A Study of Factors of Consumer Buying Behavior and its Influence on Consumer Perception: Evidence from Value Fashion Retail in The City of Bengaluru

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ABSTRACT

Apparel industry, viewed as one of the outstanding economic growth engines, has been radically evolving over the past few decades due to retail consolidation, globalization and e-commerce. Impetus for this study came from the fact that there has been a tremendous demand for product variety and very short product life cycle in value fashion .Developments in technology have raised expectations from fashion apparel industry.Being fashionable is becoming an imperative among the millennial. Individuals expect not only comfort,quality and being fashionable,but also demand proper fitting and ease of care.Objective was to understand the determinants of consumer buying behavior with regard to value fashion apparel and its impact on buying behavior particularly in India context as not many studies have been done in India. Theoretical framework was derived from secondary study of published researches.A random sample of 199 respondents within the city of Bengaluru was considered to gather data and the data so collected was analyzed using SPSS.Study validates a comprehensive approach to explaining factors influencing consumer perception about value fashion. An in depth analysis was done as to how factors of purchase decision, brand behavior and price influence the buying behavior and perception of the consumer.However it was found that factors such as store location, promotional tools, impulsive buying, had a greater impact on people.

Keywords: Fashion, Retail, Consumer behavior, location, brand, promotional tools.

INTRODUCTION:

For centuries, the phenomenon of fashion behavior has been the subject of study of social analysts, cultural historians, moral critics, academic theorists and business entrepreneurs. Particularly process whereby new apparel and apparel concepts, style statements and tastes continually changing across the population had been the subject of popular demand for centuries.

Therefore, it is imperative to understand how people interpret apparel and how different demographic characteristics make different judgments during their pre-purchase decision, which in turn is critical to apparel manufacturers and their advertising agencies.

This insights into consumer perception is crucial for the value-fashion industry and Indian players like Fbb, Reliance Trends, Pantaloons, and Westside. These value-fashion brands are now competing globally to become global leaders in apparel industry with the help of innovative branding technique (Garaus, 2017)s and retail marketing strategies to attract more customers.

Brand behaviour help customers to sort out the non-attractive similar items and gives them a reason to buy the product. Brand behaviour is essentially the sum of all experiences related to the product, after sales-service, exchange-policy which the companies render to their customers for delivering the product.

It has been acknowledged that customers make their purchasing decisions by comparing alternative offers in the market or brand loyalty. Those elements are a part of different consumer buying behaviour decision making styles. Knowing those styles, retailers can profile their consumers, communicate relevant messages and customize in-store experience for individual consumers according to their preferred decision making style.

Deciding factors of purchase are shaped by functional experiences (i.e. fashion, durability, quality, price, colour, ease of care) as well as promotional tools experiences (i.e. newspaper, radio, social media, holiday vouchers, discounts, offers, birthday vouchers) the customer associates with the product and company.

This study identified statistically significant differences between two genders for some of the consumer buying behaviour making style in the context of geographical location Bengaluru.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

A.S.Suresh (2018) has identified the factors related to traits of utilitarian and hedonistic shoppers and provides insights into characteristics and behavioural patterns of utilitarian and hedonistic shoppers spanning organized apparel, sports, jewelry, Books and FMCG retail format.

Ebster and Garaus (2017) opined that visual merchandising is the art and science of presenting products in the most visually appealing way, emphasizing on the communication with the customers through images and presentations, and also indicated that visual merchandising is a tool to convey a message about goods to the buyers by employing various visual styles and themes and also visual merchandising elements make the highest positive impact on impulse buying for consumers, when shopping in specialized clothing and footwear stores.

Stem and Piron (2016) elucidate the phenomena when consumers purchase goods upon seeing the product accompanied by the sudden realization that they need the product. This type of buying behavior is distinguished as reminder impulse buying, which is quite similar to the reminder in which consumers purchase goods when they encounter the product. However, the what distinguishes the two behaviors is that suggestion buying occurs when consumers have no prior knowledge of the product and unexpectedly visualize a need for it when seeing the product

Baumeister and Stillman(2016),indicate that shopping environment are complex, cognitively involving and require many skills such as application of rational choices that represent the best value for money, self-control. And also it is indicated that consumers use detailed information about products to guide their choices and most consumers purchase products after simply looking at the tag price and story tag of the product.

