

A STUDY OF CUSTOMER PERCEPTION OF YOUTH TOWARDS BRANDED FASHION APPARELS IN DILLA TOWN ,ETHIOPIA

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Abstract:

As in this competition era, from business point of view, we must be aware about the customer needs & wants and what a consumer expects from a company. We should have this information or a customer database if we want to stay in the market and to develop a competitive edge in the market. After conducting this study we must be able to understand what customers want from a brand, why they switches to other brand, what are the factors which force them to purchase branded apparels. By analyzing these, company can formulate the strategies as per the customer needs & deliver them the products which consumer wants from the company, which will be profitable for the company. The relationship between consumers' decision-making styles and their choice between branded and non-branded clothing is investigated using a sample of consumers of Dilla Town only. The purpose of our research is to investigate youth of Dilla Town to examine if any factor dominates in their buying behavior for apparel. In addition, consumer attributes (i.e., apparel involvement, brand consciousness, reference group, social class, and other factors) and personal characteristics were investigated separately and in relation to the purchase behavior of youth.

Introduction

The Ethiopian customer has undergone a remarkable transformation. Just a decade or two ago, the Ethiopian customer saved most of his income, purchased the bare necessities and rarely indulged himself in expensive clothing's. Today, armed with a higher income, credit cards, exposure to the shopping culture of the west and a desire to improve his standard of living, the Ethiopian consumer is spending like never before. Most customers' preferences change according to the change in fashion. Most consumers have grown up with television, the Internet, and have been exposed to the standards of living and consumer culture abroad. This generation is also making money at a younger age. As a result they are ready to spend most, if not all of their income on apparel, accessories, and electronics.

Apparels Fashion

The apparel fashion plays a paramount role in shaping apparel consumerism. As lifestyles change, fashion in Ethiopia is becoming more diversified, as in the Western countries.

Technology, ideas and lifestyles are moving concurrently and quickly. Companies and brands that offered monotonous and mundane products for years, have now multiplied their product ranges and new appealing styles, shapes and forms are being launched each season by them.

Identification of the role of apparel as a sign of business success is not a new concept. A review of related literature revealed that self-image/product image congruity was related to an individual's behavior to a particular item and that apparel products had symbolic meaning. Studies have considered the relationship between the self and apparel and have taken into account the various aspects of the self such as actual self-image and ideal self-image. If the image of an outfit were a positive match with the self-image, including both the actual self and the ideal self, the apparel item would be worn most of the time.

Statement of problem

The most important statement is to identify the need of customers, what kind of apparels they

like to wear. As we know that market, segmentation has become an important tool used by retailers and marketers for identifying target customers. Segmentation is the process of partitioning markets into segments of potential customers who have similar characteristics and who are likely to exhibit similar purchasing behavior. Segmentation has become a major tool of companies for planning marketing strategies. Segmentation research has several objectives that include analyzing markets, finding a niche, and developing and capitalizing on a superior competitive position.

This research investigates:

Those factors that affect customer perception in choosing the fashionable apparels Cultural factors such as apparel involvement, media, and reference group influences, self-esteem, and social class. It also investigates demographics such as income and age.

Do cultural influences, how much money they earn, and their age make a difference in their apparel choices? Do they let their peers choose their clothes or do they make these choices on their own?

Review of literature:

Fernandez, P. (2009), focuses on the impact of branding on youth in choice of clothing as it is hypothesized that they are brand conscious. He suggests that brand conscious is the right choice of clothing, which helps them create an image and identity for themselves. Peer influence plays a crucial role in their choice of brands as it aids in their socialization process. In addition, advertising is an important variable in conferring brand values and establishing an image for the brand. Celebrity endorsements have a huge impact on branded clothing too as they promote certain attributes like image, quality and status. The researcher recommends that to retain loyalty of youth, brand managers need to build an emotional attachment to make the brand special and bring lasting competitive advantage. Additionally, advertising should be used to not only create awareness but influence brand image and preference.

Khare, A. (2010), suggested that in developing countries, consumers are becoming conscious of fashion brands. He was directed towards understanding the determinants of fashion clothing involvement of Ethiopian youth. He researched on Youths of Ethiopian colleges to understand the importance of fashion apparels in their lives.. The results show that Ethiopian youth is involved with branded fashion wear. There was not much significant difference in the involvement of females and males towards fashion clothing.

