A Comparative Study on The Buying Behaviour and Brand Prefernce of Men and Women with Regard to The Purchase of Readymade Apparels

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ABSTRACT - A comparative study on the buying behavior and brand preference of men and women with regard the purchase of readymade apparels, to study the major influencing factors in the buying behavior of men and women regard the purchase of readymade apparels and to find out the various demographic factors that affect the buying behavior of men and women. The study covers 50 respondents i.e. 25 male and 25 female respondents of Pathanamthitta using convenient sampling method. Questionnaires were used as data collecting instrument. Data were analyzed using tabulation, percentages. The tastes and preferences of consumers regarding clothes are subject to constant change and fashion industry too is changing quickly. The study concludes by the finding that quality is one of the prime factors which influence the consumers in their buying decision. The study throws light into the concepts of consumerism by once again establishing the fact that consumer is the king and his needs must be satisfied.

Keywords: Brand, Buying behavior, Consumer, Marketing, Purchase.

I.   INTRODUCTION

Marketing is a process by which companies create value for customers and build strong customer relationships to capture value from customers in return. It is a fundamental organizational function and focuses on the needs and wants of the customers. Philip Kotler, one of the world's leading authorities on marketing defines it as "a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating, offering and exchanging products of value with others". It is the kingpin that rotates the economy. It also serves as an effective link between the business and society. And so it is considered as one of the most important function and a pervasive activity in the present day world. The study is focused on the consumer behaviour which is unpredictable and always changing. Consumer behaviour involves the use and disposal of products as well as the study of how they are purchased. It is an orderly process whereby the individuals interact with his environment for the purpose of making market decisions on products and services. Consumer behavior has greater importance under customer-oriented marketing management which is the present day marketing management. So, generally a consumer behavior study is a study which focuses on how individuals spend their available resources like time, money and effort on consumption related aspects:

What they buy? When they buy? Where they buy? How they buy?

The American Marketing Association defines consumer behaviour as "the dynamic interaction of affect and cognition, behaviour and the environment by which human beings conduct the exchange aspects of their lives". It includes all the things in the environment that influence these thoughts, feelings and actions. These include comments from other consumers, advertisements, price information, packaging, product appearance and many others. It is important to recognize from this definition that consumer behavior is dynamic, involves interactions and involves exchanges. Consumers are the revolving force of marketing. They are the king in the modern marketing era and this concept has brought a tremendous change in the apparel industry. A key driver for the growth of readymade garments industry is the growing population complimented by the changing taste and fashion of the people. It attracts consumers due to its varieties and price differentials. The garment industry categorizes itself into many segments: formal wear, casual wear, women's dresses, men's and kids wear etc. Thus the apparel industry is a wide area with a wider scope and so a study on this area would provide the needed results which can be used for the further development of the industry.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Apparel is one of the basic necessities of human civilization along with food, water and shelter. The Apparel Industry reflects people's lifestyles and shows their social and economic status. The Apparel and Textile industry is India's second largest industry after IT Industry. Apparel is

a highly symbolic product category due to its high visibility. Individuals will often make assumptions about a person's self-concept simply on the basis of his or her clothing. So the purpose of this study is to understand the important demographic, psychological and socio-economic factors which influence the consumer's purchase behaviour for apparel with reference to men and women consumers .This study also focuses on the various factors that influence their purchase decision, reason for their preference for a particular brand, extend of brand loyalty, effect of celebrity endorsement on purchase decision etc during the purchase of readymade apparels. Thus this study is an attempt to find out the likes and dislikes of men and women consumers regarding their purchase of apparels and so it is very significant to understand their needs and wants in this aspect.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Clothes and apparels are witnessing a phenomenal rise in demand especially with the advent of E-retailers which makes it a lot easier for the general public to pick and choose their choice of garments with the click of a mouse as it brings a wide array of choices, right to one's doorstep. Even though the demand for apparels is on the rise, adequate consumer research has not gone in to this area of readymade garments to understand the motives and factors underlying the buying decision process of readymade apparels. Consumers, both men and women, have wide range of choices and their choices and needs change with age, gender, income, occupational status and other demographic factors in the purchase of apparels. This would help an apparel company in tackling the needs and wants of the consumers belonging to different categories. Also the companies can know the changing trends, likes and dislikes of consumers with the changing market conditions and possibilities.