Theron and Terblanche(2015) identified that the orientation of consumers to a product depends positively on the dynamic relationship between the buyer and seller. The relationship improves profitability and customer satisfaction plays a major role in equity returns of a company, where studies in this field have suggested that there is a positive correlation between customer satisfaction and profitability. The measure of the impact of marketing actions on the level and the heterogeneity of customer satisfaction. The results relating to customers show these aspects affect the performance of a long term.

Nelson and Ellison(2014)state that one manufacturer and two retailers, which constitute a two-echelon supply chain can select not only the levels of wholesale and retail prices respectively, but also the timing of pricing. The analysis of a dynamic game composed of discrete periods provides two useful conclusions for operational decision support. First, the manufacturer must simultaneously set its wholesale prices for products that are sold to separate retailers at the same time. Second, in contrast to the simultaneous price setting by the manufacturer, the retailers must sequentially set respective retail prices at different times, thus the retailers should stagger their timings for setting retail prices.

Empson (2014) opines that current generation has huge spending power and make up a quarter of the UK population while it will constitute 40% of all U.S. consumers by 2020. So, it is expected to heavily influence retail marketing practices both from a technological and product-specific point of view and also consumer's expectations and the aspiration to fulfill them form the foundations of all classical and modern marketing concepts.

Hristoy and Reynolds(2013)state that the recent studies on diffusion of technologies have been investigated how in-store consumer behavior has been affected by advanced technologies. Results have showed that Technology Acceptance Model had been extensively exploited by considering the perceived ease of use, usefulness, attitude and behavioral intention as drivers of new technology adoption, which is been further extended with more constructs such as risk avoidance and trust.

Barthel and Hudson(2012) indentified that one of the key drivers in retail is an increasing an increasing demand for a seamless experience between online mobile and in-store shopping.The creation of a superior customer experience is asserted to be one of the pivotal objectives in retailing environments whether it be offline or online.

Podoshen and Andrzejewski(2012)discovered that consumers of materially oriented society in order to sustain a

state of happiness likely will buy goods which as they suppose make them happy and will avoid experimentation in order to prevent disappointment and possible state of unhappiness that arises from a risk of change of brand..

Sneath and Lacey(2010)suggested that consumers under difficult circumstances are prone to actively made purchases that are perceived as a self-gift or reward. Therefore, they conclude that retail therapy could be a rational response of buyers striving to reduce the disappointment and depression associated with stressful events.

Berman and Evans(2010) suggested that the cross shopping are translated into two forms in which during the year, the consumers will shop for a product category at more than one retail format or secondly on one shopping trip, they tend to visit multiple retailers, where they have more choices to do shopping, this phenomenon happens because the consumers feel comfortable shopping at different formats or that want to save both travel and shopping time.

Kaltcheva, and Winsor(2008) indicated that the consumers who are negotiating in price comparisons across stores, will be less likely to make purchases at the retailers who charged regular prices perceiving that the regular prices charged are excessive as compared to those retailers that practicing Everyday Low Pricing Strategy.

Sinha and Batra(2005)in this study on effect of consumer price consciousness on private label purchase found that the purchase of private label brands is associated with the consumer's price consciousness and also pointed that the consumer's value and buying intention perceptions are affected by the price offered and they may look elsewhere for a product that could be obtained at a lower price.

Bagdare and Jain(2001) investigated that the interpretation of shopping experience as an holistic experience of the consumer and researches the extent that a consumer can have a shopping experience without being in the shop and they chose some variables to operationalize the experience by looking at the extent of immersion, extent of connection with the shop.

Nitzan and Libai(1999) found that customers who have close connection with another person who is important for them and also when the customers have no loyalty, there is a high tendency of defection responses. In other words, the customers with planned shopping lists may not buy the listed goods because close connected person of the customer deviates the customer's purchasing intention.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM:

Fashion and apparel sector as an industry is emerging as a growth industry. It is therefore crucial to garner insights into drivers of consumer buying behaviour to enable Indian retail marketers and corp-orates to realign their strategies to consumer expectations and thereby accordingly profile their consumers, communicate relevant messages and customize in-store experience to increase their market leadership.

