Brand and Store Selection Behaviour of Female Consumers towards Clothing

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Abstract

The behaviour and interest of consumers has been consistently changing over past few decades as apparel and fashion industry has transformed in India recently. The present study explores the brand selection and store selection behaviour of female consumers in Chandigarh (tri-city) area. The study examines the factors influencing the brand and store selection behaviour of female consumers and the effects of Age, Income and Place of Residence on the factors affecting their behaviour. The primary data has been collected by distributing questionnaire to 150 consumers in various markets of tri-city (Chandigarh). The study will serve as a tool to get information regarding preferences and factors affecting choice of female consumers for new as well as existing companies to frame brand and other marketing strategies.

Keywords: Behaviour, Apparel, Brand, Preference, Strategies.

Introduction:

Strong brands are a powerful asset and commonly used to extend product lines to expand the scope and distribution of the company. It is a name, term, design, symbol or any other feature that distinguishes an organization or product from its competitors, while branding is a set of marketing and communication methods that help to differentiate the company or product. The brand indicates quality, originality, validity and product differentiation. Hence, with proper execution, a brand can be a powerful asset for new product development.

Shopping is a day to day activity, which includes selecting the store and type of item to be purchased. The clothing preference reflects the culture, life style, standard of living and growth in an economy. Individually as a form of non-verbal communication it reflects the wearer's identity. The behaviour and interests of the consumer especially female consumers has been changing over the years due to increasing number of available variety of products, stores and brands in the market. The fashion, living standard and life style and spending habits have also changed during recent period. So, the trends regarding brand selection and store selection by the consumers has become more complicated or diverse, especially in case of fashionable products. Everyone has his/her own attitude towards shopping as someone may see it as an entertainment, leisure activity and an opportunity to spend time with friends while for someone it may be a necessity or even a boredom or torture.

The present study has been conducted to determine the preference and

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behaviour of consumer's towards clothing, both in terms of type of cloth and type of brand, as large variety of Indian and foreign brands are available in market. Further, the major factors like friends, family and celebrities' etc. that have an impact on purchase decisions have been analysed. Shopping malls, company showrooms and multi-brand showrooms have emerged recently in India. Further, by analysing factors which affect store selection behaviour the major factors were identified. As the demographic profile (Age, Income and Residence Area) also affect the preferences and perception of human beings, so present study also attempts to explore the effect of female consumer's demographic profile on brand and store choice.

Chandigarh is a city as well as Union Territory of India, which serves as the capital of the states of Haryana and Punjab. The metropolitan of Chandigarh-Mohali-Panchkula collectively is known as Tri-city with a population of over 2 million. It is one of the early planned cities in India and internationally known for its architecture and urban design popularly known as city beautiful. The city is known for its high literacy rate, human development index, standard of living, per capita income and developed fashion market. There exist many shopping points or markets and availability of almost every kind of clothes and clothing brand. So it can be considered the best place to study the brand and store selection behaviour of consumers towards clothing in northern India as people from all the parts of the country come for shopping in Chandigarh.

Review of Literature:

Jantan M. and Kamaruddin A.R. (1999) examined the factors that are salient to store image in determining the choice of retail outlets in the island of Penang, Malaysia. The findings revealed that five attributes of store i.e. image, location, merchandise, price and service emerged as salient attributes, having a bearing to determine store patronage and further it was found that location and service have a strong impact on consumer's store choice.

Venkateswaran P.S., Ananthi N., et.al. (2011) studied the influence of brand loyalty on apparel buying behaviour of consumers at Dindigul. The researchers opined that branding communicates several meanings to the consumer, which include the attributes, benefit, value, culture, personality and user. The study indicated strong correlation between brand name/brand image and brand loyalty and significant relationship between factors like brand name, product quality, price, store environment and brand loyalty.

Prasad G.H.S. (2014) analysed the customer's buying behaviour and underlying factors determining the customer's buying behaviour at a selected apparel retailer. The study is based on primary data collected from 100 customers of selected apparel retailers in Hyderabad. The research found that customers gave high priority for availability of latest designs, availability of options, shopping for middle class and convenience of pick up. The major factors affecting buying behaviour are shopping as social compliance and for discount, value for money and family shopping.

Hassan S.T., Hurrah B.H. and Lanja A. (2014) examined the factors that dominate in buying behaviour of youth of Jalandhar city for apparel along with investigating the relation between purchase behaviour of youth with the consumer attributes and personal characteristics. The research found that majority people wear branded clothes because it provides more quality and value for money and price is less

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important as compared to quality and comfort for people. However, the people are not very loyal towards branded clothes and fashion, family and friends influence most consumers regarding their brand choice.

