Consumer Buying Behavior towards Multinational Branded Apparels: A Case of Nainital District

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Abstract:

Apparels are the basic essentials of human just like food and shelter. The textile industry of India is the second largest industry. Apparels have become a symbol of great personality and it is gaining a lot of customer's attention. In today's competitive market a thorough understanding of consumers needs and wants helps in acquiring a successful place in the market. The purpose of this study is to understand the consumer buying behavior towards branded apparels and to understand the factors affecting the purchase decision. The study is based on the consumers of Nainital District as branded apparels and there retail outlets are a new concept in this district and we have also tried to analyze the awareness of the consumers regarding the available brands. For the research we have chosen only multinational branded apparels. A questionnaire was prepared to conduct the survey and collect the primary data. It was found in the study that the consumers of Nainital District are fairly aware about the multinational brands. The most prominent source of information was friends and family. Consumers have their specific motive and attitude backing their purchase. It was revealed that quality, designs, uniqueness, convenience, brand image were some prominent factors affecting the purchase whereas factors like status symbol and advertisement were found to be irrelevant .

Keywords: Consumer behavior, multinational branded apparels, purchase decisions, factors.

Introduction:

India is the 12th biggest economy in the world and it is moving towards becoming one of the fastest developing economies. The textile industry of India is the second largest contributor to the country's GDP. The Indian consumers are also becoming more conscious regarding what they wear and which brands they wear. As per an article published in Hindustan Times Indian fashion market is expected to register a growth of about $115 billion by 2027. The apparel market of India has witnessed considerable change with regard to fashion, style, awareness of branded apparels and preference towards fabric. The Indian textile industry is the second largest employment generating industry. Moreover, the apparel sector has seen a substantial growth in the last year with India's readymade garment (RMG) exports to USA accelerated to $308.48 million and the overall apparel export to the world increased by 4.50% during 2019.

Thus, the apparel sector is a burgeoning industry and hence the demands and expectations of the consumers are also changing.

According to **Kotler & Armstrong** consumer buying behavior can be defined as the purchase behavior of end consumers- individuals and households who purchase products and services for personal utilization. Consumer is the king of marketing the whole market revolves around his demands and satisfying those demands. A good thorough understanding of consumers and their buying pattern help companies in devising their strategies. Consumer behavior can be subjective or objective while choosing a brand. The role of retail stores is not just limited to selling goods but they also influence the consumers purchase decision. The complete appeal of the stores plays an important role in affecting the sales and profits of the outlet.

Consumers may choose a particular brand because it delivers products which matches to the consumers' personality and satisfies their social status as well as psychological needs. Consumer behavior enquires into 3W and 1H of consumers i.e. what, when, why and how of buying. Today's consumers are dynamic and have the benefit of infinite options. Thus, understanding and catering to their continuous changing demands is becoming a challenge for the organizations. The study examines the buying behavior of consumers for branded apparels and what factors make their purchase decision so dynamic.

Review of Literature:

Fernandez (2009) analyzed particularly the behavior of youth and found out that they are highly influenced by peer pressure. The youth of today prefer buying those brands which are recommended by their favorite celebrities and advertisement is a great tool to create brand preference in the minds of the consumers and to impact the brand image.

Khare & Rakesh (2010) revealed that the consumers of developing countries are evolving and are becoming brand conscious. The youth of India is highly inclined towards branded apparels and no prominent gap was found between male and female shoppers for branded apparels.

Rajput, Kesarwani & Khanna (2012) aimed at studying female consumer buying behavior and fathom the factors which dominate the female buyer's behavior towards stylish branded apparels. The study revealed that females have a clear understanding of all the branded apparels available in the market. They prefer buying from malls and family and friends play an influential role as the source of information followed by internet and advertisement. Factors like price, fitting and level of income are crucial for female consumers while shopping. Whereas factors like status, durability and celebrity endorsement are irrelevant for the female consumers.