## OBJECTIVES:

1)To identify factors of consumer buying behavior in value apparel fashion.
2)To evaluate the influence of CBB factors on consumer buying perception.
3)To understand relationship between demographic factors and perception of the customers/consumers visiting the store during purchase of apparel.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK:
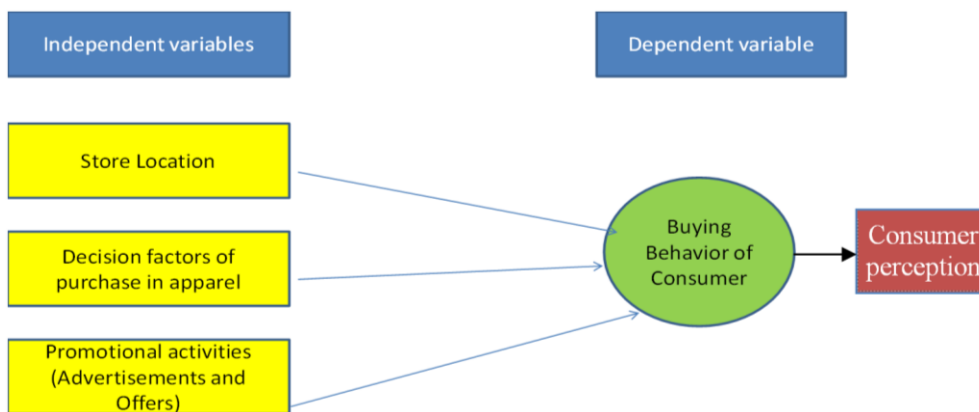
Conceptual Framework for Hypothesis 1
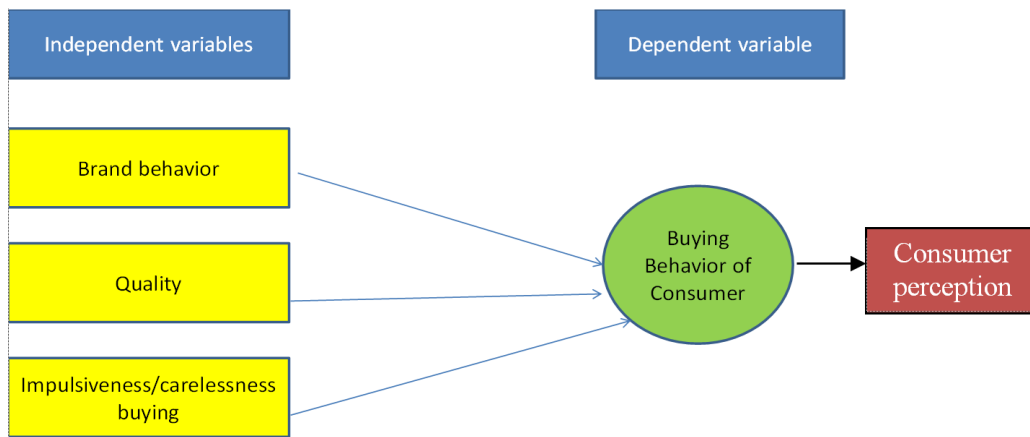
Conceptual Framework for Hypothesis 2

HYPOTHESES:

H1: A significant relationship exists between decision factors of purchase in apparel, store location, promotional activities (advertisements and offers) and consumer buying behaviour.

H2: A significant relationship exists between brand behaviour, quality, impulsiveness buying and consumer buying behaviour.

RESEARCH METHODOLGY:

First segment of the study entailed identifying and determining drivers of consumer buying behavior through secondary research for creating conceptual frame work and second segment primary research for determining its influence on buying behavior and perception respectively.

Research tools:

Research tool used for the empirical study was scaled questionnaire which included the following types of scales and questions:

Likert Scale [Strongly Disagree/Disagree/Neutral/Agree/Strongly Agree]

Closed Ended Questions

For analysis of the data, SPSS was used. Factor Analysis was used to refine data.

Sample Design :

Sample size: Sample size is 199.Sample was selected by simple random sampling from the population of city of Bengaluru.

LIMITATIONS OF STUDY:

Study is restricted to city of Bengaluru. While the findings can be replicated in cities similar to Bengaluru, the same probably cannot be deduced for tier-1 cities.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

Quantitative analysis:

Descriptive statistics and factor Analysis (factors in deciding of the purchase)

Table 4.1 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	**Std. Deviation**	**Analysis N**
Price	3.81	.892	199
Colour	4.01	.739	199
Fitting	4.39	.848	199
Easyforcare	4.03	.759	199
Durability	4.04	.745	199

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	**Std. Deviation**	**Analysis N**
Uniqueness	3.62	.834	199
Fashion	3.87	.826	199
Brand	4.02	.732	199
Comfort	3.73	1.181	199
Quality	4.16	.548	199

Interpretation: The mean, standard deviation and number of respondents(N), who participated in the survey are given, Looking at the mean, we can conclude that "Fitting" is the most important variable which influences customers in deciding of the purchase in apparel. It has the highest mean of 4.39.

