

EFFECT OF BRANDING ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR A STUDY IN RELATION TO FASHION INDUSTRY.

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ABSTRACT

“Brands are like human beings. They are born, fed and nurtured, made strong and responsible so that they can be faithful friends of the people(customers), form mutually beneficial and satisfying relationships with them and become companies for life. Such brands, make their parents (organization and corporate) proud of them. The best brands are the ones who help in forming and sustaining strong long term “parent-brand-people” relationships. These brands form the potential for present growth and future expansion. They help the organizations conquer peaks at the time of booms and stay afloat and swim at times of depression.” Today nearly all the companies are focusing more and more on building strong brands. The concept of brand equity and its management has come the fore like never before. More and more companies are refocusing on select strong brands.

Aims and Objectives

- Understanding the concepts of branding and consumer behavior.
- To study the effect of brands on consumer buying behavior in relation to readymade garments.
- To analyze the branding strategies adopted by some of the companies in the readymade garments to woo the consumers into buying their products.
- To do a comparative study of the branding strategies adopted by the companies in the readymade garments.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

BRAND

The word “Brand” owes its origin to the Norwegian word “brand” which means to burn. Products are what companies make, but customers buy brands. Therefore marketers resorted to branding in order to distinguish their offerings from similar products and services provided by their competitors. Additionally, it carries an inherent assurance to the customers that the quality of a purchase will be similar to earlier purchases of the same brand.

Kotler (1991) expands on the concept of identity by stating that a brand is capable of conveying up to six different levels of meaning to a targeted audience. This is known as the “Six dimensions of the brand”

THE RULES OF BRANDING

Branding is the concept of taking a company’s identity and establishing it as more than just a name. The brand is tied to consumer’s reaction to the company, from emotional attachment to repeat buying. A brand can also focus on individual products or services offered by a company. The more time, money and effort spent on a brand, the more value it has in the marketplace. The overall goal of branding is to immediately recognizable and known in the marketplace.

Know your customer

One of the first steps in branding is to research the company or product’s target market. This is the group of individuals or businesses you intend to reach most often with your service or product. Knowing the buying

habits, attitudes and demographics of your target market will help the company create an effective brand. The more knowledge you have of your target market, the more effective you can make your branding efforts.

Listen to your employees

One of the biggest mistakes large corporations make is to not survey the lower level employees in an organization. Typically these are the individuals who deal directly with the customer by fielding complaints or suggestions. Listen to their suggestions for marketing, improving products and meeting customer needs. While this helps to create a better product and more effective marketing, it also helps foster employee support with branding efforts.

Research your competitors

Knowing what your competitors are up to in the marketplace is critical for numerous reasons. Not only will this help it when researching market trends, but it will also ensure that we do not closely resemble our competitor.

Consistency, consistency, consistency The most important key to any branding effort is to ensure that consistency is maintained throughout any campaign. If you have a logo that changes look or color, or messaging in your ads that sends a conflicting message, recognition will not be easily gained. Create a standardized look and stick with it. Even while working on a new advertising campaign, build on your old look and feel to create a consistent image in the mind's eye of your customer.

Branding in today's Markets ; A central function of branding is the facilitation of the consumer choice process. Due to the complexity of having to select a product amongst thousands of similar offerings, consumers will instinctively attempt to simplify their choice process by selecting brands that have satisfied them in the past. Thus, one can conclude that pleasant past experiences is highly conducive to consumers associating benefits to a brand. One can conclude that central function of branding is its ability to negate the need for a consumer to seek out information when a need or a want has been recognized, but rather, lead him to a brand that has been satisfying in the past.

Importance of Branding in Business

From the point of view of a business, the process of branding involves making of a trademark and a good name. A registered trademark and a name ensure individuality and uniqueness a particular product or family of products. The lawful registration of the trademark means that any competitor cannot copy any of the elements and names of the product. Branding can be done for anything that can be promoted in the consumer's market, may it be a simple label, a family of products or umbrella brand. People can also have a personal brand. The primary advantage of branding is that it is safeguarded from unlawful activities and at the same time, it is also a way of developing a good reputation in the market.

Importance of branding in marketing

Marketing primarily involves the study of demand in a market and creating a response in the form of supply. In the field of marketing, the brand name plays an important role as it helps the people to promote the brand name and its merits quite easily. Apart from that, it also becomes possible for the marketing people to generate intelligence information about the brands popularity and also what people exactly want from brand owning company. As a result of a brand loyal group of consumers, it also becomes easier for marketing department to assess regular and promised demand. Apart from that, schemes such as free gifts and discounts often boost the sales as the brand is an important icon of the market.