In this present context, the study attempts to identify the factors influencing the buying behavior of men and women consumers and also to find out the changing tastes and preferences with regard to readymade apparels.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study is limited to the general public in Pathanamthitta due to time and cost constraints. The study covers 25 male and 25 female respondents. The study covers the purchasing behaviour of men and women consumers in readymade garments based on age, gender, occupation, income, etc. The impact of celebrity endorsement, influence of salesman and certain factors such as price, quality, promotion, brand image, style, etc. can affect the consumers in making their buying decision.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the major influencing factors in the buying behaviour of men and women regarding the purchase of readymade apparels.
- To find out the various demographic factors that affect the buying behaviour of men and women.
- To identify the brand consciousness and brand preferences of men and women consumers with regard to the purchase of readymade apparels.
- To find out the most popular brand among the various brands selected for the study.

II.   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is descriptive in nature. Both primary and secondary data have been collected for this study. The primary data have been collected by utilizing a questionaire specially prepared for this purpose. A structured questionnaire was drafted and sample survey was conducted. The data collected are presented by means of tables and graphs. A simple mathematical and statistical tool like percentage is used for analysis. All interpretations are made on the basis of analyzed results. The important sources of secondary data are books, journals, web sites etc. 50 customers have been selected using convenient sampling method.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The findings of the study cannot be generalized to the whole of population as it is based on a sample of 50 consumers of different categories selected on gender basis from the district of Pathanamthitta. The quality of certain unbranded products may be good but majority of the consumers prefer branded clothes for their use. Customers expectations, taste and preferences changes from day to day. Sample size is less, because of constraints of time. However, an in-depth study has been attempted. The findings and observations in the study are purely based on respondent's answer. Information provided by consumers may be biased.

III.   DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

A descriptive profile of the respondents of various categories is presented. Respondents are classified on the basis of variables like gender, age, income level, employment etc. The data collected is presented in tables and is analyzed with the help of charts and for analysis, simple statistical tool like percentage is used.

TABLE 1: GENDER WISE CLASSIFICATION OF RESPONDENTS

GENDER	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
MALE	25	50
FEMALE	25	50
TOTAL	50	100

Source: Field survey

This study consists of 50 respondents, 25 male and 25 female. Male respondents are 50% and female respondents are 50%.

TABLE 2: AGE WISE CLASSIFICATION OF RESPONDENTS

AGE GROUP	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
15-25	12	24
25-35	16	32
35-45	11	22
ABOVE 45	11	22
TOTAL	50	100

Source: Field survey

The table shows age wise classification of 50 respondents. Respondents are classified into four categories and respondents between 15-25 are 24%, 25-35 are 32%, 35-45 are 22% and above 45 are 22%.

TABLE 3: INCOME WISE CLASSIFICATION OF RESPONDENTS

MONTHLY INCOME	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
BELOW 10000	9	18
10000 - 20000	19	38
20000 - 30000	16	32
ABOVE 30000	6	12
TOTAL	50	100

Source: Field survey

The table above shows the monthly income of 50 respondents. Out of 50 respondents, 18% are below the monthly income category of 10000, 38% come within the income range of 10000-20000, 32% are earning a monthly income between 20000 to30000 and 12% of the respondents belong to the income category of above 30000.

TABLE 4: OCCUPATION WISE CLASSIFICATION OF RESPONDENTS

OCCUPATION	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE	8	16
PRIVATE EMPLOYEE	21	42
STUDENT	7	14
OTHERS	14	28

TOTAL	50	100

Source: Field survey

From the table, it is revealed that majority of the respondents i.e., 42% private employees, 28% belong to others category, 16% government employees and 14% students.

