

Buying Behaviour of National and International Students towards Apparel and Accessories

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Abstract

Buying these days has become easier through internet as by purchasing online saves time and money too. But at the same time one can find rush of customers in the malls and markets. Therefore, college student's apparel and accessories shopping orientation is important to research as it is an important sector of consumer behaviour. The present investigation was carried out to study the buying behaviour of Indian and International students towards apparel and accessories. The study was conducted on the Indian and International male students of Panjab University, Chandigarh. A structured questionnaire accompanied with interview was used for collecting data. The results of the investigation were interpreted using percentages. The collected data revealed that there are significant differences as well as similarities between the buying behaviour of Indian and International students toward apparel and accessories.

Keywords: Accessories; Apparel; Buying behaviour.

Introduction

Fashion is a non-verbal form of communication and often refers to the style of clothing worn on a particular time. It is distinctive and expresses one's personal style and usually communicates membership of a specific group. Its boundaries are not just limited to clothing but extend to footwear, accessories, makeup, lifestyle products, interiors etc. Due to the globalization, variety and range of products for a growing population is increasing, hence affecting their purchasing decisions (Osorno, 2015). Changing trends and fashion results in increase of buying of apparel and accessories. Social media, celebrities and fashion bloggers play an important role and have great impact on fashion. More than any other factor, it is the culture which shapes the attitude, values, belief and lifestyle of a person that allows humans to communicate, interpret and evaluate as members and hence becomes a guiding factor for the consumers in choosing a product.

Norms of society and its culture play an important role in the design and production of apparels and accessories. Country's traditional attire symbolizes its culture. People feel confident and proud while wearing their traditional dress. When an individual visits another country for a longer duration, one encounters a different culture while interacting with the natives or residents of that country and would like to change according to the place of visit. This also affects ones' choice as well as buying decisions. Sicut (2011) emphasized that foreign students try to adapt by accepting the food, clothing, lodging and other practices of the country of their visit and stay.

Fashion keeps on changing after a short period of time. Designers choose so many techniques to get people updated about latest trends, collections and they advertise about their products through magazine, brochures, newspapers etc. Buying these days has become easier through internet as by purchasing online saves time and money too.

Buying process is a method which is used for purchasing of products and further to know about its properties and quality. It can be impulsive or routine buying. There are number of steps which are taken by the customer while purchasing a product. A standard model of consumer purchase decision making is based on the demands, needs and wants of a consumer which includes information search, evaluation of choices, purchase and post-purchase evaluation. Consumers are referred as the king of the market and decide the demand and business in the market.

Apparel and accessories constitute a significant part of purchase of customers. On one side apparel and accessories add to the appearance of the wearer and on the other side its rising demand and usage creates a good employment opportunities in the business of apparel and accessories. Selection of good apparel and accessories are of concern for the students especially those who go to college and universities for education and their choice and collection reflects their buying behaviour. Chandigarh is a preferred destination for National and International tourists and also for students as an educational hub. This University with 78 teaching and research departments and 15 Centers for teaching and research provide ample study opportunities for students from all over the nation and overseas. Hence investigators thought of studying buying behaviour of apparel and accessories among Indian and International students of Panjab University with the following objectives:

Objectives

1. To study the buying behaviour of apparel and accessories among the Indian students of Panjab University.

2. To study the buying behaviour of apparel and accessories among the International students of Panjab University.
3. To compare the buying behaviour of apparel and accessories between the Indian students and International students of Panjab University.

Review of Literature

Various research studies were reviewed to have a better understanding and exploration of the research problem. The studies are further discussed under two themes:

