

# **INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT SOCIOLOGY & HUMANITIES**

**ISSN 2277 – 9809 (online)**

**ISSN 2348 - 9359 (Print)**

*An Internationally Indexed Peer Reviewed & Refereed Journal*



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## **YOUTH FASHION PREFERENCE AND BRAND PATRONAGE – A STUDY AMONG YOUTH IN THRISSUR DISTRICT**

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### **Abstract**

Today, India is an important spot on every International fashion brand's international business map. Indian consumers especially in Kerala, which is a fashion hub, are aware of international trends and have lots of exposure to western fashion sensibilities. Fashion retailing in India offering world class fashion and shopping experience through shopping malls or through their franchised separate showrooms. Fashion is defined by the involvement of a product category which it represents the identity of the consumers with its brand traits. Hence, fashion basically represents a consumer's outlook that has a positive influence on their style and status. Brand popularity is also one of the factors that influence the consumer preferences. Thus, the present study focuses on the fashion preferences and brand patronage among the Youth with special reference to Thrissur District. The main objective of the study is to study and analyze the influential attributes that affect consumer behavior towards fashion preferences and brand patronage. Therefore 50 sample respondents are selected from Thrissur District by convenience sampling method.

**Key words: fashion, brand patronage, consumer behavior, fashion sensibilities and Fashion retailing**

### **Introduction**

Globalization is an important phenomenon that is leading the entire world towards becoming one market, a global market. In the pre- liberalisation era, Indian consumers were known to exhibit a distinctively higher preference for imported goods and 'foreign brands'. However, post two decades of liberalization, the Indian apparel market is flooded with brands with their origin in foreign countries. The increased popularity of such international brands and the relatively similar big city customer profiles across countries (Quelch, 1999) are having an effect on the way marketers view the attractiveness of international markets. However, in India, for fashion brands "the tastes and preferences of consumers are beginning to develop in line with global front". Consumers' value brands with different perspectives where on one hand, they seem to attach value and admire international brands and regard such brands as a status symbol. On the other hand, international brands are often criticized for threatening the local differences and imposing the western cultures on our society, leading to a loss of cultural identity. It is argued that brands add

value to consumer goods by supplying meaning (MsCracken, 1993), as well as communicating competence, standard and image to the consumer.

Today, India is an important spot on every International fashion brand's international business map. Indian consumers especially in Kerala, which is a fashion hub, are aware of international trends and have lots of exposure to western fashion sensibilities. There are several well known global luxury fashion brands that have made in road in the country's market before with many more brands eyeing this booming market. These foreign brands are readily leveraging the potential of the Indian market. Fashion retailing in India offering world class fashion and shopping experience through shopping malls or through their franchised separate showrooms. Fashion is defined by the involvement of a product category which it represents the identity of the consumers with its brand traits. Hence, fashion basically represents a consumer's outlook that has a positive influence on their style and status. Brand popularity is also one of the factors that influence the consumer preferences. Thus, the present study focuses on the fashion preferences and brand patronage among the customers with special reference to Thrissur District.

### **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Consumers are evolving entities. Their aspirations & expectations are continuously changing. Today's shoppers are more intelligent, discerning & tuned to their individual preference. They are increasingly fashion and brand conscious and select labels which define who they are or who they want to be. The biggest challenge for all the brands is to create loyal consumer who love them. Consumers now have a wide variety of choices to make regarding their clothing with rapid growth in disposable incomes, the development of modern urban lifestyles, and the emergence of the kind of trend-conscious consumers that India has not seen in the past. The rapid pace of globalization in the business environment has created sophistication and a wide variety of choices in design and fabric. India represents an economic opportunity on a massive scale, both as a global base and as a domestic market. In India, Kerala is changing with the latest trends in apparels. Kerala is also known for its fashion as well as ethnic and traditional apparels have been an identity of Kerala since long. But now-a-days fashion apparels have changed the scenario of Indian market.

### **1.3 Scope and significance of the study**

Modern consumption patterns have changed and evolved where consumers are well aware of fashion trends and updates are easily available to consumers for all segment through different media channels. This has changed consumers motivation behind their fashion consumption as well, some uses fashion as a means of presenting themselves to the society at large. Fashion is a dynamic phenomenon which changes with time; irrespective of whether it is a garment, cosmetics or jewellery, but to define how fashion has changed. Every year a bewildering array of styles are prepared all over the world and replaced the year after with new ones. Fashion clothing industry is completely dependent on constant ideas and new expectations of the youth. The youth in every segment prefer buying fashion apparels in every season or festivals. Keeping in view of the

objectives, the present study undertakes to study fashion preferences and brand patronage among the customers with special reference to Thrissur District.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the study**

The main objective of the study is to study and analyze the influential attributes that affect consumer behavior towards fashion preferences and brand patronage.