Erdil T.S. (2015) investigated the effects of price, brand image and perceived risk on store image and purchase intention of consumers' in apparel sector. The findings of the paper shows direct effect of price image, brand image and perceived risk on purchase intention and mediating effect of store image on the relationship between price image and risk perception and purchase intention.

Tiwari G. (2015) studied the attributes and preference of young girls buying decision in case of Kurties. The Study is based on primary data including sample of 100 girls of 18-22 years age group from Jaipur city. The study shows price and quality as major attribute as it strongly affects the purchasing decision of young girls. Further, use of fabric in kurties and embroided kurties are major preference of young girls, as it reflects elegance in dressing style.

Narayana L. and Sreenivas D.L. (2016) investigated the relationship between the factors that affect the buying behaviour towards branded apparels in Bangalore city. The paper concluded that there is positive significant relationship between reference group, store attributes, income of respondents, occupation and consumer purchase intention and consumer buying behaviour.

Objectives of the Study:

The main aim of the study includes:

1. To study the behaviour of female consumers regarding brand and store selection towards   apparel

2. To study major factors affecting brand selection behaviour of female consumers towards clothing.

3. To study major factors affecting store selection behaviour of female consumers towards clothing.

4. To study the effect of demographic factors (Age, Income and Place of Residence) that affect the brand and store selection behaviour of female consumers towards clothing.

Research Methodology:

Research Design:

The research study has been designed to explore the female consumer's behaviour while selecting the brand and store for clothing in Chandigarh the capital city of Punjab and Haryana. This kind of study has not been conducted by any researcher over the female consumers of the city Chandigarh (Tri-city). So the research is said to be exploratory in nature. It aims to explore brand and store selection behaviour of female consumers towards clothing and effect of their demographic profile over their opinions.

Data Collection and Sampling:

The primary data has been collected by using a closed ended questionnaire and secondary data has been used to identify major factors effecting consumer behaviour towards clothing which have been considered in the study. The questionnaire was based on previously available literature and includes the questions and factors previously used by various researchers. The sample frame consists of the female customers. The markets included were Sector 17, Sector 22, Elante Mall in Chandigarh. Further 50 female consumers were selected on convenience bases from each market for

filling the questionnaire, making the total sample of 150 respondents. The

distribution or demographic profile is given below in the table.

Table 1
Demographic Profile of Respondents

		No. of Respondents	Percentage
Age	18-30	118	78.7
	30-45	24	16
	45 and Above	8	5.3
Family Income (Annually)	Upto 2 Lakhs	42	28
	2-4 Lakhs	39	26
	4-6 Lakhs	31	20.7
	Above 6 Lakhs	38	25.3
Residence	Mohali	29	19.3
	Panchkula	19	12.7
	Chandigarh	24	16
	Any Other	78	52

Data Analysis:

The data has been analysed using the common measures such as frequency, percentage to study the preferences of consumers. To identify the important factors affecting the brand and store choice behaviour responses were recorded on 5 point likert scale. The dimensions used were always, mostly, sometimes, rarely and never. The weighted mean was calculated by giving weights such as always =5, mostly=4, sometimes=3, rarely=2 and never=1. To measure the opinion of respondents regarding some statements the points are taken as strongly agree=5, agree=4, neither agree nor disagree=3, disagree=2 and strongly disagree=1.

As the critical p-value of Shapiro-Wilk test is very less i.e. 0.000, it indicates that data is not normally distributed. So, the non-parametric test i.e. Kruskal Wallis H test was used to determine the difference between the opinions of respondents from different age, income and place of residence.

Scope of Research:

The area of study was limited to the female consumers in Chandigarh (Chandigarh, Mohali, Panchkula) city only. The study measured only the major factors, which affect the purchasing behaviour and store selection behaviour of female consumers, which are identified from the previous literature available in this field. To study the factors affecting brand choice, the factors such as Quality,

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Price, Brand Popularity, Promotional Offers, Advertisement Message, Easy Availability, Past Experience with Brand and Variety has been considered. Store related factors such as Easily Accessible Location, Attractive Layout, Past Experience of Store, Availability of Multi-Brands, Sales Promotion Activities, family Choice, Good Display, Reputation of Store, and Provision for Credit, Acceptance of Debit / Credit Card and Friendly Staff were analysed. Further studies can be conducted in the same field by considering more factors and in other geographical areas.