1. Consumer buying behaviour towards apparel
2. Factors affecting consumer behaviour

1. Consumer buying behaviour towards apparel

Kawabata and Rabolt (1999) conducted a study to compare clothing purchase behaviour between US and Japanese students in terms of evaluative criteria, interest in clothing and fashion, information sources and money spent on clothing. The consumer attitudes in the two countries were similar in many ways. The most important evaluative criteria were the same: good fit, style, design, quality, price and color. In another research by Akubue (2002) on the choice of clothing and factors that influences clothing choices of female undergraduates at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, shows that the female undergraduates make their choice with respect to the fashion in vogue which had the highest rating, for fitting purpose and to look attractive to the other students and protection from weather hazards. Vaani (2011) studied consumer buying behaviour towards branded and non-branded ready-made garments in Ludhiana, India. The study concluded that people mainly shop after 15 days, majority of customers are brand conscious, consider it as a status symbol and they enjoy particular brand. Also, people want the qualitative product, easy availability, better performance and affordable price, whether it may be branded or non-branded product. A study by Chakrapani (2015) focused on the consumer behaviour of Indian youth in the age of 15-25 years to understand and know their perception towards spending. Due to the increase in the employment rate and extensive raise in income, spending power has increased over the years and particularly the youth in the age of 15- 25 years like to shop more. The study of consumer behaviour is important for the field of marketing as it helps companies to develop smarter marketing strategies by getting knowledge about what affects the decision making of consumers (Khaniwale, 2015).

2. Factors affecting consumer behaviour

Customer behaviour is affected by different factors such as culture, social class, references group relation, family, salary, age, gender etc. The differences are more specific when two different consumer groups from different countries are compared (Yoldas, 2012). According to Osewe (2013) internet advertising plays a vital role in purchasing decision of the consumers. The study reveals that there is a positive relationship between internet advertising and consumer purchase decision. A study by Prasad (2014) revealed that customers generally prefer availability of latest designs, availability of options, convenience of pick and choice and family shopping under one roof rather than advertisements and trust.

Islam et al (2014) claimed that customers desire for product's quality, comfort, price, functional and aesthetic look, offer and discount and many other key buying factors suitable for them when visiting a brand showroom. According to Jadhav and Khanna (2015) five dimensions which influence buyers purchase behaviour are store attributes, product attributes, reference groups, promotional factors and consumer characteristics. Ahmad (2015) carried out a study to examine the influence of sales promotion on the buying behaviour. The consumer's attitude towards different promotional tools on buying behaviour is positive. Sales promotion tools support the existing business as an additional marketing strategy. This research explained that consumers' buying behaviour is affected by socio-demography, promotional tools such as price discounts, coupons, free samples and 'buy-one-get-one-free'. Prasad and Vetrivel (2016) conducted a study to understand visual merchandising and its impact on consumer buying behaviour. The study revealed that window display, fixture, signage, mannequin, colors and lighting affect the consumer buying behaviour. Displays play vital role in showcasing the latest trends and the new arrivals.

Methodology

Indian and International students from different departments of Panjab University, Chandigarh were purposely selected for the present study. Multistage random sampling was employed for the selection of the sample. Eighty respondents were randomly chosen consisted of forty Indian and forty International male students from different departments for the study. A structured questionnaire was framed that contained questions regarding the buying behaviour of Indian and International male students towards apparel and accessories. Data collection also involved interviews and discussions with the respondents. The data collected from respondents was

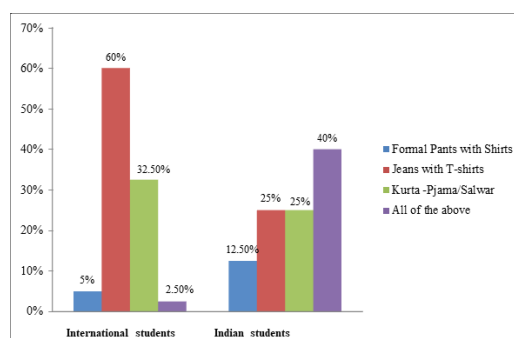
coded, tabulated and was subjected to statistical analysis. Keeping in the mind the objectives, design and nature of the data, percentages were calculated and data was presented in the form of tables and bar graphs.

Result and Discussion

The results obtained from the present investigation are discussed below:

1. Preference of attire in daily routine

The data revealed that 60% of International students and 25% of Indian students prefer to wear Jeans with T- Shirts in routine. Most of the International students investigated were native from Afghanistan and Indian students from Punjab and Haryana states, so Kurta- Pajama/ Salwars also preferred choice of both the student's community which was 32.5% and 25% respectively. Formal pants and shirts were preferred attire in day to day routine of 5% of International students and 12.5% of Indian students.



*multiple responses

Fig1. Preference of attire in daily routine

2. Preference for different types of accessories

It is observed from the data that majority of the Indian students (42.5%) preferred simple accessories whereas International students preferred modern accessories (33%) as well as traditional accessories (33%).