Specific objectives are as follows:

1.4.1 To analyse the perception of youth towards new fashion apparels.

1.4.2 To study the association of demographic factors with perception of youth towards new fashion preferences and brand patronage.

1.4.3 To analyse the attitude towards new apparels

1.4.4 To identify the reasons in preference of new international brands

#### **1.5 Hypotheses**

1.5.1 H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference in the opinion related to the factors affecting attitudes towards apparel on the basis of gender.

H<sub>1</sub>: There is significant difference in the opinion related to the factors affecting attitudes towards apparel on the basis of gender.

1.5.2 H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference in the opinion related to the factors affecting attitudes towards apparel on the basis of marital status.

H<sub>1</sub>: There is significant difference in the opinion related to the factors affecting attitudes towards apparel on the basis of marital status.

1.5.3 H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference in the demographic factors association with average perception towards new fashion preferences and brand patronage.

H<sub>1</sub>: There is significant difference in the demographic factors association with average perception towards new fashion preferences and brand patronage.

1.5.4 H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference in the sum of ranks between male and females.

H<sub>1</sub>: There is significant difference in the sum of ranks between male and females.

1.5.5 H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference in the sum of ranks between married and unmarried.

H<sub>1</sub>: There is significant difference in the sum of ranks between married and unmarried.

#### **1.6 Research Methodology**

##### **1.6.1 Research design**

The study was conducted among the youth in Thrissur, District. Here the population was youth added between 15 to 30 years. This study is descriptive in nature. Descriptive research is mainly

used to gain information regarding the current status of the phenomenon and to describe "what is already exists" with respect to variables or conditions in a situation.

### 1.6.2 Operational definitions

In the context of this study, the following terms were used as follows:

**Youth:** Youth is being redefined to cover people in the age group of 15 to 30 years as per National youth policy 2014

**Apparel:** Different types of clothes that are made from textiles. The term as used in the study, referred to all types of clothes, both undergarments and outerwear.

**Attitude:** A hypothetical construct that represents an individual's like or dislike for an item. Attitudes represent positive, negative or neutral feelings of the consumer.

**Patronage:** The strong feeling of attachment and loyalty to one's own country without corresponding hostility towards other nations. This term referred to the support and encouragement that a consumer showed to apparel produced locally.

**Perception:** The immediate or intuitive appreciation of aesthetic qualities of an item. Perception, as used in this study, was the positive, negative or neutral feelings of the consumers in relation to the apparel purchased.

### 1.6.3 Sample Design

**a) Population:** Youth in Thrissur, District

**b) Sampling frame:** To study the whole population in order to arrive at conclusion would be impractical. Since, it was not feasible to include all the youth in the study for data collection. It was considered inevitably to draw a representative sample by using non probability method viz, convenience sampling.

### 1.6.4 Sample size

50 samples are essential for doing factor analysis and Karl Pearson chi square test therefore 50 sample respondents are selected from Thrissur District by convenience sampling method. 50 sample respondents among the youth from both male and females constitute the sample size.

### 1.7.1 Data Collection

#### Sources of Data

Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data were collected through structured questionnaire based on the objectives. The secondary data were collected from books, websites, annual reports etc.

### 1.8 Tools for Analysis

**Measurement & Scaling Techniques:** For scaling purpose, the 5-point Likert Scale of the itemized rating scale (Non comparative scaling) has been used. The collected data was analyzed with the help of both relevant descriptive and inferential statistical tools such as Percentage analysis, Levene's t- test is used to analyse the homogeneity of variance among different groups of respondents. But the data related to perception and brand preferences are collected by using ordinal scale and categorical scale therefore non- parametric test like Mann Whitney U test and Karl Pearson chi square test etc are also used.

**Part II**

**Data analysis and findings**

Levene’s t test is used for testing of equality of variance assumed and equality of variance not assumed among male and females, married and unmarried. The following variables like prestige, style, quality and social aspects etc. are taken to test whether the variance of the two groups are equal or not.