Table 4.2 KMO and Bartlett's test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.599
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	126.040
	Df	45
	Sig.	.000

Interpretation: KMO measure is > 0.5.Hence its possible to extract reliable factors from the given set of variables.

Bartlett's test of sphericity:
Null hypothesis: correlation matrix is identity matrix (correlation is not significant)
Alternate hypothesis: correlation matrix is not an identity matrix (correlation is significant)

Inference:
Since p-value < 0.05, Hence the correlation is significant i.e Factor Analysis can be performed.

Table 4.3: Communalities Extraction from principal component analysis

	Initial	**Extraction**
Fashion	1.000	.244
Brand	1.000	.694
Comfort	1.000	.616
Quality	1.000	.433
Price	1.000	.475
Colour	1.000	.259
Fitting	1.000	.518
Easyforcare	1.000	.496
Durability	1.000	.381
Uniqueness	1.000	.375

Interpretation:
From this table, it can be observed that brand (.694), comfort(.616), and fitting(.518) are considered important variables among the other variables in deciding of the purchase of apparel. 69% of variance in "brand" is accounted for, while 61% of variance in "comfort" is accounted for, and followed by 51% of variance in "fitting" are considered important variables among the customers during the deciding of purchase for apparel.

Table 4.4: Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	**% of Variance**	**Cumulative %**	**Total**	**% of Variance**	**Cumulative %**
1	1.885	18.849	18.849	1.885	18.849	18.849
2	1.474	14.740	33.589	1.474	14.740	33.589
3	1.132	11.323	44.912	1.132	11.323	44.912

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
4	.970	9.698	54.610			
5	.924	9.242	63.851			
6	.895	8.949	72.800			
7	.817	8.167	80.968			
8	.722	7.222	88.190			
9	.610	6.104	94.294			
10	.571	5.706	100.000			
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.						

It can be deduced from the above table that Percentage of total variation explained by factor 1(brand) is 18.849%; by factor 2 (comfort)is 14.740%: by factor 3(fitting) is 11.323%
Total variation explained by all the three factors put together = 44.912 %

Table 4.5 Factor Analysis (factors for store location)

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Analysis N
Proximity to work	3.51	.905	198
Proximity to home	3.66	.909	198
Availability to quality apparrel	3.90	.864	198
Reasonable price	3.63	.930	198
Availability of variety	3.62	.947	198
Staff service	3.64	.987	198
Offers and discounts	3.66	.857	198

Interpretation:
The mean, standard deviation and number of respondents(N), who participated in the survey are given, Looking at the mean, it can be concluded that "Availability of quality apparel" is the most important variable which influences customers in deciding of the store location for shopping. It has the highest mean of 3.90.

Table 4.6 KMO and Bartlett's test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.766
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	152.463
	Df	21
	Sig.	.000

Interpretation:
KMO measure > 0.5.Hence its possible to extract reliable factors from the given set of variables.

Bartlett's test of sphericity:
Null hypothesis: correlation matrix is identity matrix (correlation is not significant)
Alternate hypothesis: correlation matrix is not an identity matrix (correlation is significant)

Inference:
Since p-value < 0.05, Hence the correlation is significant i.e Factor Analysis can be performed.

Table 4.7: Communalities Extraction from principal component analysis

	Initial	Extraction
Proximity to work	1.000	.747
Proximity to home	1.000	.363
Availability to quality apparrel	1.000	.453
Reasonable price	1.000	.405
Availability of variety	1.000	.447
Staff service	1.000	.483
Offers and discounts	1.000	.497

Interpretation: From this table, it can be observed that proximity to work (.749), and "offers and discounts"(.497) are considered important variables among the other variables in deciding of the store location. 74.7% of variance in "proximity to work" is accounted for, while 49.7% of variance in "offers and discounts"are considered important variables among the customers during the decision of store location.

Table 4.8: Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.346	33.512	33.512	2.346	33.512	33.512
2	1.050	15.000	48.512	1.050	15.000	48.512
3	.912	13.032	61.545			
4	.749	10.697	72.242			
5	.694	9.914	82.156			
6	.631	9.017	91.173			
7	.618	8.827	100.000			
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.						