Next, an analysis on the factors influencing buyer behaviour, sources of information about the brand, extend of brand loyalty, level of satisfaction towards a brand etc are made.

TABLE: 5 CLASSIFICATIONS ON THE BASIS OF FACTORS INFLUENCING BUYING BEHAVIOUR

FACTORS	MALE	PERCENTAGE	FEMALE	PERCENTAGE
PRICE	5	20	6	24
QUALITY	11	44	14	56
STYLE	5	20	3	12
PROMOTION	1	4	1	4
BRAND IMAGE	3	12	1	4
TOTAL	25	100	25	100

Source: Field survey

From the table it is understood that the major factor influencing the buying behaviour of male customers(25) is quality at 44%, 20% of the respondents consider price and style as the second factor, brand image is the third factor at 12% and the last factor considered by them is promotion at 4%. Out of 25 female customers, the major factor influencing the buying behaviour is quality at 56%, the second factor is price at 4%, and style is the third factor with 12% and 4% each for promotion and brand image considering it as the fourth factor.

TABLE: 6   CLASSIFICATIONS ON THE BASIS OF IMPACT OF CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT IN BUYING BEHAVIOUR

CRITERIA	MALE	PERCENTAGE	FEMALE	PERCENTAGE
STRONGLY AGREE	2	8	3	12
AGREE	10	40	15	60
STRONGLY DISAGREE	6	24	2	8
DISAGREE	7	28	5	20

TOTAL	25	100	25	100

Source: Field survey

The table shows the impact of celebrity endorsement in the buying behaviour of 50 respondents. Out of 25 male respondents, 40% agree to the impact of celebrity endorsement in their purchase decision, 28% disagree, 24% strongly disagree and 8% strongly agree.

Out of 25 female respondents, 60% agree to the impact of celebrity endorsement while 20% disagree, 12% strongly agree and 8% strongly disagree.

TABLE: 7 MOST ATTRACTIVE FEATURES FOR THE PURCHASE OF READYMADE APPARELS

FEATURES	MALE	PERCENTAGE	FEMALE	PERCENTAGE
DISCOUNT OFFERS	12	48	10	40
FREE GIFT	3	12	3	12
BUY ONE GET ONE FREE	3	12	7	28
OTHERS	7	28	5	20
TOTAL	25	100	25	100

Source: Field survey

From the table ,it is observed that 48% male are attracted by discount offers with the purchase of apparels while 28% prefer other offers and buy one get one free offer and free gift offer are the least to attract them at 12%. In the case of female respondents, 40% prefer discount offers, 28% prefer buy one get one free offer, 20% prefer other offers and 12% prefer free gift offers.

TABLE: 8 CLASSIFICATIONS ON THE BASIS OF INFLUENCE OF MEDIA REGARDING THE PURCHASE OF APPARELS

INFLUENCE OF MEDIA	MALE	PERCENTAGE	FEMALE	PERCENTAGE
TELEVISION	8	32	14	56
NEWSPAPER	6	24	4	16
INTERNET	9	36	4	16
MAGAZINE	2	8	3	12
TOTAL	25	100	25	100

Source: Field survey

The table reveals that out of 25 male respondents, 36% are largely influenced by internet followed by television at 32% and newspaper at 24% whereas only 8% are influenced by magazine or publications. In the case of female respondents, 56% give more preference to television over newspaper and internet tied at 16% each while only 12% consider magazine or publications as an influencing medium in their purchase decision.