Table1. Preference for different types of accessories

Sr. No.	Types of Accessories	Percentages %	
		(International Students)	(Indian Students)
1.	Traditional	33%	7.5%
2.	Simple	27%	42.5%
3.	Modern	33%	32.5%
4.	Any Other	7%	17.5%

3. Preference for the type of clothing

The data indicated that majority of Indian and International male students prefer to buy branded clothes from the malls as well as online. Branded clothes are considered as status symbol among youth. Often students get attracted to the offers and discounts provided by the brand. International students prefer to buy apparels from same shop and window displays also play a role in shopping of apparel. colour, graphics, signage, lightning, seasonal displays and interior display invite the students to visit a shop. Discounts are also important when they select clothing items. Majority of Indian students were neutral especially with regards to buying from same shop, window displays or discounted shopping. Some of them also prefer to buy non branded clothes. Some of the garments especially Kurta - Pajama is preferred to be stitched by the tailor. A neutral response was found among both Indian and International students for surplus exports clothing.

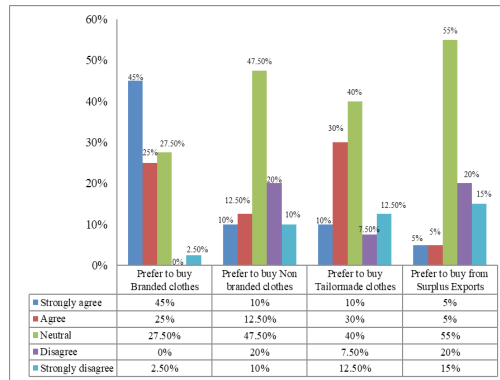


Fig2. Preference for the type of clothing by Indian students

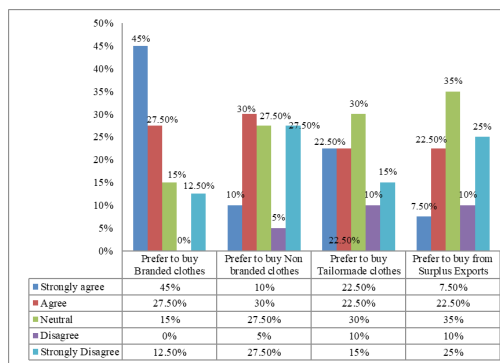
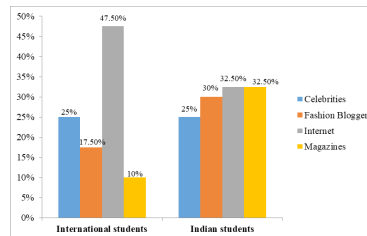


Fig3. Preference for the type of clothing by International students

3. Sources of inspiration for buying apparel and accessories

Both International and Indian students preferred to wear accessories daily. Regarding their expenditure, it was found that both categories of students spent maximum money on food followed by clothing. 25% of both Indian and International students get inspired from celebrities regarding their clothing styles, 17.5% of International students and 30% of Indian students get inspired from Fashion Bloggers followed by them on social media sites like Instagram, Facebook etc. Moreover, Internet is a great inspiration for 47.5% of International students and 32.5% of Indian students. This indicates a great impact of social media on buying practices of students. It is also observed that, 10% of International students and 32.5% of Indian students got inspiration from magazines.



*multiple responses

Fig. 4. Sources of inspiration for buying Apparel and Accessories

4. Preference for online buying of apparel and accessories

Online as well as shopping from the retail stores is preferred by students for shopping apparel. Regarding shopping in the retail stores, International students mainly shop with their own country's friends and Indian students mainly shop with their family. Both International and Indian students reported to purchase new apparel after a month. The data indicated that International students (73%) preferred more to buy accessories online than Indian students (27.50%).

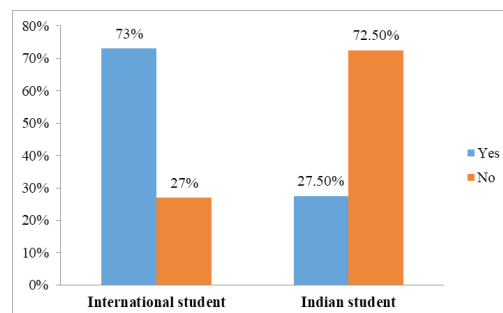


Fig5. Preference for online buying of accessories

5. Frequency of purchase of accessories

It is observed from the data that maximum number (40%) of International students preferred to purchase accessories after 3 months and 50% Indian students purchase accessories after 6 months, 13% of International students and 41% of Indian students purchase accessories once a year whereas 20% of International students purchase when needed.