Importance of branding in advertising Advertising is often considered to be a part of marketing however; branding a particular product helps the advertisers to provide catchy logos and advertisements. As a brand name can never be copied, advertisers face lesser heat from unauthenticated advertisements, effectively, their advertisement creation gets protected. Apart from that advertisers can initiate fearless and independent advertising as due to the process of branding, the consumers are already well of the product, its identity and nature.

IMPACT ON CONSUMERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS BRANDS

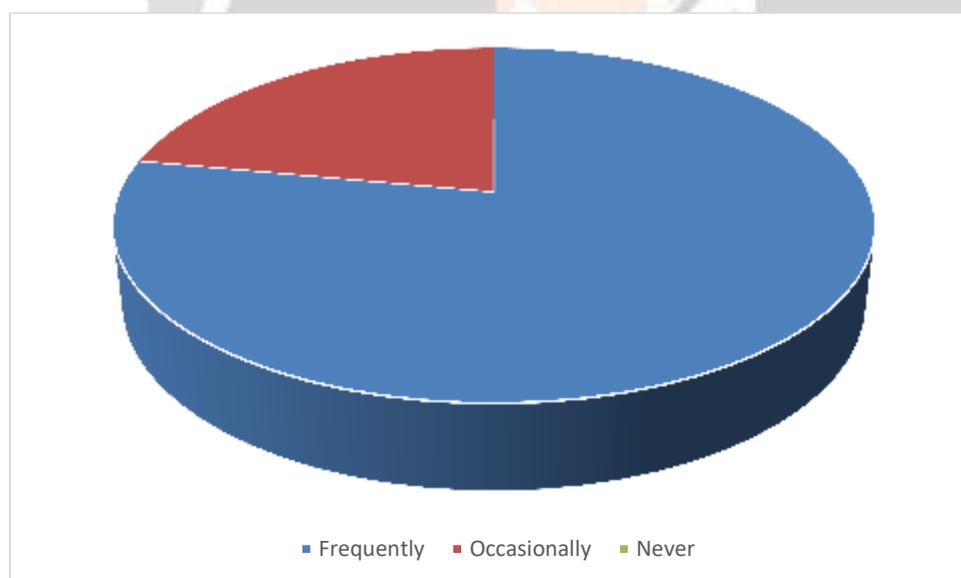
An attitude can be considered to be either positive or negative, depending on the outcome of their learning and evaluating process.

The evaluation of consumer attitudes towards brands has quickly become a major part in conducting marketing research. The development of positive attitudes towards brands can lead to not only the sustaining of competitive advantage, but in the bettering of the financial health of a company.

Branding has been found to be a key in formation of positive attitudes towards products, especially those involving low-levels of consumer involvement. However it has been noted that there are factors that might negate the effects of the formation of positive attitudes. One being that the effects of positive attitudes can dissipate should the consumer not purchase the product within a certain timeframe. Another factor that might negate the effects of positive attitudes might be an overtly high pricing policy, which might have a contrary effect to the consumer's positive attitude towards the brand and result in a non-sale

TIME PERIOD OF CHANGING GARMENTS

VARIABLES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENT	PERCENTAGE
Frequently	39	78
Occasionally	11	22
Never	0	0
Total	50	100



Interpretation

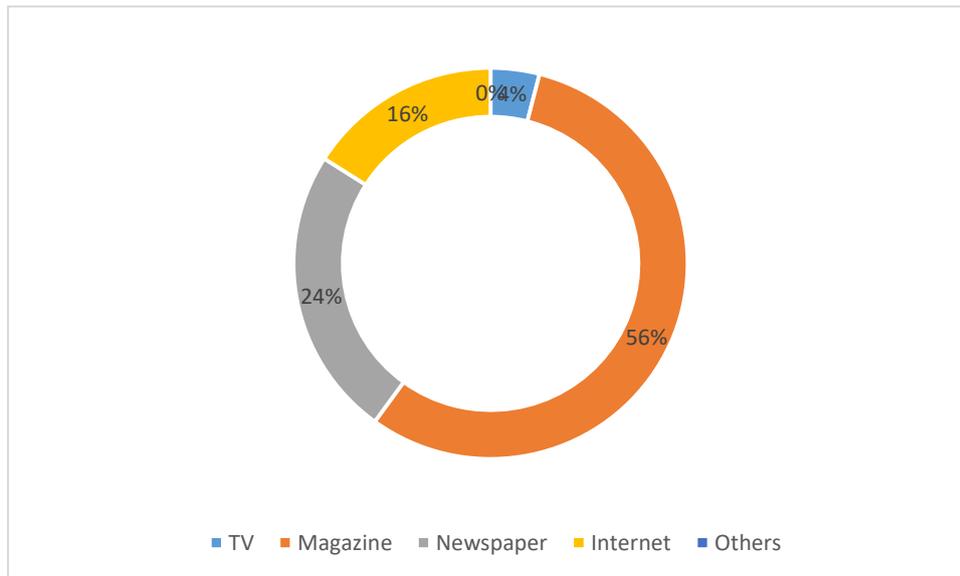
From the above chart it is clear that 78% of the respondent changes their garments frequently. 22% changes occasionally.