Mittal & Aggarwal (2012) made an attempt on studying consumer approach towards branded apparels in Jaipur city. For conducting their study the researchers divided the objectives into two parts- Primary and Secondary. The primary objective was to analyze whether the consumers of Jaipur even favor brands or not. Other secondary objectives were to investigate how aware the consumers towards existence of various brands and what factors affect their buying decisions. The findings of the research was that consumers of Jaipur prefer branded apparels over non branded apparels as they feel that brands augment a person's charisma. Consumers link brand with fashion, quality and features. Moreover, price is a crucial factor for consumers and they give utmost importance to the pricing of the products while making a purchase decision. Consumers prefer branded apparels because they expect it to bring contentment and acceptance.

Shafi & Madhavaiah (2014) concluded that promotional offers and discounts influence consumers' decision. Some other factors are colleagues, store image dimension, income level, profession, and product characteristics. The results also focused that the store owners should give importance on improving its store image and characteristics and try to make it attractive as well as focus on product attributes to retain consumers.

Hassan, Hurrah & Lankja (2014) studied the consumers of Jalndhar and revealed that consumers of Jalandhar prefer wearing branded apparels over non-branded. Branded apparels are a guarantee of comfort and good quality hence they are even ready to pay higher prices for branded apparels. Friends and family influence the consumers decision and factors like discount, fashion, fabric and design affect the purchase.

Vashishth & Tripathi (2016) analyzed the consumer response towards branded apparels exclusive showrooms and retail stores. The study concluded that consumers are not so brand conscious and prefer non branded apparels over branded. The ratio of branded apparels preference to non-branded is 40:60. Price is a significant factor for a purchase decision. Consumers prefer shopping from retail outlets more than e-commerce.

Saluja (2016) studied the consumers of Delhi and considered demographic, psychological and socio-economic factors which influence the consumers and their pattern. The researcher concluded that the respondents prefer branded apparels and they are content with their purchase decision. Consumers are not affected by demographic factors. Quality is a significant factor for consumers while making a purchase.

Asif & Kaushik (2017) concluded that the consumers of Gurgaon are highly brand conscious and their liking for branded apparels is increasing. In comparison to male consumers, female consumers are more brands conscious and prefer buying international branded apparels. Factors like friends, family, appeal of the brand, and promotion by an influential person affect consumers. Moreover, consumers from any age group, gender or income prefer discounts and promotional offers while buying apparels.

Kumar & Kanchan (2017) revealed that age is a pivotal factor while shopping and has a crucial influence on the consumers buying pattern and decision. Income level affects consumers buying behavior. The overall study concluded that consumer's in Ludhiana is inclined towards fashion and brands and on any day would prefer brand over non-brand.

Sreerekha & Kumar (2018) conducted their research in Coimbatore city to delve into the relation between various variables stirring consumer buying behavior pattern towards branded apparels. The objective of the study was to examine the Indian apparel industry and inquire about the diverse demographic, psychological and socio-economic factors impacting the consumer decision. The scholars also analyzed the effect of promotional activities, gender and peer influence on the consumers. The study revealed that consumers give crucial importance to quality and price of the product while making a decision. The correct pricing of the product based on the competitors pricing is pivotal in the long run for the brands.

Maran, Badrinaryanan & Kumar (2018) took the study with the aim of analyzing the consumer's behavior towards branded readymade garments with respect to their age and income level. The findings of the study revealed that quality is the most important factor and other secondary factors are color, design, style, price and comfort. Consumers prefer branded apparels as they meet their expectations. Moreover, income level is also a deciding factor for consumers while making a purchase.

Objectives of the study:

- To analyze the buying behavior of the consumers of Nainital district towards multinational branded apparels
- To study the various factors which affect the consumer behavior towards branded apparels.
- To analyze consumer's awareness regarding multinational branded apparels.

Hypothesis:

H_{01}- The consumers of Nainital district are well aware about multinational branded apparels.

H_{02}- Multinational branded apparels have huge superiority over non-branded apparels in terms of preference.

H_{03}- Consumers buying decision for branded apparel is affected by demographic factors.