**H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference in the opinion related to the factors affecting attitudes towards apparel on the basis of gender.**

**H<sub>1</sub>: There is significant difference in the opinion related to the factors affecting attitudes towards apparel on the basis of gender.**

**Table 2.1**

**Independent Samples Test**

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Prestige	Equal variances assumed	7.874	.007	-.008	48	.994	-.0018	.2204	-.4449	.4414
	Equal variances not assumed			-.012	43.220	.991	-.0018	.1507	-.3057	.3022
Style	Equal variances assumed	.022	.882	.742	48	.461	.1610	.2168	-.2750	.5969
	Equal variances not assumed			.660	15.703	.519	.1610	.2438	-.3567	.6787
Quality	Equal variances assumed	3.642	.062	-.939	48	.352	-.19373	.20631	-.60855	.22109
	Equal variances not assumed			-.767	14.303	.455	-.19373	.25254	-.73430	.34684
Social aspect	Equal variances assumed	.405	.528	.848	48	.401	.2061	.2430	-.2825	.6948
	Equal variances not assumed			.814	17.372	.427	.2061	.2533	-.3274	.7397

Source : spss output

The table 2.1 shows the levene’s test for equality of variance among male and female respondents. The equality of variance is checked through spss, the result of analysis shows variance is not significant in the attitude among male and females in respect of style (p value=0.882), quality(p value=0.062), and social aspect (p value=0.528), that means p values are greater than the significance level of 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. But in the case of prestige the p value is .007, it is less than .05 alpha then it conclude that there is significant variance in the attitude towards new apparel in terms of prestige among male and female respondents. Secondly, the t-test values with equality of variances assumed. The p values of all variables are greater than the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. It means that there is no significant variance in the attitude among male and females in respect of prestige, style, quality, and social aspect.

**H0: There is no significant difference in the opinion related to the factors affecting attitudes towards apparel on the basis of marital status.**

**H1: There is significant difference in the opinion related to the factors affecting attitudes towards apparel on the basis of marital status.**

**Table 2.2**  
**Independent Samples Test**

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Prestige	Equal variances assumed	.867	.357	.169	47	.866	.0337	.1992	-.3670	.4344
	Equal variances not assumed			.174	31.907	.863	.0337	.1940	-.3615	.4289
Style	Equal variances assumed	.019	.891	.431	47	.669	.0852	.1979	-.3130	.4834
	Equal variances not assumed			.417	27.432	.680	.0852	.2045	-.3341	.5046
Quality	Equal variances assumed	.593	.445	-.252	47	.802	-.04839	.19200	-.43465	.33787
	Equal variances not assumed			-.231	24.041	.820	-.04839	.20988	-.48152	.38474
Social aspect	Equal variances assumed	.538	.467	2.059	47	.045	.4489	.2180	.0103	.8875
	Equal variances not assumed			2.152	33.421	.039	.4489	.2086	.0246	.8731

Source : spss output

The table 2.2 shows the levene’s test for equality of variance among male and female respondents. The equality of variance is checked through spss, the result of analysis shows variance is not significant in the attitude among married and unmarried in respect of prestige (p value=0.357), style(p value=0.891), quality (p value=0.445), and social aspect (p value=0.467), that means p values are greater than the significance level of 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. Secondly, the t-test values with equality of variances assumed. The p values of all variables are greater than the significance level of 0.05 except social aspects. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. It means that there is no significant variance in the attitude among married and unmarried respondents in respect of prestige, style, quality. In the case of social aspects there is significant variance in their attitude towards new trends in apparel.

**Chi-Square Independence Test**

It is used to analyse the demographic factors association with average perception towards new fashion preferences and brand patronage. Here an attempt is made to study the demographic variables like age, gender, marital status, education, income and residence.

**H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference in the demographic factors association with average perception towards new fashion preferences and brand patronage.**

**H<sub>1</sub>: There is significant difference in the demographic factors association with average perception towards new fashion preferences and brand patronage.**

**Table 2.3**

**Chi-Square Independence Test**

	Pearson Chi-Square Value	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Age * Perception	36.739	.185
Gender * Perception	11.495	.320
Marital status* Perception	14.170	.822
Education* Perception	45.253	.262
Income * Perception	42.152	.378
Residence * Perception	11.151	.942

Source: spss output

The table 2.3 shows the demographic factors association with average perception towards new fashion preferences and brand patronage. The p values in all demographic variables are greater than the significance level of 0.05. It indicates that there is no significant association between the demographic factors and perception variables.

**Mann-Whitney U Test**

Here an attempt is made to study the attributes which prioritize in the selection of new brand among male and female, married and unmarried respondents. Mann-Whitney Test is used to identify the order of priority a respondent is consider while selecting the brand.

