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A STUDY ON EFFECT OF CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT TOWARDS CLOTHING BRAND - PANTALOONS

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the effectiveness of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) practices adopted by Pantaloons, one of India's leading fashion retail chains under Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Ltd. (ABFRL), on customer satisfaction and loyalty. Data were collected from 200 respondents in Chennai through a structured questionnaire administered via Google Forms. Descriptive statistics, chi-square tests, and one-way ANOVA were employed to analyze the relationships between demographic variables and CRM-related outcomes. Results indicate that demographic factors such as age, area of residence, educational qualification, occupation, and monthly income are significantly associated with customer satisfaction levels, while gender shows no significant association. ANOVA further confirms significant differences in the effectiveness of CRM strategies across all demographic subgroups. The findings underline the need for Pantaloons to adopt more personalized, data-driven, and digitally enhanced CRM strategies to strengthen customer relationships in an increasingly competitive retail environment.

Keywords: *Customer Relationship Management, Customer Satisfaction, Pantaloons, Retail Industry, ANOVA, Chi-Square*

1. INTRODUCTION

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) refers to the strategies, technologies, and practices used by organizations to manage and analyze customer interactions throughout the customer lifecycle. The primary goal is to improve customer service relationships, retain customers, and drive sales growth. In the retail sector, CRM plays a crucial role in understanding customer preferences, purchase behavior, and feedback.

Pantaloons, one of India's leading fashion retail chains, is a division of Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Ltd. (ABFRL). Founded in 1997 with its first store at Gariahat, Kolkata, Pantaloons has grown into one of the fastest-growing lifestyle apparel destinations in India, operating over 400 stores across 190 cities. The brand adopts CRM practices such as loyalty programs, personalized promotions, and customer feedback systems to enhance customer satisfaction and brand loyalty.

With increasing competition in the retail industry, effective CRM helps Pantaloons maintain long-term relationships with customers while improving overall business performance. The present study evaluates whether the existing CRM practices of Pantaloons are effective in meeting customer expectations and retaining customers in a competitive market.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Rikita Sinha and Dr. Anil Sharma (2025) conducted a case study on the effectiveness of CRM in the retail industry with reference to Pantaloons in Vadodara. They found that a well-managed CRM strategy ensures higher customer engagement, retention, and satisfaction, ultimately contributing to increased store footfalls and revenue generation.

Tushar Tomar (2025) studied customer satisfaction and marketing at Pantaloons, highlighting that the competitive retail market requires continuous understanding of consumer preferences. The study used primary and secondary data collection methods and described the retail market in India as highly competitive due to rising middle-income consumers and changing consumption patterns.

Nilima Das (2024) measured customer satisfaction at Pantaloons, Bhubaneswar Patia, and found that despite some shortcomings, customers continued to visit Pantaloons and enjoyed their shopping experience. The study applied a gap analysis between customer expectations and perceptions.

Ms. Swarali Keshav Dhawale (2023) examined customer preference and satisfaction at Pantaloons, Pune, and concluded that Pantaloons' diverse product range and vibrant store experience make it a preferred fashion destination. The study called for a stronger focus on customer preferences to further boost sales.

Mehrun Nisha (2023) studied CRM practices at Zara and found that while customers trust the brand, improvements in quality, pricing, and staff behavior are desired. Saravanan and Brindha Devi (2024) found Amazon to be the most preferred platform among online shoppers in Chennai, with electronics as the most frequently purchased category, indicating a growing preference for digital retail channels.

Earlier studies by S M Sohel Rana and Abdullah Osman (2014), Dr. P.C.S. Rajaram and Mr. V.P. Sriram (2014), and Ligo Koshy and S. John Manohar (2014) collectively established that responsiveness, product quality, pricing, physical design, and service quality are primary determinants of customer satisfaction in organized retail.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The study employs a descriptive research design. Both primary and secondary data were utilized. Primary data were gathered through a structured questionnaire, while secondary data were sourced from books, journals, and websites.

