally good in numbers as most of the respondents are professionals they look for a week end slackening. This encourages them to buy as and then they desire than a pre-planned purchase and this makes them to fall under the cluster of convenience buyers.

Furthermore while studying the respondent personal profile it is obviously understood that majority of the customer who visits the contemporary retail outlets exclusively located at shopping malls are in the age group of 18-23 years. Hence this supports the results that brand and variety influences more than the other attributes.

It is also evident that the female respondents have higher satisfaction on all attributes than the male respondents. Another vital aspect is whether the preferences on attributes differs based on their location and it is proven from the results that respondents who lives at village and town are highly satisfied with variety whereas respondents reside at city gives more prominence to quality.

However all the five attributes quality, price, appeal, brand and variety influence each other in which variety and brand has a moderate positive correlation while purchasing a product from the outlet.

Finally to conclude the retail managers should emphasis and strengthen availability of more collections with latest design ease of pick and choice and value for their money for which consumers give more priority. Since the outlet has got its own brand image and value in the industry, as well as in the geographical area, the store should maintain their relationship with the customer and will transmute them as loyal customers in the near future.

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