EFFECT OF MEDIA

Variable	Number of respondent	Percentage
TV	2	4
Magazine	28	56

Newspaper	12	24
Internet	8	16
Others	0	0
Total	50	100

Chart: 5



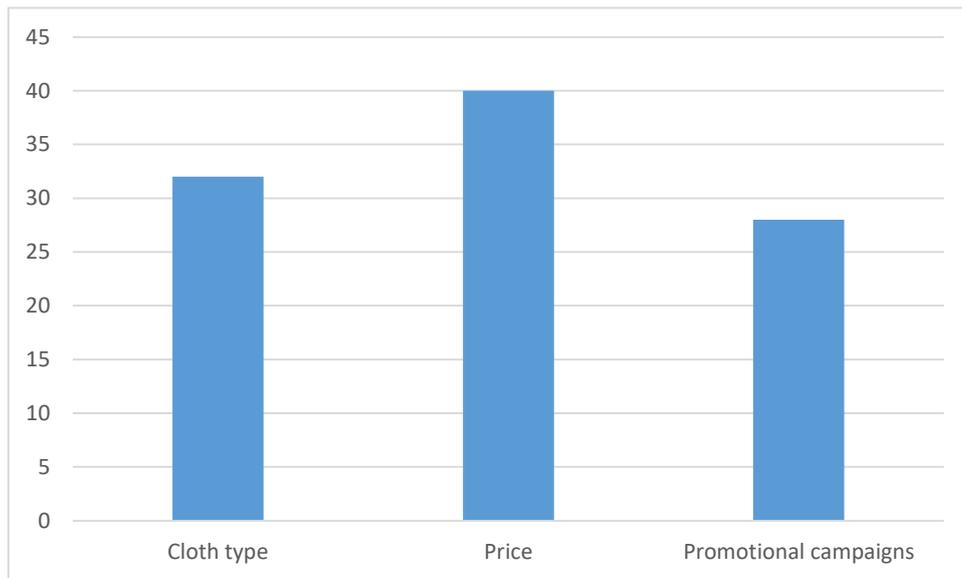
Interpretation

From the above chart it is clear that magazine is the most using advertisement source for these brands. That is, 56% of the respondents uses magazines in checking out these brands. The other most influential factors are Internet (16%) and newspaper (24%).

FACTORS NOT AFFECTING AT ALL YOU IN CHOICE OF READYMADE GARMENTS

Variable	Number of respondent	Percentage
Cloth type	18	36
Price	29	58
Promotional campaigns	3	6
Total	50	100