3.2 Sampling

Convenient sampling was adopted. The sample size consisted of 200 respondents drawn from Chennai city. The questionnaire was distributed through Google Forms during the period January 2026 to March 2026.

3.3 Statistical Tools

The following statistical techniques were applied to analyze the data:

- Percentage Analysis – to describe the distribution of responses
- Chi-Square Test – to examine associations between demographic variables and customer satisfaction
- One-Way ANOVA – to determine the influence of demographic factors on the perceived effectiveness of CRM strategies

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Demographic Profile

The sample comprised 120 males (60%) and 80 females (40%). The dominant age group was 15–20 years (60%), followed by respondents below 15 years and 20–25 years (15% each). Fifty percent of respondents resided in rural areas, 45% in urban areas, and 5% in semi-urban areas. Postgraduates formed the largest educational segment (35%), and the majority were employed in the public sector (35%). Monthly income for 45% of respondents ranged between Rs. 10,001 and Rs. 15,000.

4.2 Awareness and Usage

Social media was the primary source through which 60% of respondents learned about Pantaloons. Weekly shopping was reported by 75% of respondents, indicating a high frequency of engagement. Sixty-eight percent had used Pantaloons' loyalty programs, and 58% primarily interacted with the brand in-store.

Table 1: Summary of Demographic and Usage Profile

| Variable | Category / Majority | Percentage (%) |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Gender | Male | 60% |
| Age Group | 15–20 years | 60% |
| Area of Residence | Rural | 50% |
| Education | Post Graduate | 35% |
| Occupation | Public Sector | 35% |
| Monthly Income | Rs. 10,001–15,000 | 45% |
| Awareness Channel | Social Media | 60% |
| Shopping Frequency | Weekly | 75% |
| Loyalty Program Usage | Yes | 68% |
| Primary Interaction Channel | In-store | 58% |

4.3 Chi-Square Analysis

Chi-square tests were conducted to examine the association between demographic variables and customer satisfaction levels (High, Moderate, Low) with services and support at Pantaloons.

Table 2: Chi-Square Test Results

| Variable | χ^2 Value | df | Table Value (5%) | Result |
|-------------------|----------------|----|------------------|-------------------------|
| Gender | 5.556 | 2 | 5.991 | H ₀ Accepted |
| Age | 40.509 | 6 | 12.592 | H ₀ Rejected |
| Area of Residence | 40.741 | 4 | 9.488 | H ₀ Rejected |
| Education | 69.742 | 6 | 12.592 | H ₀ Rejected |
| Occupation | 29.742 | 6 | 12.592 | H ₀ Rejected |
| Monthly Income | 68.783 | 6 | 12.592 | H ₀ Rejected |

The chi-square results reveal that all demographic variables except gender show a statistically significant association with customer satisfaction. Gender yielded a calculated χ^2 of 5.556 against a table value of 5.991, indicating no significant difference in satisfaction levels between male and female respondents. However, age ($\chi^2 = 40.509$), area of residence ($\chi^2 = 40.741$), educational qualification ($\chi^2 = 69.742$), occupation ($\chi^2 = 29.742$), and monthly income ($\chi^2 = 68.783$) all significantly exceeded their respective critical values, confirming strong associations with satisfaction.

4.4 ANOVA Analysis

One-way ANOVA was applied to assess the influence of demographic variables on the perceived effectiveness of CRM strategies used by Pantaloons to engage customers.