Analysis of Data:

Brand Selection Behaviour of Female Consumers and Effect of Age, Income and Place of Residence on the Factors Affecting their Behaviour

The table below provides detailed analysis of data by using frequencies, percentage and weighted mean of responses, of female consumers to know the brand selection behaviour of females in clothing. The weighted mean has been calculated by using 5 point Likert scale i.e. always, mostly, sometimes, rarely and never where maximum weight is given to always i.e. 5.

Table 2

Clothing Item Like to Wear		
Type	**No. of Respondents**	**Percentage**
Indian	81	54
Western	69	46

Table 2, Indicates that majority of respondents (54%) would like to wear Indian clothes. However the difference between the respondents who like to wear Indian and western clothes is not very large.

Table 3
Kind of Clothes Buy

Type	**No. of Respondents**	**Percentage**
Branded	20	13.3
Non-Branded	18	12
Both	112	74.7

Table 3 shows that most of the respondents (74.7%) preferre to buy both branded and non-branded clothes and secondly (13.3%) of respondents buy only branded clothes, which further show that large percentage of respondents prefer branded clothes.

Table 4
Type of Brand Buy

Type	**No. of Respondents**	**Percentage**
Indian	29	22
Imported	20	15.2
Both	83	62.8

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Table 4, shows that among the types of brands available in the market, most of the female respondents i.e. 62.8% purchase both Indian and imported brands followed by 22% going only for Indian brands. This indicates a difference of large percentage for particular type of brand.

Table 5
Brand Names Come in Respondents Mind

Brand Name	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Madame	27	20.4
Zara	18	13.6
Nike	13	9.8
UCB	12	9
Gucci	12	9
Tommy Hilfiger	12	9
Lifestyle	12	9
Levis	10	7.5
Adidas	9	6.8
Puma	9	6.8

When the respondents were asked about the brand name that came in their mind, about 60 brands names were given, out of which the list shown above in the table 5, were the most popular brands among the female consumers. The highest number of respondents preferred Madame followed by Zara, Nike, UCB, Gucci, Tommy and lifestyle.

Table 6
Source of Getting Information about Brand

Source	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Advertisement	41	31
Company Website	12	9
E-Commerce	15	11.3
Retailers	5	3.7
Social Website	40	30.3
Family/ Friends	53	40.2

Table 6, reveals that most of the respondents got information about clothing brands from their family/ friends i.e. 40.2%. Secondly, advertisement and social websites are the main sources of getting information about clothing brands available in the market having almost equal percentage of responses.

Table 7
Average One Time

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Expenditure

Type	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Upto 1500	27	20.5
1500-2500	46	34.8
2500-4000	35	26.5
Above 4000	24	18.2

Table 7 shows that highest percentage (34.8%) of respondents answered that their one time expenditure on clothing were Rs 1500- 2500, which indicates their ability to spend and preference to spend. Followed by the number of response for Rs 2500-4000.

Table 8
Persons Influence in Buying Brand

Person	Weighted Mean	p-value (Age)	p-value (Income)	p-value (Residence)
Friends	3.18	0.005	0.135	0.003
Celebrity	2.39	0.001	0.008	0.154
Family Member	3.23	0.247	0.321	0.071
None	2.65	0.674	0.023	0.553

Table 8, indicates the highest weighted mean for family members, which implies that female consumers are highly influenced by family members while purchasing the branded clothes as compared to their friend and celebrities. On the other hand respondents are least influenced by celebrities, while purchasing branded clothes. Further, Kruskal Wallis test results show that there is significant difference in opinion of respondents from different age groups for friends and celebrities. There is a significant difference between the responses of respondents from different income group for celebrities and in the opinion of respondents from different place of respondents for friends at 5% level of significance (as p-value < 0.05). It indicates significant effect of age, income and place of residence over the opinions regarding the influence of these different factors.