TABLE: 9 CLASSIFICATION ON THE BASIS OF INFLUENCE OF SALESMAN

INFLUENCE OF SALESMAN	MALE	PERCENTAGE	FEMALE	PERCENTAGE
AGREE	7	28	9	36
NEUTRAL	8	32	9	36
DISAGREE	10	40	7	28
TOTAL	25	100	25	100

Source: Field survey

Table shows that out of 25 male respondents, 40% disagree with the influence exerted by salesman on their buying decision, 28% seem to agree with the influence of salesman and 32% have a neutral opinion in this regard. Out of 25 female respondents, 36% agree and 36% have neutral opinion on the influence of salesman in their purchase decision and 28% do not appear to be influenced by salesman

TABLE: 10 CLASSIFICATIONS ON THE BASIS OF BRAND LOYALTY OF CUSTOMERS

BRAND LOYALTY STATUS	MALE	PERCENTAGE	FEMALE	PERCENTAGE
YES	23	92	22	88
NO	2	8	3	12
TOTAL	25	100	25	100

Source: Field survey

The table depicts that 92% of male respondents and 88% of female respondents are loyal towards their brands while 8% of male respondents and 12% of female respondents do not seem to be brand loyal.

TABLE: 11 a   Brand owned by male customer

Apparel	Allen solly	%	Arrow	%	Killer	%	Others	%	Total	%
Jeans	1	4	1	4	3	13	2	9	7	30
Shirt	3	13	5	21	1	4	2	9	11	48
Others	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	2	9	3	13	5	22
Total	4	17	6	26	6	26	7	31	23	100

Source: Field survey

The table shows the brand owned by 23 male respondents. The brands selected for the study are Allen Solly, Arrow, Killer and others. Among the male respondents, 21% own shirts of the brand Arrow, 13% own jeans of the brand Killer, 13% own shirts of the brand Allen Solly and 13% own other apparels of other brands

Apparel	Roshini	%	Karishma	%	Vismay	%	Fab-t	%	Other	%	Total	%
Churidar	1	4	3	14	3	14	1	4	2	9	10	45
Sarees	1	4	2	9	2	9	1	5	2	9	8	36
Others	1	5	1	5	Nil	Nil	2	9	Nil	Nil	4	19
Total	3	3	6	28	5	23	4	18	4	18	22	100

TABLE 11 b Brand owned by female customer

Source: Field survey

The table shows the brand owned by 22 female respondents. The brands selected for the study are Roshini, Karishma, Vismay, Fab India and others. Among the female respondents, Churidar of Karishma and Vismay are 14% each, sarees of Karishma, Vismay and others are 9%, other apparels of Fab India is 9%.

TABLE: 12 CLASSIFICATION ON THE BASIS OF INFLUENCE TO BUY BRANDED APPARELS

INFLUENCE	MALE	PERCENTAGE	FEMALE	PERCENTAGE
ADVERTISEMENT	6	26	4	18
SHOP DISPLAY	4	18	7	32
WORD OF MOUTH	1	4	2	9
FAMILY OR FRIENDS	6	26	5	23
OTHERS	6	27	4	18
TOTAL	23	100	22	100

Source: Field Survey

From the table, it is found that the male respondents consider advertisement and family or friends as their influencing factor to buy branded apparels at 26% but a majority of 27%   prefer other influencing factors, 18% consider shop display and only 4% are influenced by word of mouth. From the 22 female respondents, 32% consider shop display as the influence to buy branded apparels, 23% consider family or friends, advertisement and other factors are at 18% each and only 9% prefer word of mouth.

TABLE: 13 ATTRIBUTES THAT ATTRACT BUYERS TO PURCHASE BRANDED PRODUCTS

FACTORS	RANKS			
	1	2	3	4
BRAND NAME	23	7	6	9
PRICE	7	20	13	5
EASY AVAILABILITY	5	9	12	19
STYLE	10	9	14	12

Source: Field Survey

It is evident from the table that both male and female respondents are mainly attracted by the attribute brand name at 23%, second attribute is price at 20%, style is third attribute at 14% and the last attribute to attract their buying decision is easy availability at 19%.