Research Methodology:

The study was done to analyze the buying behavior of consumers in Nainital district. Data was collected through both primary and secondary sources. A structured questionnaire was used to collect the primary data and the secondary data was collected from journals, websites etc. The research was carried out through the survey method with the help of self-developed, structured and disguised questionnaire. Those respondents were selected who were ready to answer the questionnaire and a random sample of 60 respondents was taken. The research design is descriptive in nature.

Data Analysis and Interpretation:

Data collection was conducted through a questionnaire survey. With a view to fulfilling the objectives of the study, primary data and the information were collected from 60 respondents residing in Nainital district of the state Uttarakhand.

The data coded in excel using MS-Office package. The coded data was then analyzed using SPSS version 23.0. The data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. First all questions were subjected to frequency analysis to check whether the scale is measuring any variation or not. Secondly, factor analysis was undertaken to condense the 11 scale items into the four convenient dimensions. After these steps, inferential statistics were used to test the hypothesis under the study.

Reliability of the Questionnaire

Reliability can be defined as the degree to which measurements are free from error and, therefore, give in consistent results. Internal consistency involves correlating the responses to each question in the questionnaire with those to other questions in the questionnaire. A reliability 0.60 or above is considered to be the criteria for demonstrating internal consistency of scales[1]. In this study the Cronbach's alpha is 0.676 for 11 items of the questionnaire included in the part B. The result of the analysis shows that the factor scales are internally consistent.

table 1.1: reliability statistics
source: spss output

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.676	11

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The demographic characteristics of the respondents are collectively illustrated in the following table 1.2.

table 1.2: demographic profile of the respondents.

Demographic Variables	Characteristics	No. of Respondents	Percentage
GENDER	Male	23	38.3
	Female	37	61.7
	Total	**60**	**100**
AGE	Above 40 Years	11	18.3
	Between 20-40 Years	49	81.7
	Total	**60**	**100**
EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	Intermediate	1	1.7
	Others	2	3.3
	Graduation	20	33.3
	Post-Graduation	37	61.7
	Total	**60**	**100**
OCCUPATION	Others	3	5.0
	Business	8	13.3
	Home Maker	8	13.3
	Student	11	18.3
	Service	30	50.0
	Total	**60**	**100**

Table 1.1 illustrates that 23 (38.3%) of the respondents in the sample were male while 37 (61.7%) were female. The above table shows that the majority 81.7 percent of the respondents were in the age group of 20-40 years, 61.7 percent

are post graduated, 50 percent of the respondents are in service. The number of respondents is representation of the target population.

Awareness about Multinational Branded Apparels

In this section, the following hypothesis has been checked by using descriptive statistics.

H$_{01}$: The consumers of Nainital district are well aware about multinational branded apparels.

table 1.3: preference of shopping for apparels.

Response	Frequency	Percent
No	8	13.3
Yes	52	86.7
Total	**60**	**100.0**

table 1.4: frequency of shopping for apparels.

Frequency of Visit	Frequency	Percent
Once in 15 days	7	11.7
Very rare	15	25.0
Once in 2 months	17	28.3
Once in a month	21	35.0
Total	**60**	**100.0**

table 1.5: origin of knowledge about multinational branded apparels.

Information Channel	Frequency	Percent
Magazines	2	3.3
TV	9	15.0
Friends & Family	24	40.0
Internet	25	41.7
Total	**60**	**100.0**

From table 1.3, it can be inferred that majority of respondents under study prefers shopping for apparels. Table 1.4 revealed that majority of respondents shop once or twice in a month. The table 1.5 illustrates that the majority of the respondents got information form Internet (41.7%) followed by Friends & Family (40%) and TV (15%) respectively.

H$_{02}$: Multinational branded apparels have huge superiority over non-branded apparels in terms of preference.

Table 1.6: Preference towards Branded apparels (like Levis, Pepe-Jeans).

