

APPAREL ATTRIBUTES: A REINFORCER ON IMPULSE BUYING BEHAVIOR OF COLLEGE STUDENTS IN BANGALORE CITY

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ABSTRACT

Apparel is one of the basic human needs apart from food, water and shelter. In India, Apparel is the second largest retail industry after IT industry and also second largest foreign exchange earner for the country. This paper attempts to find out the relationship between the product attributes and impulse buying behavior with reference to College students in Bangalore City. And also the focus is to identify the different temperamental background of impulse buying behavior among male and female students. Trendy, Fashionable, Colour scheme, Quality, brand etc are the various factors related to product attributes examined. Convenience sampling method was used to collect the data, structured questionnaires were distributed to 250 respondents. The data is analyzed using SPSS, Chi-square test is used to find out the relationship between the variables.

Keywords : Apparel industry, Generation Y, Impulse buying behavior, Product attributes

INTRODUCTION

“Window shopping” is the growing culture in India. The substantial increase in disposable income, spending capacity is the reasons for growing window shopping culture. India is in the 4th place, in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP) economy, after USA, China and Japan. To overcome the stress, tension, boredom and to relax people tend to go for an outing. But due the growing mall culture people are attracted going out for a window shopping. Most of the time window shopping triggers impulse buying. Many people fall victim to the last-minute impulse purchase. In fact, 90 percent of shoppers buy items not on their shopping list, indicating that the impulse buy is alive and well, according

to a new survey. The phenomenon of impulse buying is affecting the people around the world especially the metro cities. The act of unplanned buying is called impulse buying. It arises spontaneously and urges the consumer to “BUY NOW” and “all of a sudden” being hit with urges to buy something.”

The Gen Y customers aged 18 to 25 plays an important role for the Indian marketers as they constitute an important part of the target customers. They are the key customers in the terms of magnitude and spending capacity. The census report that about 54% of the population i.e. 540 million are in the age of 25 and 45% are below the age 19 yrs. Their disposal income is increasing day by day as they get more pocket



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money from parents and also capable of earning from part-time jobs. Also they are very much interested in shopping trendy Apparels, accessories, beauty products, also find these items to be important. Apparels reflect the lifestyle and also the social and economic status of the Gen Y customers.

There are several internal and external factors which influence the impulse buying behavior of the customers such as the store environment, customer psychology, promotional activities etc. According to Gagliano, K.B., Hathcote, the customer's age, gender, income and ethnicity are considered as important factors which has the ability to shape customer's expectation and purchasing. Marketer do lot of exercise in motivated a customer to make purchases impulsively. Some of the strategies taken up are store incentives, sales promotional activities and differentiations in product etc. The present study tends to evaluate the contribution of apparel product attributes towards the consumer's impulse buying behavior. According to Zhang et al, by analyzing the relation between product attributes and consumer's attitude, apparel marketers can understand the consumer's need. It is important for the marketer to serve the customers and increase their sale. Customers can take away this feel only when the apparel marketer makes an attempt in providing apparels which are trendy and fashionable designs, introduce new and unique designs, pattern and variety in apparels, presenting it attractively, unique appearance, colour scheme, patterns etc.

Apparel products are comprised with many physical characteristics, which are perceived differently by the consumers. The preferences for the apparel is influenced by the product

attributes such as brand familiarity, product composition factor, WOW factor, quality, value for the price etc. Apparel product composition refers to the factors like fit, texture, durability, shape, size, colour, texture, pattern etc. Product WOW factor refers to the psychological experience felt by the customer which makes the customer feel excited or impressed or surprised at the sight of the product relating to the product quality or feature of the product or presentation of the product. This experience is created by the marketer only when he can differentiate his product from other retailers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Thomas & Sekar, (2008) developed apparel buying behavior model with five important dimensions, namely consumer characteristics, reference groups, store attributes, promotion and product attributes. Based on the various consumer behaviour research studies and also on the opinion of various experts from the industry and academic institutions, these dimensions are created. Product attributes are the product features like style/design, quality, price, brand, fit etc.

Kwan et al (2004) in his study classified the product attributes into two major categories; intrinsic and extrinsic related to consumer's clothing purchase decision. Further the extrinsic criteria was categorized into Product composition, quality, product performance and price.

According to Jones et. all. (2003), he proved that product characteristics can also influence consumer's impulsive buying behavior. Beatty, S. E. and Ferrell M. E. (1998) in his research stated that the product characteristics such as the appearance of products in the retail environment

and some of the product features such as durability have an impact on consumer impulse buying behavior.