TABLE: 14 CLASSIFICATION ON THE BASIS OF BRAND PREFERENCE

REASON	MALE	PERCENTAGE	FEMALE	PERCENTAGE
PRICE VARIABILITY	2	9	3	14
AFFORDABILITY	2	9	4	18
QUALITY	13	56	5	23
COMFORTABILITY	6	26	10	45
TOTAL	23	100	22	100

Source: Field survey

The table depicts the brand preferred by male respondents. Quality is considered as the prime reason for preferring brand at 56%, 26% of the respondents consider comfort ability provided by the brand and price variability and affordability is only 9% each. The female respondents prefer comfort ability ranking it as the first reason in their

preference for a brand at 45%, 23% like quality, affordability at 18% and only 14% consider price variability as the last reason to influence their preference for a brand.

TABLE :15 CLASSIFICATION ON THE BASIS OF THE ATTITUDE OF BUYERS REGARDING SWITCHING OF BRAND WITH A PROMOTIONAL SCHEME

PREFERENCE	MALE	PERCENTAGE	FEMALE	PERCENTAGE
YES	18	72	11	50
NO	5	22	11	50
TOTAL	23	100	22	100

Source: Field survey

From the table it is observed that 78% of the male respondents like to change their brands while 22% are firm in their loyalty towards their brands. In the case of female respondents, 50% are considered to be brand switchers while the rest 50% are firm in their loyalty towards their brands.

TABLE: 16 OPINIONS OF RESPONDENTS REGARDING PREFERENCE OF PRODUCTS

OPINION	MALE	PERCENTAGE	FEMALE	PERCENTAGE
BRANDED	19	83	12	55
UNBRANDED	4	17	10	45
TOTAL	23	100	22	100

Source: Field survey

The table shows the opinion of respondents regarding the preference of products. Out of the 23 male respondents, 83% prefer branded products and only 17% prefer unbranded products. Out of the 22 female respondents, 55% prefer branded products and 45% prefer unbranded products.

TABLE: 17 CLASSIFICATION ON THE BASIS OF EXTEND OF BRAND LOYALTY

BASIS	MALE	PERCENTAGE	FEMALE	PERCENTAGE
BRAND LOYALTY	14	61	14	64
BRAND SWITCHING	9	39	8	36

TOTAL	23	100	22	100

Source: Field survey

The table highlight the extend of brand loyalty of both male and female customers. From the table it is understood that a majority of 61% male respondents are brand loyal whereas 39% may switch their brand if necessary. 64% of the female respondents are brand loyal whereas 36% may switch their brand if necessary.

TABLE: 18 COMPARISON BETWEEN SELECTED BRAND AND ANOTHER BRAND

DIFFERENCES	MALE	PERCENTAGE	FEMALE	PERCENTAGE
CLOTH	5	22	12	54
DURABILITY	7	30	4	18
STITCHING PATTERN	3	13	3	14
OTHERS	8	35	3	14
TOTAL	23	100	22	100

Source: Field survey

Table shows the comparison between the selected brand and another brand of the study. It is found that 35% of the male respondents prefer other brands when 54% of the female respondents prefer the cloth of their current brand. 30% of the male respondents consider durability of their brand while only 18% of the female respondents consider durability. Stitching pattern is only 13% for male customers and 14% for female customers. 22% of the male customers consider cloth and 14% of the female customers consider other features of the brand.

TABLE: 19 a CLASSIFICATIONS ON THE BASIS OF SATISFACTION OF SELECTED BRAND

SATISFACTION	MALE	PERCENTAGE	FEMALE	PERCENTAGE
YES	13	57	16	73
NO	10	43	6	27
TOTAL	23	100	22	100

Source: Field survey

From the table, it is found that 57% of the male respondents and 73% of the female respondents are satisfied with their current brand whereas 43% of the male respondents and 27% of the female respondents are not satisfied with their current brand.