Table 3: ANOVA Results – CRM Strategy Effectiveness vs. Demographics

| Variable | Between SS | F Value | Sig. | Result |
|-------------------|------------|---------|-------|-------------|
| Gender | 8.250 | 20.443 | 0.000 | Significant |
| Age | 14.250 | 11.920 | 0.000 | Significant |
| Area of Residence | 3.000 | 4.546 | 0.012 | Significant |
| Education | 68.000 | 34.526 | 0.000 | Significant |
| Monthly Income | 11.500 | 6.364 | 0.002 | Significant |

All ANOVA results returned p-values below 0.05, confirming statistically significant differences in the mean scores of perceived CRM effectiveness across gender ($F = 20.443$, $p = 0.000$), age ($F = 11.920$, $p = 0.000$), area of residence ($F = 4.546$, $p = 0.012$), educational qualification ($F = 34.526$, $p = 0.000$), and monthly income ($F = 6.364$, $p = 0.002$). These results indicate that demographic factors meaningfully influence how customers perceive and respond to Pantaloons' CRM strategies.

5. FINDINGS

5.1 Descriptive Findings

- The majority of respondents (60%) were male, aged between 15 and 20 years.
- Social media is the dominant channel (60%) through which customers discover Pantaloons.
- A remarkably high 75% of respondents shopped at Pantaloons weekly, indicating strong habitual engagement.
- Sixty-eight percent participated in the Pantaloons loyalty program, and 58% primarily interacted in-store.

5.2 Statistical Findings

- Gender is not significantly associated with customer satisfaction ($\chi^2 = 5.556 < \text{critical } 5.991$), suggesting comparable satisfaction levels across gender.
- Age, area of residence, education, occupation, and monthly income are all significantly associated with customer satisfaction levels.
- ANOVA confirms that all tested demographic factors significantly influence perceived CRM effectiveness (all $p < 0.05$).
- Educational qualification shows the strongest ANOVA result ($F = 34.526$), indicating it is a key differentiator in how CRM strategies are perceived.

6. DISCUSSION

The high weekly shopping frequency (75%) suggests that Pantaloons has successfully cultivated habitual shopping behavior among its customer base, particularly among younger demographics aged 15–20 years. The dominance of social media as the primary discovery channel reflects a digitally active customer segment, presenting significant opportunities for targeted digital CRM initiatives.

The absence of a gender-based difference in satisfaction aligns with Pantaloons' positioning as a fashion destination for all demographics, with a broad product assortment catering equally to men and women. However, the significant associations with age, residence, education, and income underscore that CRM strategies must be differentiated to serve diverse customer segments effectively.

The strong ANOVA results for educational qualification ($F = 34.526$) suggest that more educated customers evaluate CRM strategies more critically, potentially expecting higher personalization, transparency, and digital sophistication. Income-based variation ($F = 6.364$) similarly implies that higher-income segments may expect more premium CRM experiences.

7. SUGGESTIONS

- Enhance personalization using customer purchase history and behavioral analytics to deliver more targeted offers.
- Strengthen digital CRM capabilities through an improved mobile app, virtual try-on simulators, and AI-powered recommendations to engage the growing segment of online shoppers.
- Redesign loyalty programs to offer clearer, more attractive rewards that cater to diverse income segments.
- Invest in staff training to ensure consistent, high-quality in-store service experiences, particularly given that 58% of customers interact in-store.
- Leverage influencer marketing and social media campaigns to capitalize on the social media-driven discovery trend.
- Implement AI-based CRM tools for better data analysis, customer segmentation, and proactive communication strategies.
- Collect and act on customer feedback regularly to close service quality gaps identified by different demographic groups.

8. CONCLUSION

This study establishes that Customer Relationship Management is a vital lever for sustaining growth and customer loyalty in India's competitive fashion retail sector. Pantaloons has achieved notable success through its loyalty programs, in-store engagement, and social media presence. However, significant demographic variation in CRM effectiveness and customer satisfaction signals the need for more granular, segment-specific CRM strategies.

An effective CRM system not only increases customer satisfaction but also enhances brand loyalty and profitability. By harnessing advanced technologies, deepening digital engagement, and delivering personalized customer experiences, Pantaloons is well-positioned to consolidate its leadership in the Indian fashion retail market.

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