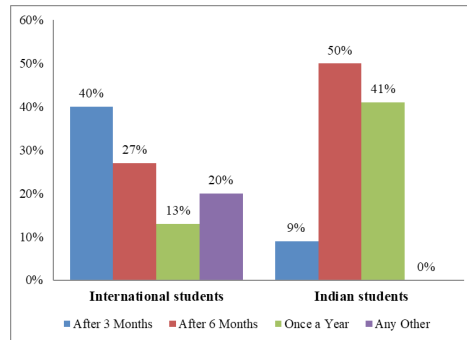


Fig6. Frequency of purchase of accessories

6. Factors affecting buying decisions of Indian and International students towards apparel and accessories

It is observed from Table 2 that 40% of Indian students strongly agree to buy apparel and accessories at reasonable price because students prefer to spend maximum amount of their money on food followed by clothing, 47.5% of students make sure that whatever apparel and accessory they buy it suits them, 32.5% agree on preferring fresh arrivals followed by 45% who agree for colour of the apparel and accessories as a deciding factor for purchase. Good material, good quality, fit and style line are some important factors that Indian students consider while buying. On the other hand, Table 3 indicates that 42.5% of International students agree on purchasing apparel and accessories at reasonable price. Monthly expenditure on buying apparel by International students is more than Rs2000 per month whereas Indian students in the survey revealed that they spend less than Rs2000 per month. Half of the international students strongly agree on making sure whatever accessory they buy it suits them and 50% agree on the good material of the apparel and accessories. Maximum numbers of International students agree for fresh arrivals and colours while buying. Also, majority of International students strongly agree on having good fit and quality of the apparel and accessories. Both Indian and International students agree on modernization of apparel and accessories which were 57.5% and 55% respectively.

Table 2. Factors affecting buying decision of Indian Students

Factors affecting buying decision of Indian Students towards Apparel and Accessories						
Sr. No.	Factors	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	Reasonable price	40%	40%	20%	0%	0%
2.	It suits on me	47.5%	37.5%	15%	0%	0%
3.	Fresh arrivals	32.5%	37.5%	17.5%	0%	12.5%
4.	Good material	37.5%	45%	17.5%	0%	0%
5.	Good quality	52.5%	40%	7.5%	0%	0%
6.	Good fit	37.5%	55%	7.5%	0%	0%
7.	Style line of the apparel	25%	65%	10%	0%	0%
8.	Colour	42.5%	45%	12.5%	0%	0%
9.	Modernization	25%	57.5%	12.5%	5%	0%

Table 3. Factors affecting buying decision of International Students

Factors affecting buying decision of International Students towards Apparel and Accessories						
Sr. No.	Factors	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	Reasonable price	32.5%	42.5%	15%	7.5%	2.5%
2.	It suits on me	50%	32.5%	12.5%	5%	0%
3.	Fresh arrivals	32.5%	40%	12.5%	7.5%	7.5%
4.	Good material	25%	50%	12.5%	7.5%	5%
5.	Good quality	47.5%	32.5%	17.5%	0%	2.5%
6.	Good fit	42.5%	40%	12.5%	5%	0%
7.	Style line of the apparel	32.5%	42.5%	15%	5%	5%
8.	Colour	37.5%	40%	12.5%	5%	5%
9.	Modernization	22.5%	55%	12.5%	5%	5%

Conclusion

On the basis of the study it can be concluded that the International students prefer to wear Jeans with T-Shirts while going to their departments but on the other hand Indian students prefer to wear Formal Pants- Shirts, Kurta-Pajama/salwar as well as Jeans with T- Shirts. The International students like to purchase traditional and modern accessories but on the other hand Indian students go for simple ones. Both the groups of Indian and International students prefer to wear branded clothes at compatible price. Internet is the main source of inspiration to buy new products for both International and Indian students. Both Indian and International students like to buy accessories; International students like to buy after 3 months whereas Indian students like to buy after 6 months. Both International and Indian students like to purchase apparel and accessories at reasonable price,

fresh arrivals, having good quality, should fit well and complement them while wearing.

Limitation of the Study

The study is limited to the International and National male students of Panjab University, Chandigarh.

Scope for Further Research

The study focuses on only one consumer group. Similar studies can be conducted on other consumer groups which will help marketers to have better knowledge about the behaviour of a consumer at the market place.

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