Chart: 6

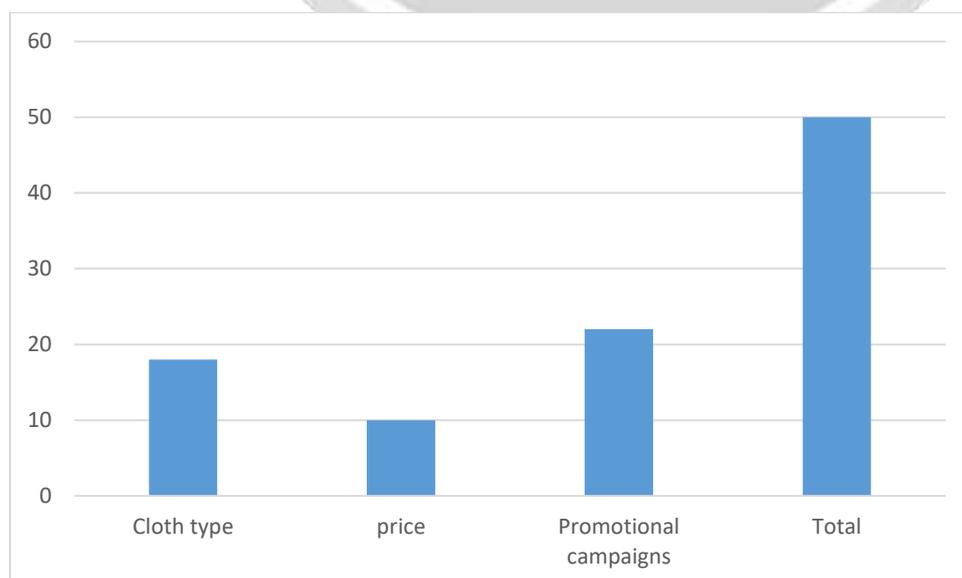


Interpretation

The chart shows the respondents for whom the factors doesn't affect the most. 58% of respondents are not aware of the price. 36% to cloth type and remaining 6% for promotional campaigns.

FACTORS AFFECT YOU MOST IN CHOICE OF READYMADE GARMENTS

Variable	Number of respondent	Percentage
Cloth type	18	36
price	10	20
Promotional campaigns	22	44
Total	50	100

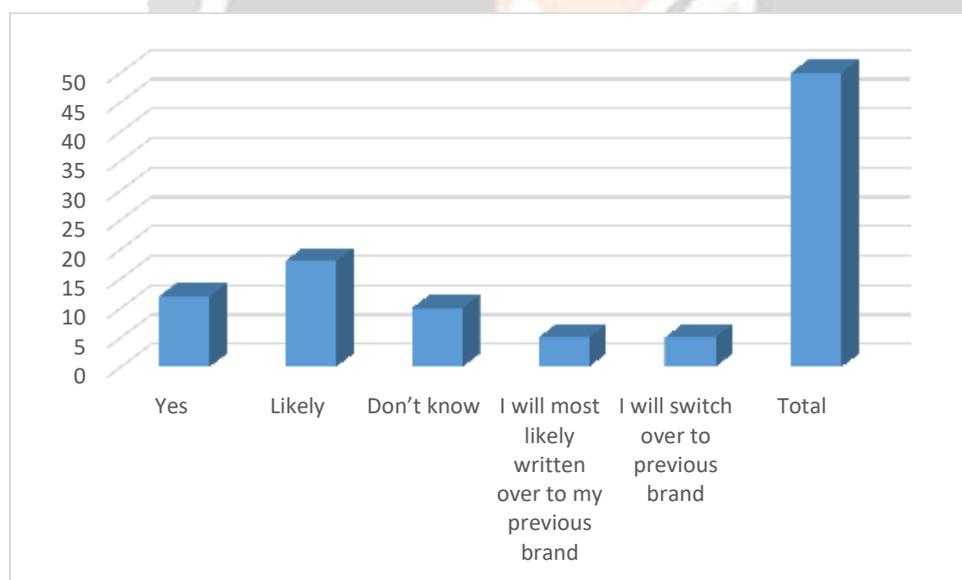


Interpretation

This chart shows the respondents for whom the factors affects the most. Promotional campaigns are the most affect factor for those (44%).36% of respondents are aware of cloth type of garments. Only 20% in price.

BUYING BEHAVIOR AFTER PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGNS

Variable	Number of respondent	Percentage
Yes	12	24
Likely	18	36
Don't know	10	20
I will most likely written over to my previous brand	5	10
I will switch over to previous brand	5	10
Total	50	100