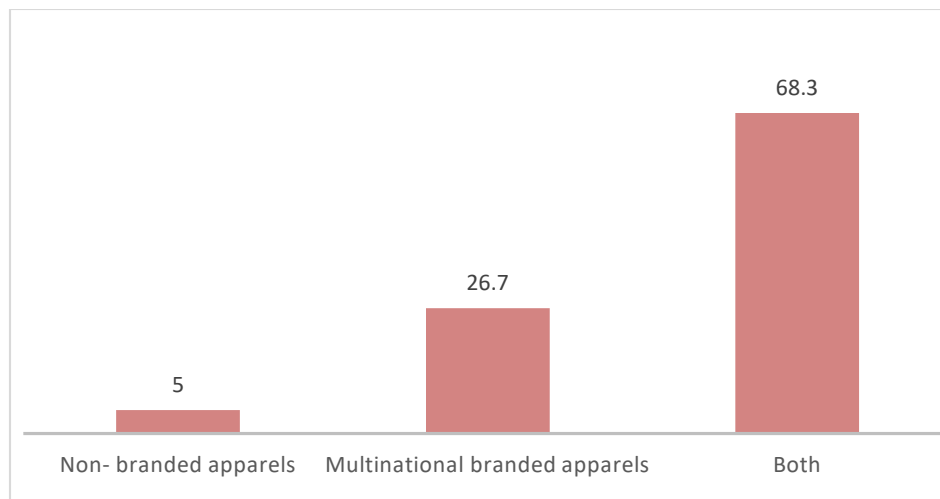| Preference	Frequency	Percent
Non- branded apparels	3	5.0
Multinational branded apparels	16	26.7
Both	41	68.3
Total	**60**	**100.0**

figure 1.1: preference towards branded apparels (like levis, pepe-jeans).

The results from the above table and figure shows that majority of the respondents have given preference towards both multinational branded apparels and non-branded apparels. However, 26.7% respondents preferred multinational branded apparels which support our hypothesis that the consumers of Nainital district are well aware about multinational branded apparels.

Name	Extremely Familiar	Familiar	Moderately Familiar	Slightly Familiar	Not at All
Lee	14 (23.3)	**25 (41.7)**	10 (16.7)	8 (13.3)	3 (5.0)
Levis	**34 (56.7)**	23 (38.3)	3 (5.0)		
Arrow	13 (21.7)	**19 (31.7)**	15 (25.0)	6 (10.0)	7 (11.7)
Puma	**28 (46.7)**	25 (41.7)	5 (8.3)	2 (3.3)	
Adidas	**31 (51.7)**	25 (41.7)	4 (6.7)		
Nike	**33 (55.0)**	23 (38.3)	3 (5.0)	1 (1.7)	
Wrangler	14 (23.3)	**22 (36.7)**	14 (23.3)	3 (5.0)	7 (11.7)
Jockey	**37 (61.7)**	20 (33.3)	2 (3.3)	1 (1.7)	
Tommy Hilfiger	17 (28.3)	**21 (35.0)**	11 (18.3)	4 (6.7)	7 (11.7)
H&M	11 (18.3)	**20 (33.3)**	15 (25.0)	6 (10.0)	8 (13.3)
Zara	**21 (35.0)**	19 (31.7)	8 (13.3)	5 (8.3)	7 (11.7)
Pepe	15 (25.0)	**22 (36.7)**	7 (11.7)	8 (13.3)	8 (13.3)
Peter England	21 (35.0)	**26 (43.3)**	8 (13.3)	3 (5.0)	2 (3.3)
Park Avenue	20 (33.3)	**22 (36.7)**	12 (20.0)	4 (6.7)	2 (3.3)
United Colors of Benetton	**23 (38.3)**	22 (36.7)	5 (8.3)	3 (5.0)	7 (11.7)
Only	8 (13.3)	12 (20.0)	16 (26.7)	6 (10.0)	**18 (30.0)**
Vero Moda	11 (18.3)	10 (16.7)	**15 (25.0)**	11 (18.3)	13 (21.7)

Factors Affecting the Purchasing Decision towards Multinational Branded Apparels

In this section, the descriptive analysis was performed for the factors which affect the purchasing decision of consumer towards multinational brands. The mean score and SD of various factors have been calculated and the ranking was given to the obtained mean scores. The following table represents the analysis.

table 1.8: factors affecting the purchasing decision towards multinational branded apparels