Table 9
Factors Affects Brand Choice

Factors	Weighted Mean	p-value (Age)	p-value (Income)	p-value (Residence)
Quality	4.63	0.486	0.988	0.302
Price	3.47	0.093	0.401	0.275
Brand Popularity	3.18	0.432	0.001	0.426
Promotional Offers	2.53	0.796	0.178	0.263
Advertisement Message	2.34	0.407	0.001	0.139
Easy Availability	3	0.382	0.001	0.001
Past Experience with Brand	3.59	0.865	0.007	0.258
Variety	3.59	0.918	0.554	0.178

Table 9, shows highest weighted mean for quality, which implies quality as the most important factor which affects female consumers brand choice, followed by past experience with brand and variety having equal weighted mean and price as fourth important factor. It further shows that advertisement message has least effect on females brand selection regarding clothes. Further analysis shows that age does not have effect over the opinions of respondents regarding any factor. However, income has significant effect on the opinion of respondents regarding brand popularity; advertisement message and past experience with brand (As p-value < 0.05) and place of residence has significant effect on the responses of respondents regarding easy availability, at the 5% and 1% level of significance both (as p-value < 0.05 and 0.01 both).

Table 10
Buy Particular Brand

	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	23	17.4
No	109	82.6

Table 10, indicates that only 17.4% respondents buy particular brand of clothes. Further when they were asked whether they bought a particular brand or not, it was found that most of the female consumers(82.6%) were not brand loyal as they do not buy a particular brand every time.

Table 11
What Does Brand Gives to Respondents

	No. of Respondents	Percentage
STATUS	4	17.3
SATISFACTION	20	86.9
VALUE FOR MONEY	5	21.7
PRAISE FROM FRIENDS	1	4.3

When the respondents who bought a particular brand were asked what does a brand give them, most respondents (86.9%) answered that they bought a particular brand because brand gave them satisfaction, followed by the value for money (21.7%). This shows that these are the important factors for brand loyalty.

Store Selection Behaviour of Female Consumers and Effect of Age, Income and Place of Residence on the Factors Affecting their Behaviour

Table 12
Place Preferred to Buy Clothes

	No. of Respondents	Percentage
NEARBY	53	35.3

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MARKET		
MAIN MARKET	83	55.3
OTHER CITY	19	12.6

Table 12 shows that more than half i.e. 55.3 per cent respondents would prefer to buy clothes from main market, while a very low percentage of respondents went to other city for shopping. It may be because Chandigarh is a big city and every type of clothes and brands are available there.

Table 13
From Where Respondents Purchase Cloths

	No. of Respondents	Percentage
SMALL RETAIL STORES	39	26
SHOPPING MALLS	80	53.3
COMPANY SHOWROOMS	13	8.6
SINGLE BRAND SHOWROOM	9	6
MULTI-BRAND SHOWROOM	47	31.3

When the respondents were asked about the type of retailers from where they bought clothes, a large percentage of respondents (53.3%) preferred shopping malls as indicated in table 13, followed by multi-brand showrooms and small retail stores respectively. A very low percentage of respondents bought from single brand showroom, which indicates that shopping mall is the preference of majority of female consumers.

Table 14
Distance Travel to Purchase Clothing

	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Less Than 2Km	13	8.7
2 to 5Km	54	36
5 to 10Km	39	26
Above 10km	44	29.3

Table 14 reveals that highest percentage of respondents (36%) travel from 2 to 5 Km for buying clothes, secondly 29.3% of respondents travel more than 10 Km to buy clothes in Chandigarh. This indicates willingness of female consumers to travel for apparel.

Table 15
Factors Influence Store Choice for Clothing

Factors	Weighted Mean	p-value (Age)	p-value (Income)	p-value (Residence)
Easily Accessible Location	3.54	0.428	0.194	0.036

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Attractive Layout	3.2	0.001	0.019	0.813
Past Experience of Store	3.56	0.177	0.002	0.453
Availability of Multi Brands	3.54	0.001	0.085	0.791
Promotion Activities	2.76	0.214	0.001	0.014
Good Display	3.23	0.036	0.357	0.094
Family Choice	3.43	0.029	0.003	0.471
Reputation of Store	3.41	0.454	0.335	0.547
Provision for Credit	2.46	0.268	0.003	0.066
Acceptance of Debit/Credit Card	2.82	0.003	0.022	0.227
Friendly Staff	3.24	0.189	0.844	0.002
Advertisement and Sales Promotion Activities	2.89	0.032	0.001	0.664

Table 15 shows highest weighted mean for past experience of store (3.56), which implies past experience is the most important factor that influences the store selection decision of the female consumer in Chandigarh, followed by easily accessible location and availability of multi-brand having equal (3.54) weighted mean. However provision for credit has least weighted mean, i.e. it has lowest influence over the store selection decision as compared to other factors. Further, the Kruskal Wallis test results show that there is significant difference between the opinion of respondents from different age groups for attractive layout, availability of multi-brands, good display, family choice, acceptance of debit/ credit card and advertisement and sales promotion activities at 5% level of significance. There exists significant difference between the opinions of respondents from various income groups for attractive layout, past experience, promotion activities, family choice, provision of credit, acceptance of cards and advertisement. There is significant difference in the opinion of respondents from different place of residence, for easily accessible location, promotion activities and friendly staff.