It can be deduced from the above table that Percentage of total variation explained by factor 1(proximity to work) is 33.512%; by factor 2 (offers and discounts)is 15.000%
Total variation explained by both the factors put together = 48.512 %

Table 4.9 Factor Analysis (factors for promotional strategies-offers)

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Analysis N
Discount	3.74	.845	197
Gifts	3.41	.919	197
holidayvouchers	3.53	.884	197
Exchange	3.61	.928	197

Interpretation:
The mean, standard deviation and number of respondents(N), who participated in the survey are given, Looking at the mean, it can be concluded that "discount" is the most important variable which influences customers in visibility of brand in terms of offers. It has the highest mean of 3.74.

Table 4.10 KMO and Bartlett's test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.570
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	84.921
	Df	6
	Sig.	.000

Interpretation:
KMO measure > 0.5.Hence its possible to extract reliable factors from the given set of variables.

Bartlett's test of sphericity:
Null hypothesis: correlation matrix is identity matrix (correlation is not significant)
Alternate hypothesis: correlation matrix is not an identity matrix (correlation is significant)

Inference:
Since p-value < 0.05, Hence the correlation is significant. Ie, Factor Analysis can be performed.

Table 4.11: Communalities Extraction from principal component analysis

	Initial	Extraction
Discount	1.000	.453
Gifts	1.000	.499
holidayvouchers	1.000	.573
Exchange	1.000	.251

Interpretation: From this table, it can be observed that "holiday vouchers" is considered important variables among the other variables in promotional strategies(offers). 57.3% of variance in "holiday vouchers" is considered important variables among the customers for the promotional strategies used as offers.

Table 4.12: Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	1.776	44.396	44.396	1.776	44.396	44.396
2	.981	24.514	68.910			
3	.749	18.716	87.625			
4	.495	12.375	100.000			
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.						

It can be deduced from the above table that Percentage of total variation explained by factor 1(holiday vouchers) is 44.394%.
Total variation explained by the factor = 44.396 %

Cross tab Analysis (factors for Quality) :

Table 4.13: Casualwearwithbestpqualityareusuallymychoice * Age

		Age					Total
		less than 20	20-30yrs	30-40yrs	40-50yrs	above 50	
	strongly disagree	0	1	1	0	0	2
	disagree	1	1	1	1	3	7
	neutral	2	45	11	16	5	79
	agree	11	39	11	15	3	79
	strongly agree	2	11	9	2	7	31
Total		**16**	**97**	**33**	**34**	**18**	**199**

Interpretation:
Casual wear with the best quality are usually my choice" is taken as a statement from the questionnaire from the factor Quality and compared with the demographic characteristic as Age, and it is observed that 45% of consumers are in dilemma of the fact, they are neither agreeing nor disagreeing with the factor.

Cross tab Analysis (factors for Impulsiveness/Carelessness Buying) :

Table 4.14: Often I make careless purchase and later I wish I had not * Age Crosstab

Count		Age					Total
		less than 20	20-30yrs	30-40yrs	40-50yrs	above 50	
	disagree	6	7	9	2	1	25
	neutral	6	54	7	17	7	91
	agree	3	31	12	12	7	65
	strongly agree	1	5	5	3	3	17
Total		**16**	**97**	**33**	**34**	**18**	**199**

Interpretation:
Often I make careless purchase and later I wish I had not" is taken as a statement from the questionnaire from the factor Impulsiveness/Carelessness buying and compared with the demographic characteristic as Age, and it is observed that 54% of consumers are in dilemma of the fact and they are neither agreeing nor disagreeing with the factor.i.e; staying neutral.

Cross tab Analysis (factors for Brand behaviour):

Table 4.15: store offers me the best choice of brands* Age Crosstab

		Age					Total
		less than 20	20-30yrs	30-40yrs	40-50yrs	above 50	
	disagree	0	3	1	0	0	4
	neutral	3	47	9	13	5	77
	agree	11	36	15	13	10	85
	strongly agree	2	11	8	8	3	32
Total		16	97	33	34	18	199

Interpretation:
Store offers me the best choice of brands" is taken as a statement from the questionnaire from the factor Brand Behaviour buying and compared with the demographic characteristic as Age, and it is observed that 47% of consumers are in dilemma of the fact, and they are not agreeing neither disagreeing with the factor.i.e; staying neutral.