**H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference in the sum of ranks between male and females.**

**H<sub>1</sub>: There is significant difference in the sum of ranks between male and females.**

Table 2.4

<b>Mann-Whitney Test Rank table</b>
-------------------------------------



	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Good fit	Male	12	26.96	323.50
	Female	38	25.04	951.50
Durability	Male	12	30.83	370.00
	Female	38	23.82	905.00
Ease care	Male	12	32.96	395.50
	Female	38	23.14	879.50
Price	Male	12	23.63	283.50
	Female	38	26.09	991.50
Comfort	Male	12	20.42	245.00
	Female	38	27.11	1030.00
Quality	Male	12	25.38	304.50
	Female	38	25.54	970.50
Colors	Male	12	27.88	334.50
	Female	38	24.75	940.50
Fabrics	Male	12	34.38	412.50
	Female	38	22.70	862.50
Fashion	Male	12	20.21	242.50
	Female	38	27.17	1032.50
Reputation	Male	12	22.46	269.50
	Female	38	26.46	1005.50
Style	Male	12	14.25	171.00
	Female	38	29.05	1104.00
Workmanship quality	Male	12	25.33	304.00
	Female	38	25.55	971.00

Source: spss output

Rank table displays the details about the mean rank and sum of ranks for each category of gender. The sum of ranks of females are higher than the sum of ranks of males.

**Table 2.5**

**Test statistics**

Mann - Whitney U	Good fit	Durability	Ease care	Price	Comfort	Quality	Colors	Fabrics	Fashion	Reputation	Style	Workmanship
	210.5	164.00	138.5	205.5	167.0	226.5	199.5	121.5	164.5	191.5	93.	226.
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	<b>.688</b>	<b>.136</b>	.039	<b>.602</b>	<b>.160</b>	<b>.970</b>	<b>.507</b>	.014	<b>.144</b>	<b>.401</b>	.002	<b>.962</b>

a. Grouping Variable: Gender

Source: spss output

The test statistics table gives information about whether the difference is statistically significant or by chance. The associated significance value of the variables like good fit, durability, price, comfort, quality, color, fashion, reputation and workmanship quality etc; are much higher than .05. It indicates that there is no significant difference in the sum of the ranks given by male and females in prioritizing the new brand. But in the case of the other three variables like ease care, fabrics and style shows significant difference in the sum of the ranks as the p values are less than 0.05.

**H0: There is no significant difference in the sum of ranks between married and unmarried.**

**H1: There is significant difference in the sum of ranks between married and unmarried.**

Table 2.6

Mann-Whitney Test Statistics												
	Good fit	Durability	Ease care	Price	Comfort	Quality	Colors	Fabrics	Fashion	Reputation	Style	Workmanship
Mann-Whitney U	224.50	207.0	199.0	211.5	245.50	233.00	152.00	238.00	218.500	241.500	218.000	253.500
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.395	.213	.160	.253	.689	.466	.014	.573	.326	.627	.319	.815

a. Grouping Variable: MStatus

Source: spss output

The test statistics table gives information about whether the difference is statistically significant or by chance. The associated significance value of all the variables except color are much higher than .05. It indicates that there is no significant difference in the sum of the ranks given by married and unmarried in prioritizing the new brand. But in the case of color shows significant difference in the sum of the ranks as the p value is less than 0.05.

**Part III**

**Findings, suggestions and conclusion**

Consumer buying behavior is the sum total of a consumer’s attitude, preference, intentions, and decisions regarding the consumer’s behavior in the market place when purchasing a product or services. Undertaking the buying behavior of target market is the essential task of marketing manager under the marketing concept. In the earlier time, marketers could understand the consumer through the daily experience of selling to them. But the growth in the size of firms and markets has removed many marketing decisions makers from direct contact with consumer.

Brand preference is when you choose a specific company’s product or services when you have other, equally priced and available option. It is reflection of consumer’s loyalty, successful

marketing tactics, and brand strength. This study has been conducted in order to analyse the changes in fashion preference and brand among youth for this study, several factors of fashion had been chosen. Among them, it is found that, compared with other consumer's youth are buying more branded product.

### **Suggestions**

Following suggestions in order to reducing the problems or difficulties faced by change in fashion and brands can be minimized following ways

- Non availability of international brand in their locality.
- Price of branded products is a big issue for people.
- Fast change in fashion.
- Less awareness about branded products.
- Advertisement of such latest fashion must be more effective.
- Increasing quality of latest fashion trends and brands.

### **Conclusion**

This study was conducted to determine the “Fashion Preference and Brand Patronage among Youth”. It is very clear from analysis that youth consumers mostly preferred. There are many features which determine the selection of new fashion and brands like, durability, good fit, ease of care, right price, comfort, quality, choice of color, fabric, fashionable, style, brand reputation etc. It shows young consumers are very aware and well conscious about fashion, brand and the use of apparel products and that they take choice is themselves which are based on their environment. And availability of brand in their local area, are also influenced consumer behavior of youth consumers.

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**INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNAL OF  
MANAGEMENT SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY**

**ISSN – 2250 – 1959 (O) 2348 – 9367 (P)**

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**ISSN 2277 – 9809 (O) 2348 - 9359 (P)**

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