Factors	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	Mean Score	SD	Ranking
Quality	3	5	4.617	0.5237	1
Variety of Product	1	5	4.150	0.8198	2
Uniqueness	1	5	4.083	0.9259	3
Brand Image	1	5	3.950	1.1112	4
Offers/ Discount	1	5	3.867	1.0163	5
Advertisement	1	5	3.650	1.0708	6
Status Symbol	1	5	3.600	1.2782	7
Peer Pressure	1	5	2.850	1.1020	8

*5 =Very Satisfied, **4** = Satisfied, **3** = Neutral, **2** = Dissatisfied, **1** = Extremely Dissatisfied

Quality is the most significant part of a solid brand and a quality item conveys unrivaled performance in the apparels market. The quality factor has over whelming reaction from the purchasers and has gotten the top position with the most noteworthy mean score 4.617.The accessibility of good types and designs under a particular brand name has an immediate bearing on the brand quality. This factor has positioned at the second position with mean score 4.150.In the branded apparels market, the products can be easily copied and improved. The uniqueness factor thus secured third position with mean 4.083. The brand image also plays a vital role in branded apparels market. This factor stands at fourth position. Offers/discount on branded apparels also increases their sales. This factor secured fifth position with mean score 3.867. The factors 'Advertisement' and' Status Symbol' registered mean scores of 3.640 and 3.600 respectively and the difference in the scores is very narrow. Peer pressure is the least factor with mean score 2.850.

Buying Decision for Branded Apparel Vs Demographic Factors

To understand the purchasing behavior of Individuals 11 statements have been included in the questionnaire. Each statement describes one aspect of perception. The opinions of respondents have been collected in Likert five-point scale. Studying all 11 statements has been repetitious and, in fact not mandatory too. So, factor analysis has been used to reduce variables into smaller number of manageable variables by exploring common dimensions available among the variables. The variable which had common response and high correlation were grouped under a common factor. Variables which do not have any significant effect have been suppressed. The reduced factors should be distinct from each other.

Firstly, factor analysis has been tested for the purpose of suitability of data using two tests, namely KMO test and Bartlett's test of Sphericity. Table 1.9 showed the KMO value obtained 0.616, which was indicative of good category. Therefore, sampling has been considered satisfactory and appropriate for further analysis. Hence factor Analysis can be carried out on the responses collected from the Respondents.

table 1.9: kmo and bartlett's test
source: spss output

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.616
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	159.396
	Df	55
	Sig.	0.000

In order to isolate the significant variables out and to determine the behavior factors influencing the purchasing decision in Branded apparel shopping, a factor analysis was carried out by using the exploratory factors analysis method. Varimax rotation together with Kaiser Criterion was used to classify and reduce the factors to interpretable components. There were 11 variables in the questionnaire. These 11 variables have been factorized with Varimax

Rotation to interpret and to determine which of the variables related to their group. Data have been subjected to principal component analysis, where these 11 statements are reduced to four principal components through varimax rotation.

table 1.10: identified factors with the factor loadings

Component	Initial Eigen values			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.89	26.347	26.347	2.245	20.412	20.412
2	1.90	17.359	43.706	1.909	17.352	37.764
3	1.41	12.901	56.607	1.873	17.029	54.793
4	1.13	10.282	66.889	1.331	12.096	66.889
5	0.92	8.412	75.301			
6	0.67	6.094	81.395			
7	0.53	4.874	86.268			
8	0.49	4.468	90.737			
9	0.41	3.760	94.497			
10	0.35	3.179	97.676			
11	0.25	2.324	100.000			

The statements with factor loading of 0.50 or higher have been clustered together to form separate constructs, as recommended by Hair *et al*.(2006). The result showed that out of 11 variables 4 variables explained over 66.889% of the total variances. The percentages of variance explained by factors 1 to 4 are 26.347, 17.359, 12.901 and 10.282 respectively. The rotated component matrix that was used to extract independent variables highly related to particular components has been performed. Orthogonal Varimax rotation together with the Kaiser Normalization was used to force the entries in the initial factor to be near 0 or 1. Such loadings show more clearly which variables go together and thus easily interpretable.