TABLE 19 b CLASSIFICATION ON THE BASIS OF REASON FOR DISSATISFACTION

DISSATISFAC TION	MALE	PERCENT AGE	FEMALE	PERCENT AGE
HIGH PRICE	1	10	2	33
CHANGING FASHION	3	30	1	17
NOT MATCHING EXPECTATIONS	3	30	2	33
QUALITY HAVE REDUCED	3	30	1	17
TOTAL	10	100	6	100

Source: Field survey

It is understood from the table   that the reasons for the dissatisfaction of the current brand by its users are, for male, 30% each consider changing fashion, not matching expectations and decrease in quality. 10% of male are dissatisfied due to high price. In the case of female customers 33% are dissatisfied because of high price and another 33% are dissatisfied because the brand is not matching their expectations. 17% consider changing fashion as one reason and another 17% consider decrease in quality as another reason.

IV.   FINDINGS

❖ Majority of the respondents of the study belong to the age group of 25-35 i.e., 32%.
❖ Monthly income of majority of the respondents is between 10000 to 20000 i.e. 38%.
❖ Most of the respondents of the study are private employees i.e. 42%.
❖ The major factor influencing the buying behaviour of respondents are
➢ For both men and women it is quality at 44% for men and 56% for women.
➢ The second factor is price for both the respondents.
❖ The study reveals that the impact of celebrity endorsement in the buying behaviour of both the respondents is high.
❖ The most attractive feature for the purchase of apparels for both men and women is discount offers , least attractive feature, for men is buy one get one free offer while for women it is free gift offer.
❖ Internet is considered as the most influencing media by men in their purchase decision but for women it is television.
❖ The study reveals that male respondents disagree with the influence exerted by salesman on their buying decision while some female respondents agree and some

others have a neutral opinion with the influence exerted by salesman in their buying decision.
❖ The brand loyalty of men and women is high i.e. 92% of men and 88% of women are highly brand loyal.
❖ The study highlights that majority of men prefer shirts of Arrow brand and women prefer Churidar of Karishma and Vismay brand.
❖ Shop display is the influencing factor for women to purchase branded apparels but for men the factors are others like attractive packaging, celebrity endorsements etc.
❖ Brand name is the prime attribute which attracts the respondents to purchase apparel. Price is the second attribute for them.
❖ The study reveals that most of the men prefer the quality provided by a brand but women prefer the comfort ability provided by a brand.
❖ Respondents don't mind switching their brand if a strong promotional scheme is available with another brand.

V.   CONCLUSION

Consumer Behaviour is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure, use, and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts that these processes have on the consumer and society. It blends elements from psychology, sociology, social anthropology, marketing and economics. The survey has been undertaken to collect data on the buying behaviour of consumers regarding the purchase of readymade apparels. Information has been gathered from a sample of 50 respondents. The study of consumer behaviour and brand preference in the purchase of readymade apparel is worth serious consideration in this present day world. Since apparel has got great importance in this present world, companies must focus on the needs and wants of the consumers as it influences their choice of particular apparels. The tastes and preferences of consumers regarding clothes are subject to constant change and fashion industry too is changing quickly. The study concludes by the finding that quality is one of the prime factors which influence the consumers in their buying decision. Brand name is the most important factor which is taken into account by consumers while choosing a brand. So the study throws light into the concepts of consumerism by once again establishing the fact that consumer is the king and his needs must be satisfied.

VI.   RECOMMENDATIONS

❖ Quality of brand is seen to be the most influencing factor in the purchase of apparels; companies should focus on improving the quality of their brand through various promotional campaigns.
❖ Companies must try to provide more discount offers during festival seasons for their customers as it is

considered as one of the most attractive feature for making a purchase decision by consumers.

❖ Companies should try to understand the changing fashion happening in the apparel industry in order to produce clothes according to the changing fashions and needs.

❖ Popularize method of marketing through internet.

❖ Male brand, Allen Solly and female brand Roshini must focus on their marketing strategies to increase sales.

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