

## **A Study on Changing Trends in Online Shopping of Indian Consumers in Apparel Segment**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Internet is playing a major role in removing business limitations of the past. Today, a sales representative of a company can directly reach to a client's doorstep and offer the most satisfying services in a click. Though internet marketing in India is low as compared to the western countries, it is growing at a fast pace. There is a huge online market in India as computer and internet is becoming an inevitable part of our life. The technology is developing day by day as it removes the misconceptions and limitations of the technology in the past. Advanced technologies and web applications with safe transaction assurance are giving enough reasons to the new age Indian buyers to shop online. The best thing about the e-business is that it never phases out and it demands half of the amount which a retail business does. If the web promotion and upgradation of website are at place, it means you are there to survive in the business for many more years.

In last two years, many e-commerce websites have come up and competing one another with striking deals like free shipping, coupons, free gifts, easy return policy, and many others. The latest data reveals that Flipkart, Amazon, Snapdeal, Paytm, Myntra, eBay, Jabong, Shopclues, Homeshop 18, and Infibeam are the top ten e-commerce websites in India. Flipkart is one of the biggest E-commerce giant that arrived as the top among e-commerce websites in India.

Online shopping is a form of electronic commerce whereby consumers directly buy goods or services from a seller over the internet without an intermediary service.

1. **Easy to Find :** Finding a product online is much easier than looking for it in the local store. You can search any product easily by using the search engine feature of an online shopping website. But in store you have to look for it until you find it.
2. **Products can be Cheaper :** Sometimes a product can be much cheaper in another country than your country. In this case, it would be wise to shop online to save some money.
3. **Save Time and Energy :** You don't have to waste your time in going to store and standing in front of the crowd.
4. **Freedom of Choice :** Freedom of choice is very high in online than shopping from a nearby store. In online, you can choose the product you are looking, from a vast range of products.
5. **Freedom of Price Flexibility :** You will enjoy the freedom of price flexibility. If you don't like the price of a product from an online shop, you can switch to other online store to look for cheaper price

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Cowart, Kelly O. Goldsmith, Ronald E. (2001), "The Influence of Consumer Decision-making Styles on Online Apparel Consumption by College Students." Apparel purchases now constitute one of the fastest-growing segments of e-commerce. Thus, there are strong theoretical and managerial reasons to better understand consumer characteristics associated with buying apparel online. This paper investigates motivations for online apparel consumption using the Consumer Styles Inventory. Data from a sample of college students showed that quality consciousness, brand consciousness, fashion consciousness, hedonistic shopping, impulsiveness and brand loyalty were positively correlated with online apparel shopping. Price sensitivity was negatively correlated with online spending.

Lee, Eun-Jung, Park Jung Kun Park, Jung Kun (2005), "Online Service Personalization for Apparel Shopping."

This study explores the dynamics of online service personalization in the online apparel retailing context, with regard to customers' actual online shopping activities, this study empirically presents the dynamics of online service personalization in the context of online apparel retailing. Also, the results show that customer online shopping experiences may impact on their online service personalization attitudes. Theoretical and managerial implications are also discussed regarding online service management. Based on the results, internet-based apparel retailers may benefit from developing various types of personalization services by enhancing shopping intentions of their customers, in particular, of those who are loyal to the retailers.

Jones, Christie, Soyoung Kim, "Influences of Retail Brand Trust, Off-line Patronage, Clothing Involvement and Website Quality on Online Apparel Shopping Intention" (2009) this study examines the influence of retail brand trust, offline patronage, clothing involvement, and website quality on online apparel shopping intention for young female US consumers. Retail brand trust, offline patronage, clothing involvement and two factors of website quality were found to significantly influence online apparel shopping intention. Offline patronage was the strongest predictor of online shopping intention. Implications for multi-channel apparel retailers were discussed based on these findings.

Agrawal, Mohan Sandhir, Vidushi Gupta, Gaurav (2010)," Emerging Profile of Online Apparel Shoppers in India" Online shopping is most common these days in the developed world especially in the USA. Though rapidly rising, online shopping in the developing countries particularly in India is yet to become strong and diversified. The theme hasn't been researched strongly either. Towards researching the emerging profile and identifying differences between the American and Indian online shoppers, this study reports a survey and several other empirical tests. The study reveals a huge potential for converting Indian in-store consumers into online buyers. This study should facilitate retailers and brands in expanding their presence and impact through online portals.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The trends emerging within the Indian fashion market can be broadly classified into four categories, depending on their associations; these are discussed in the following sections. The sound growth of the fashion products market, driven by the 8- to -9% GDP growth and positive investment sentiment, looks like a thing of the past. The growth story of one of the largest emerging economies, India, has required severe revision. A growth rate under 5%, coupled with double-digit inflation, has dampened consumer demand for fashion items. As a result, the Indian fashion products consumer has become a cautious spender; demanding value for the money spent. In many cases, the Indian middle class has started trading down by shifting to either products available at a lower price-range or to lowering purchase volumes if within the same price range. The recent inflation in food and vegetables' prices has added to the woes of the Indian consumer. Food, being an irreplaceable item, has eaten into the share of non-food items in recent years. In addition to the weak economic sentiment, the worsening political environment and an increasing lack of confidence in governments and institutions has negatively impacted the country's overall business competitiveness. As a consequence, the retail market is also hit in terms of business growth. From the above observation, the researcher has made an attempt to study and analyze changing trends in online shopping in the apparel segment.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the emerging trends in apparel shopping in India.
2. To evaluate the scope and challenges of fashion in apparel in India.
3. To study the trends of latest developments in the Apparel Industry in India and the awareness of the same amongst the people.
4. To study the preferences of the people in online shopping.

## SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study is confined only to Indian online users. This study has been conducted to analyze the changing trends in online shopping in the apparel segment, and the preferences of the consumers in online shopping and the changes happening in this sector over the past few years.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Both primary and secondary data has been used for the purpose of this study.

Primary data is collected with the help of a structured questionnaire, the same is finalized after conducting a pilot study.

The secondary data is collected from various published sources such as books, journals, newspapers, websites etc.

### Sampling Design

**Sampling Frame :** individuals between 15 years to 28 years.

**Sampling Unit :** youth in Bangalore using online shopping.

**Sample Size :** 150 respondents.

**Sampling Method :** non-probability -convenience sampling

### Data Analysis and Interpretation

**Table 1**

**Online Purchase of Apparel**

Rating	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	142	94.6%
No	8	5.4%
Total	150	100%

Source : Primary Data

### Inference

To know or understand the changing trends in online shopping, one

should experience online shopping. It is found that 94.6 % of the respondents have experienced online shopping and the remaining 5.4% have not experienced online shopping of apparel.

**Inference**

It can be inferred from the above Table that 31% of the respondents do not search apparel online and buy in a store, 23% respondents rarely follow the above pattern, 29% prefer this option sometimes, 10% of the respondents prefer this option often and 7% of the respondents prefer this option very often.

**Table 2**  
**Respondents Who Search Apparel Online and Buy in Store**

Rating	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Never	46	30.7%
Rarely	34	22.7%
Sometimes	44	29.3%
Often	16	10.6%
Very Often	10	6.7%
Total	150	100%

Source : Primary Data

**Inference**

It can be inferred from the above Table that 31% of the respondents prefer this option very often, 21% of the respondents prefer often, 31% of the respondents are neutral who prefer this option sometime, 13% consider this option rarely and the remaining 4% do not prefer this option at all.

**Table 3**  
**Respondents Who Search Apparel in Store and Buy Online**

Rating	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Never	6	4%
Rarely	20	13.3%
Sometimes	46	30.7%
Often	32	21.3%
Very Often	46	30.7%
Total	150	100%

Source : Primary Data

**Table 4**  
**Problems with buying apparel online**

Rating	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Can't Touch And Feel	40	26.7%
Can't Check Fitting	55	36.75
Offline Buying Is More Fun	6	4%
Poor Return Policy	25	16.6%
Low Payment Security	14	9.3%
Total	150	100%

Source : Primary Data

### **Inference**

It can be inferred from the above Table that 39% of the respondents face the problem of the difficulty to check the fitting, 29% of the respondents face to problem of not able to touch and feel the apparel while shopping, 18% feel there is no proper return policy, 10% feel there is low payment security and 4% feel that offline shopping is fun.

### **FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

This study is conducted to find the changing trends in online shopping in the apparel sector. This analysis was done through statistical tools based on primary data acquired through survey conducted with questionnaires distributed at the stores and online.

People who belong to the age group of 20-22 shop online more often than people of other age groups.

Amongst the respondents the number of female respondents is more than the male respondents.

People, who are undergraduates, shop online more often than a post-graduate or any other qualified person.

Almost all the respondents, who shop online, have access to internet except a very few who do not have direct access to internet.

In the survey conducted, almost all the respondents have had previous experience in shopping online and have purchased apparel online previously.

People prefer to search apparel in store and buy online rather than search apparel online and buy in a store, the respondents prefer the option of searching apparel in a store and then buy online is to assure the quality and fitness. The respondent's family income affects the online buying behavior. Various offers attract

large number of online apparel shoppers as it leads to saving of money.

According to the responses given by the respondents, most of the people are aware of the new trends in online apparel shopping. This says that respondents adapt easily to the changing trends which encourages the online retail to experiment with new trends.

People prefer a lot of options while shopping online and the respondents prefer to shop online because of the ability to shop around for a lower price and the flexibility of shopping hours.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Indian fashion online apparel industry encompasses a plethora of opportunities. But tapping these opportunities, and converting them to business value, requires a holistic understanding of the industry, starting from fiber-to-online fashion retail. Online fashion retailers have to go beyond the boundaries of sales, marketing, merchandising, and category management, and have to explore upstream and allied industries with accuracy. Online apparel retailers in India have to continue realigning and restructuring their models to cater to the evolving needs of this dynamic market. The opportunity in the online fashion market is immense, but this opportunity exists only for those who can visualize the future and reinvent themselves in order to address the associated challenges.

## **SUGGESTIONS**

Based on the findings of the study, the following suggestions are given by the researcher to overcome the problems associated with online shopping of apparels :

The online retailers should give first preference to the quality of the apparel than any other factor, as the quality of the apparel is preferred by the customers.

About the range of the apparel in the online shopping sites, there should be a range of designer clothing added. The online retailers can tie-up with the designers so that there will be easy access to designer clothing too.

The online retailers can also bring international brands such as Louis Vuitton, Dior which are not easily available to their sites as many of the international brands are not found everywhere, so that the Indian customers can get their favorite international brands from anywhere in the world.

The online wardrobe should be updated according to the changing fashion in the country as the customers are updated in the changing fashion

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