According to Babin, B.J., Darden, W.R. and Griffin, M. (1994), categorized the product into two types with different applications. The first category belongs to hedonic products which are mainly used for their hedonic advantages and the second category belongs to functional products which are mainly used for practical values. Impulse purchasing generally falls under the category of hedonic products which are not mostly supposed to accomplish practical needs because Impulse purchase happens while a customer is motivated by sudden and influential incentives to purchase a product.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

In the booming Apparel retail market, marketers operate in competitive environment facing challenges in changing customer needs, types of retailing and technology, it is inevitable for the marketer to learn how to retain the market share as well as to increase the sales. This research paper focuses on to explore the different aspect that have impact on college student's impulse buying behavior in apparel retail sector in Bangalore. The following objectives were set to prove the above said statement:

- To explore the impact of different product attributes on college students buying behavior.
- To know the buying behavior exhibited by the Gen Y customers in purchase of apparel.
- To evaluate the relationship of various product dimension / attributes on consumer impulse buying behavior.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

For this research, the following hypotheses are developed:

H1: Product attributes has a strong association with the impulse buying behavior of the shopper with reference to apparel purchases in organized retail stores.

H1a: Product Quality has a significant impact on consumers' impulse buying behavior towards apparel.

H1b: Brand popularity has a significant impact on consumers' impulse buying behavior towards apparel.

H1c: Product composition has a significant relationship on consumers' impulse buying behavior towards apparel.

H1d: Value for the Price has a significant impact on consumers' impulse buying behavior towards apparel.

H1e: Product WOW factor has a significant impact on consumers' impulse buying behavior towards apparel.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This present study has been conducted to find out the perception, views and attitude of consumers towards various attributes of apparel product. The study restricts the attributes to Product quality, Brand popularity, product composition, value for price, product WOW factors. The study is administered with the data collected with the help of a structured questionnaire from the young apparel shoppers of 5 different malls in Bangalore City. From each of the five malls, 50 responses were obtained, for a sample size of 250.

Questionnaires were distributed to 260 respondents. A total of 250 fully filled questionnaires were considered for the research and rest of the questionnaire are not included due to incomplete response. The questionnaire consists of two parts. The first part consists of demographic data age, gender, disposable income and core field of study of respondents. The second part of the questionnaire consists of questions measuring the impact of product attributes of apparels on impulse buying behavior of college students, 16 questions were developed using the previous studies. Questions mainly addressed on the Product quality, Brand popularity, Product composition, Value for the price and Product WOW factor. For product wow factor on apparel impulse buying such as appearance, trendy, fashion and unique design, a total of five items were drawn from the literature (Susana Azevedo et al. 2008). Six items were adapted from the literature to measure the impulsivity of apparel buying (Kwan C.Y. et al. 2004) encompassing both product composition and quality. Three items measuring brand

familiarity purchase scale was adapted from the previous study (Shailesh Kumar Kaushal, 2013) and two items measuring the value for the price is adapted from the previous literature (EunJoo Park, 2011). Five items to measure impulse buying behavior was framed by modifying the impulsivity scale (Rook and Fisher, 1995).

The responses to each variable was measured using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree=1 to strongly agree=5. After collecting and scrutinizing the questionnaires, the data of completed questionnaires were coded and then entered into SPSS tool for analysis.

The reliability of the scale is assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. This is applied to calculate the internal coordination of the measurement instruments. The overall Cronbach's alpha is 0.79, which is more than the standard value 0.7. Further, factor analysis was used to categories the variables into 5 factors and are termed as Product quality, Brand popularity, Product composition, Value for the price and Product WOW factor.

Item	Measuring factor
Product Quality	Quality of the apparel
Brand Popularity	Branded apparel, Brand popularity, Favorite brand
Product Composition	Colour choice and attractive colour, durability, mix and match facility, fitting and size
Product Wow factor	Appearance, trendy, fashion, variety and unique design
Value for the Price	Adequate price for the apparel

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

From the demographic profiles of the respondents, it is understood that 37% of the respondents are in the age group of 18 to 20 years, 63% are above 22 years. 33% of the respondents are students from Arts and Management, 23% of them from Engineering, 20% of them are from medical. Majority of the respondents are female i.e., 70%. The monthly income of the 28% respondents is less than 15,000, 39% is in the range of 16,000 and 30,000 and the rest is getting above 30,000.

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quality, Brand popularity, Product composition, Value for the price and Product WOW factor.