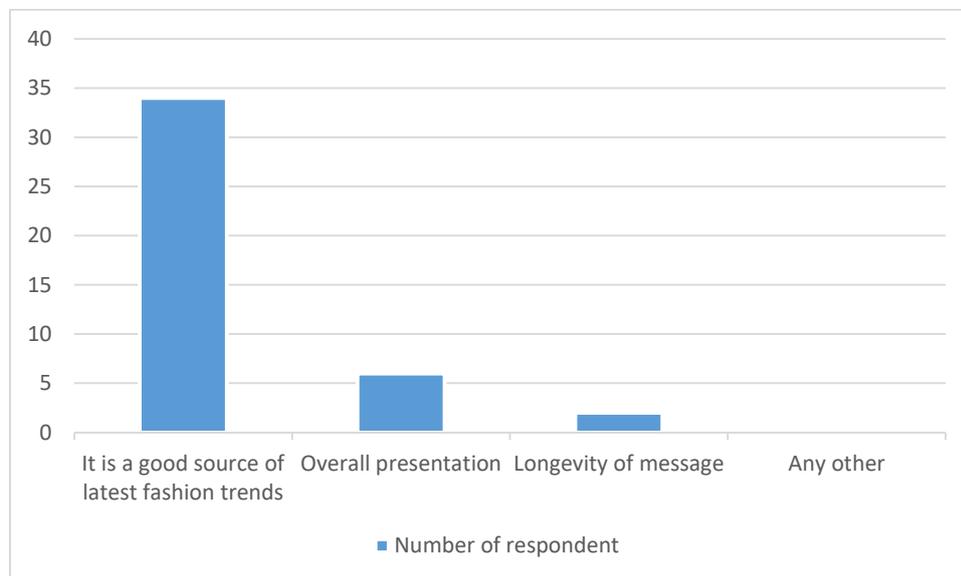
Interpretation

The chart shows the role of promotional campaigns in selecting a brand. While selecting a readymade garment during promotional campaigns, most of the respondents buys that garment (36%). The one who switch to their previous brand is comparatively.

IF MAGAZINE, IS IT BECAUSE OF

Variable	Number of respondent	Percentage
It is a good source of latest fashion trends	34	68

Overall presentation	6	12
Longevity of message	2	4
Any other	0	0



Interpretation

The above chart shows the reason for selecting magazine as most usable media for fashion ads. 68% of the respondents agrees that it is a good source of latest fashion trends and also its overall presentation.

FINDINGS

- A fashion is a style that has been accepted by many people; high fashion consists of new, expensive styles offered by upper-end designer. A trend is a general direction that may lead to a fashion.
- Perspectives on motivation for adopting new styles include psychological, economic, and sociological models of fashion.
- Marketing activities exert an enormous impact on individuals. Consumer behavior is relevant to our understanding of the dynamics of popular culture.
- Online commerce allows us to locate obscure product around the world, and consumption communities provide forums for people to share opinions and product recommendations.
- There are many perspectives on consumer behavior. The positivist perspective emphasizes the objectivity of science and the consumer as a rational decision maker. The interpretive perspective, in contrast, stresses the subjective meaning of the consumer's individual experience.

- **SUGGESTIONS**

1. Rural market. Knowing the huge size of rural population of India, it is natural that the rural market is attractive to marketers. Company should study purchasing power, life styles, buying habits, optimal usage level.

2. Understanding role of children. Marketers should study the role of children in buying decision- as influencers and decision makers. However the challenge remain how does one communicate with children.

Advertising recalls being more in the case of children-one way is clear but with every trying to apply the same technique, marketers will be gradually disillusioned with the method. Possible ways of circumventing this problem may be to market the product through schools or to use the imitative tendencies of children by influencing their peers.

3. Distribution. Distribution cost are an increasing component of marketing cost marketers will have to find ways through which one can achieve efficient as well as economic distribution. One solution is joint distribution or by adopting direct marketing.

4. Packaging. With self-shopping gaining grounds and shelf space getting limited, packaging becomes an important factor that marketers have to be concern about. Companies should identify the requirements and pack commodities according to demand.

5. Customer service challenge. In an increasingly competitive market, retention of a customer is possible only through better service. Marketers will require devoting to more efforts to understand the customer view of quality and convenience. Marketers should do regular research to find this fact.

6. Adaption to newer environment. As government withdraw entry barriers and relax restriction on merger or takeover many companies should install superior technology and resort to merger – acquisition route to make their unit more efficient.

.CONCLUSIONS

Readymade garment is really becoming big business. This domestic market too presents immense opportunities with customer spending on the rise and organized retailing growing. Operating in the domestic market poses an entirely different set of challenges from that of the export market. It requires more than manufacturing expertise and a heightened fashion-consciousness.

Competition is likely to hot up and keep domestic players on their toes. The retail landscape is changing, and the traditional distribution strategy of apparel players is in for an overhaul. Figuring out which price point to operate in is another challenge for an apparel maker. Challenging but interesting, times are ahead for the readymade garment industry.

Apparel retailers, with little retail expertise, had to build their own network, at considerable expense. The rapid growth in recent years of various retail formats, such as departmental stores and malls, has given a fillip to the industry.

A boost to the industry would come from allowing foreign direct investment in retailing, which would increase space considerably and also bring international practices to India. This may also encourage newer entrants, once the distribution costs decline.

Private labels tend to do well during recessions. Retailers enjoy better margins on their own labels, and are also able to price them lower. Players would have to move towards a low margin, volume-driven business. This would also need a far larger distribution network than what exists today.