Cross tab Analysis (factors for price) :

Table 4.16: I look for price at different places

Count		Gender		Total
		female	Male	
I look for price at different places	strongly disagree	1	0	1
	Disagree	5	5	10
	Neutral	39	51	90
	Agree	33	27	60
	strongly agree	13	23	36
	6	1	0	1
	Total	92	106	199

Interpretation:
I look for price at different places" is taken as a statement from the questionnaire from the factor Shopping Behavior buying and compared with the demographic characteristic as Gender, and it is observed that 39% of consumers are in dilemma of the fact and they are neither agreeing nor disagreeing with the factor. i.e; staying neutral.

Following statements satisfy Hypothesis 1:

From the attributes of store location as a factor, it is seen that" Availability of quality apparel" is having the highest value as 3.90, which influences the customers in deciding the store location. It is also seen that proximity to work(.747) i.e; 74.7% and offers and discounts(.497) i.e; 49.7% respectively are considered important variables for the customers.

From the attributes of decision factors of purchase in apparel. It is seen that "Fitting" is having the highest value as 4.39, which influences the customers in deciding the purchase of apparel among the other variables. It is also seen that brand(.694) i.e; 69.4% ,comfort(.616) i.e;61.6% and fitting (.518) i.e; 51.8% respectively are considered important variables for the customers.

From the attributes of promotional strategies as per Advertisements, it is seen that "Hoardings" is the most important variable which influences customers in visibility of brand, and has the highest mean of 3.73. It is also seen that divider poles(.720) i.e;72% and hoardings (.710) i.e; 71% respectively are considered important factors for the customers.

From the attributes of promotional strategies as per Offers, it is seen that "Discounts" is the most important variable which influences customers in visibility of brand, and has the highest mean of 3.74. It is also seen that holiday vouchers(.573) i.e;57.3% is considered important factors for the customers regarding offers.

This proves that there is a significant association between the Store location, Decision factors of purchase in apparel and promotional activities (Offers and Advertisements) and consumer buying behavior and hence Hypothesis 1 is accepted.

Following statements satisfy Hypothesis 2:

From the attributes of Brand behavior, as" Store offering me the best choice of brands is the best store" it is observed that 47% (Age group – 20-30yrs) of the customers are neutral with this factor, 15% (Age group – 30-40yrs) of the customers are agreeing to the fact and 13%(Age group – 40-50yrs) of the customers are also agreeing to this fact.

From the attributes of Quality, as "Casual wear with the best quality are usually my choice", it is observed that 45% (Age group – 20-30yrs) of the customers are neutral with this factor, 11% (Age group – 30-40yrs) of the customers are agreeing to the fact and 15%(Age group – 40-50yrs) of the customers are also agreeing to this fact.

From the attributes of Impulsiveness buying, as "Often I make careless purchase and later I wish I had not", it is observed that 54% (Age group – 20-30yrs) of the customers are neutral with this factor, 12% (Age group – 30-40yrs) of the customers are agreeing to the fact and 12%(Age group – 40-50yrs) of the customers are also agreeing to this fact.

This proves that there is a significant association between the Brand behavior, Quality and Impulsiveness buying and Consumer buying behavior and hence Hypothesis 2 is accepted.

FINDINGS:

Fashion, Brand and Comfort are the most important variables during the decision of purchase in apparel industry.

Proximity to work and Availability of quality apparel are factors considered by customers for choosing store .

Divider poles and Hoardings from advertisements, Discount and Holiday vouchers from offers are having a higher impact on the perception of the consumer with respect to promotional strategies.

Quality factor plays an important role for consumers during buying behaviour of apparel.

Impulsiveness/Carelessness buying is also factor for consumers during buying behaviour of apparel and hence store plano-gram should be aligned to impulsive tendencies

Brand behaviour, pricing and availability are other significant factors is also considered an important factor for the customers who shop from value fashion store.

Age group of 20-30 yrs is more active in shopping and visiting to fashion as compared to other age groups.

SUGGESTIONS:

Age groups above 30 years should also be targeted to understand their perception during their buying behaviour in apparel industry.

Females of different age groups should be targeted more in terms of exchange policy and gift vouchers.

Advertisements strategies such as Social media and Newspaper should be given more preference in terms of brand visibility.

More sale and offer campaigns should take place as, consumers are taking pricing factor as an important factor during their purchase decision.

Value fashion brands should tie-up with other brands or should come up with in-house brands, as brand behaviour is considered as an important factor during purchase decision.

CONCLUSIONS:

Fashion, brand, comfort and quality seems to be the key drivers in value fashion apparel industry for consumers. Hence Companies should focus on these components while strategizing to acquire more consumers and market share.

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