table 1.11: rotated component matrix

Rotated Component Matrix[a]				
	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Quality and Reliability	0.48	**0.64**	-0.10	0.04
Acknowledgement	**0.86**	0.01	0.17	0.05
Effect of Income Level	0.16	**0.76**	-0.15	0.08
Effect of Age	-0.04	0.09	**0.77**	0.12
Effect of Profession	-0.05	**0.76**	0.41	-0.07
High Status	**0.69**	0.28	0.29	0.15
Effect of Marital Status	0.26	-0.11	**0.82**	0.04
More Comfortable	**0.72**	0.13	-0.09	-0.22
Preference over Same Price of Local Brand	0.09	0.35	0.31	**-0.65**
Preference towards branded or non-branded apparels depend on the gender	-0.40	0.34	0.26	**0.57**
Buying products from multinational brand or a local shop.	0.14	0.13	0.26	**0.71**

The name of the factor statement and factor loading has been summarized in **Table 1.12**.

table 1.12: the grouping of various statements in four components.

S.NO.	Name of Factors	Statements	Factors Loading
1	**Factor 1**	1. Buying branded apparels help people in getting acknowledgment from their interest group? 2. Multinational brands are favored by consumers because they are correlated with high status? 3. Do you agree that branded apparels are more comfortable as compared to non-branded apparels?	0.86 0.69 0.72
2	**Factor 2**	1. In comparison to non-branded apparels, multinational branded apparels are anticipated to be highly exceptional in quality and reliable? 2. Do you think your income level affects your decision for buying branded or non-branded apparels? 3. Do you think your occupation level (the position you hold at your work place) & the profession you are into effect your buying decision?	0.64 0.76 0.76
3	**Factor 3**	1. Do you consider your age before choosing between branded or non-branded apparels? 2. Do you think your marital status affect your preference for branded or non-branded apparels?	0.77 0.82
4	**Factor 4**	1. If a multinational branded apparel and non-branded apparel (local shop) is priced same would you prefer multinational brand? 2. Do you think that preference towards branded or non-branded apparels depend on the gender (male or female) buying the apparel? 3. Do you consider your family and friends choices while buying products from multinational brand or a local shop (non-branded shop)?	-0.65 0.57 0.71

For better understanding these four factors are renamed. Factor 1 was renamed as ego, Factor 2 as lifestyle, factor 3 as course of life and Factor 4 as social norms. The new names include all the statements grouped under the factors.

Findings:

The consumers percentage of Nainital District preferring both multinational as well as non-branded apparels is high but in comparison to between non-branded and multinational branded apparels multinational branded apparels are preferred more. Thus, implying that if the retail outlets focus on proper promotion and advertisements then multinational branded apparels will be successful in gaining superiority over non-branded apparels in near future. Moreover, the consumers are pretty well aware about the existence of multinational branded apparels in the market and their familiarity for various multinational brands was also measured which revealed that out of 17 multinational brands consumers are fairly familiar with 15 brands. Quality is the most prominent factor affecting the consumer buying behaviour followed by other factors like attractive designs, convenience, uniqueness, brand image, offers, advertisement and status symbol respectively. Status symbol was the least important factor for the consumers thus indicating that the consumers of Nainital District are not influenced by the craze of status and only buy a product if they genuinely like it. Consumer's preference is also afflicted due to demographic factors, factors like- ego, lifestyle, course of life, and social norms highly target consumer's preference for multinational branded apparels.

Conclusion:

Consumer's predilection is increasing for multinational branded apparels; their focus on receiving acceptance from society in terms of brands they are wearing is expanding. Multinational branded apparels which were a new concept few years back for the consumers of Nainital District is now becoming a familiar conception. Consumers prefer experimenting with their looks thus they focus on design and uniqueness of the apparel. Advertisement is not an effective tool to attract the consumers as they do not focus on it. The companies can increase their customer base if it stays loyal to the quality of the apparel delivered. By providing more enticing and consumer friendly promotional offers firms can expand the demand for the apparels. The apparel market of Nanital District hold vast opportunities for the firms as it is yet an unexplored market.

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