Table 16
Buying From Particular Store

	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	43	28.7
No	107	71.3

When the respondents were asked whether they buy from particular store or not, most of the respondents (71.3%) said they do not shop from a particular store. It shows that majority of consumers are not store loyal in Chandigarh.

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Table 17
How Long Have Been Purchasing from Particular Store

	No. of Respondents	Percentage
From Past 1 Year	16	37.2
1-3 Years	17	39.5
More Than 3 Years	10	23.3

The respondents who bought from a particular store were asked, since how long they have been purchasing from the same store, highest percentage of respondents answered from 1-3 years and lowest percentage of respondents answered for more than 3 years.

Table 18
Agreement Regarding Some Statements

Statements	Weighted Mean	p-value (Age)	p-value (Income)	p-value (Residence)
Good Looking Shops Provide Good Quality	3.11	0.884	0.125	0.215
Good Looking Shops are Costlier	3.5	0.375	0.294	0.017
Good Brands Improve Your Status	3.46	0.036	0.021	0.303
Good Brands are Costlier	3.7	0.818	0.325	0.747

Table 18 shows that weighted mean for all the statements are more than 3, i.e. they agree with these statements, as their answer lies between agree and neither agree nor disagree. However good brands are costlier and have highest weighted mean while good looking shops, provide good quality and so have lowest weighted mean. The Kruskal Wallis test results show that age and income have significant impact over the opinion of respondents regarding the statement that good brands improve your status. The place of residence of respondent has significant effect over the opinion, regarding the statement that good looking shops are costlier.

Findings:

❖ Majority of the respondents like to wear Indian clothes and most of the respondents purchase both the branded and non-branded clothes in Chandigarh.

❖ Most of the respondents buy both Indian and imported brands, followed by Indian brands only regarding clothing items. Madame and Zara are the famous brands among the consumers.

❖ Majority of respondents get information from family/ friends about clothing brands. Advertisement and social websites also play an important role by providing information to consumers regarding clothing brands.

❖ Family members influenced the respondents the most, while making brand choice decision. Factors such as age, income and place of residence do not have significant impact over the

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opinion in comparison to the influence of family member.

❖ Quality was most important factor affecting the brand choice decision of respondents, followed by past experience with brand and variety and price came later. This shows that consumers are willing to pay more for good quality and better variety. Only income of respondent has significant effect over the opinion of respondents regarding past experience with brand.

❖ Majority of respondents are not brand loyal. However who are loyal, are loyal because the brand which they buy, gives them satisfaction.

❖ Majority of respondents purchase clothing item from main market and shopping malls are most famous outlets among the respondents, from where respondents like to shop for clothes. The respondents are willing to travel 2-5 km or even more than 10 km for the same.

❖ Past experience of store is the most important factor that effects the store choice decision of respondents and only income has significant effect over the opinion of respondents regarding this. The second most important factor affecting store choice is easily accessible location and availability of multi-brands.

❖ Majority of respondents are not store loyal, however out of the respondents who are loyal, majority were purchasing from 1-3 years from the same store.

❖ Most of the respondents agree with the statement that good brands are costlier and good looking shops are costlier. The respondents from different place of residence have different opinion regarding the statement that good looking shops are costlier.

Conclusion:

The research showed that largest percentage of shoppers in Chandigarh (Tri-city) is of young girls, who may be students or newly married females. Female consumers were quiet aware about clothing brands through their family and friends. Social media also plays a vital role, in providing awareness to them. The analysis shows that the females are very very quality conscious as compared to price. This implies they are willing to pay high prices, for good quality and they want to try new brands and stores every time, as most of the consumers are not loyal for the brands and stores. Now day's big shopping malls or shopping centres are preferred by customers, for shopping of clothing items since shopping there is more pleasurable or enjoyable. The retailers have to provide good after sale services and have to maintain long term relationship with consumers, as past experience with store is the main determinant for consumer's store selection behaviour. The study suggests that young girls form a large mass of female consumers in the markets of Chandigarh (Tri-city), so the marketers should understand their needs, preferences and trends to increase sales and to compete with competitors in the market.

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