Table 1 shows the result of chi-square test. Hence, the analysis concludes that there is a significant relationship between product composition and consumer impulse buying behavior and is also influenced by colour choice, attractive colour combinations, size/fit, durability and fabric ($p < 0.05$ i.e. 0.021). Hence, it is proved that the proposed hypothesis H1c is accepted.

Followed by product composition the other product attribute that has a positive impact on consumer's impulse buying behavior is the Product WOW factor which includes new fashion, trendy, unique design, attractive appearance and variety etc., The test reveals that the $p = 0.027$, which is less than $p < 0.05$. Hence, H1e is accepted.

Table 1: Chi-Square Test

Cross tabulation Variables	SA	A	NAND	D	SD	Pearson Chi-square	Result
Impulse buying behavior / Brand familiarity	85	55	56	32	22	0.601	Insignificant
Impulse buying behavior / Product composition	88	99	30	18	15	0.021	Significant
Impulse buying behavior / WOW factor	102	97	16	23	12	0.027	Significant
Impulse buying behavior / Quality	30	75	90	40	15	0.318	Insignificant
Impulse buying behavior / Value for the price	77	78	49	32	14	0.69	Insignificant

SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, NAND-Neither agree nor disagree, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly disagree

Further, the research found that there is no significant relationship between consumer impulse buying behavior and other attributes of product such as quality, brand popularity and value for the price considered in the study as the $p > 0.05$. Hence, the Hypothesis H1a, H1b and H1d are rejected.

CONCLUSION:

Window shopping creates an opportunity for the apparel marketers to attract the customers and enhance their sales. Hence, it is very important to understand the consumer psyche and proceed accordingly. The study examined the influence of product attributes and college students' behavior towards the apparel impulse buying decision. The study revealed that among the product attributes, the product composition and WOW factor are the main dimensions of apparel impulse buying behavior. This shows that the apparel marketers should give more importance to these attributes to attract the customers. The apparel marketer should concentrate on attribute like fashion, trendy and appearance of the apparels.

Limitations and Suggestions for future Research

The research has few limitations which must be acknowledged. The main limitation in this study is it is restricted only to a part of Bangalore City with a small sample size and limited market segment.

Due to these reasons the result of the present study cannot be generalized universally. Further study can be conducted on other segments of customers. Another limitation is that the study has considered only the apparel sector; study can be extended to other product lines.

The data is based on the opinion of the respondents and it may change from time to

time. This study has not considered other external factors like economy, technology etc. and these factors may be taken up for future research not included in the model and may be tested.

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Annexure:

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.790	21

KMO and Bartlett's Test

	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.602
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	168.802
	Df	91
	Sig.	.000

N=250
Rotated Component Matrixa

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
Brand popularity					
The branded apparel tempts me to buy	.662				
Design popularity will attract my attention and induce my unplanned purchase	.387				
When I see my favourite brand immediately I buy it.	.778				
Quality: I buy spontaneously when I see best quality apparel		.459			
Value for the price If I find the apparel with the best value for money, immediately I buy it The reasonable product price tempts me buy immediately			.803 .778		
Product Composition:					
Colour choice make me to buy spontaneously				.765	
Attractive colour combination of the apparel tends me to buy				.744	
The option of Mix and Match triggers me to buy				.108	
The durability of fabric tempts me to buy				.655	
Proper fitting of the apparel tempts me to buy				.563	
Product WOW factor					
The appearance of the product triggers me to buy					.719
I buy spontaneously when I see trendy and fashionable apparel					.687
Design popularity will attract my attention and induce my unplanned purchase					.630
When I see the varieties of apparel I tend to buy immediately					.732
I really enjoy trying different apparel					.627

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 16 iterations.

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
The branded apparel tempts me to buy	3.50	1.407	250
Design popularity will attract my attention and induce my unplanned purchase	3.29	1.054	250
When I see my favourite brand immediately I buy it.	3.79	1.226	250
I buy spontaneously when I see best quality apparel	3.56	1.259	250
If I find the apparel with the best value for money, immediately I buy it	3.38	1.255	250
The reasonable product price tempts me buy immediately	3.35	1.467	250
Colour choice make me to buy spontaneously	2.96	1.414	250
Attractive colour combination of the apparel tends me to buy	2.90	1.209	250
The option of Mix and Match triggers me to buy	3.33	1.248	250
The durability of fabric tempts me to buy	3.52	1.229	250
Proper fitting of the apparel tempts me to buy	3.25	1.235	250
The appearance of the product triggers me to buy	3.12	1.278	250
I buy spontaneously when I see trendy and fashionable apparel	3.38	1.430	250