Verma, A.P. and Tiwari, K(2011) covered the medium to high potential consumers that international and national brands can target in the Ethiopian context. This study measures the segment values of some brands those have achieve success in the Indian market. Study shows that people are becoming mere brand conscious with the increase in income level. Brands and individuals would do well to understand the finer aspects of the scenario, and venture out to capitalize on the opportunities.

Yin, H.S. and Susan, S. (2012) this study examine the purchase preferences towards foreign and domestic branded apparels. It was found that preferences towards foreign branded apparels are related to the level of purchasing power and is not related to the demographics variables. 58% of the students surveyed preferred foreign branded apparel. There is a positive relationship between media influence and preferences towards foreign/domestic branded apparels. The more a person is exposed to the media, the stronger will be the influence of the media in “persuading” the individual to purchase the apparel.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

Objectives of this research study are:

- To study & analyze the brand preference of youth in buying branded apparels in Dilla Town.

- To study the factors which influence the buying behavior of youth for branded apparels
- To study the impact of branded apparels on the youth

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Data Sources:

In dealing with any real life problem, it is often found that data at hand are inadequate, and hence, it becomes necessary to collect data that are appropriate. We have chosen following methods:

- a) Primary data: These are those data, which are collected afresh and for the first time, and thus happen to be original in character. We have used the structured questioners.
- b) Secondary data: These are those which have already been collected by someone else and which have already been passed through the statistical process. We collect the data from the sources like internet, published data etc.

Population of the study :

This Study was conducted at the Dilla Town, Ethiopia.

Sampling Size:

It is the total number of respondents targeted for collecting the data for the research. We have taken sample size of 200 respondents for our research.

Sampling Technique:

Random sampling technique is used in this research project.

Data Analysis:

We entered the daily data into MS-Excel sheets. After the exhaustion of the specified geographical area, this data has analyzed using the different inbuilt formulae of Microsoft excel this will also help us in making the simple graphical and tabulation techniques. This data will help us in analyzing the outcome of the research.

Tools used for research

As the research is exploratory so the tool used for analyzing the data that can be collected from questionnaires is Factor Analysis and other

primary tools needed for questionnaire design and data collection. We use factor analysis to check the impact of different factors of customers that leads to buy or switch the brand.. Factor analysis attempts to represent the correlations between variables as closely as possible with the fewest number of factors.

Analysis:

Factor 1 includes four variables

1. Do you think that when new styles of apparel appear on the market, you are the one who first buy them?
2. Do you wear Brand clothes to impress people?
3. Would you buy branded apparel in place of non-branded apparel regardless of the high prices?
4. Do you buy branded apparels only because you want to look more attractive?

Factor 1 can be renamed as **Brand Conscious**

	S1	S2	S3	S4
Never	37	35	16	24
Not very often	55	41	25	43
Neutral	56	57	73	48
Usually	34	42	56	52
Always	18	25	30	33

Analysis: Most of the people have shown their consent that they usually wear or are neutral regarding the wearing of branded clothes to impress people. 65% people are saying that they usually prefer or are neutral towards the price of branded clothes i,e high price is not an issue for them. Most of the people show their consent that they wear branded clothes to look attractive. It can be revealed that people wear branded clothes to look attractive and to impress people. Price of branded clothes is not a big issue for people. People prefer branded clothes over non-branded regardless of high price.

Factor 2 includes 5 variables

1. Do you buy well-known brands only

2. Do you feel different when you wear different clothes?
3. How much knowledge do you have about the International /National Brands of Apparels?
4. Do you buy branded clothes only because you get value for the money you spend?
5. Do you prefer to buy branded apparels because you are happy with the quality of that particular brand?

The factor can be named as **Value and Quality Seekers**

Responses of Value and Quality Seekers factor

	S5	S5	S6	S7	S8
Never	10	9	11	20	9
Not very often	11	12	19	32	9
Neutral	71	43	57	55	39
Usually	77	71	76	56	84
Always	31	65	37	37	59

Analysis: Most of the people say that they buy well-known branded clothes, they feel different when they wear different clothes, they have much knowledge regarding branded clothes, they buy branded clothes because they provide them more value and they buy them because of their good quality. From this factor we conclude that people buy branded clothes because they provide more value for money and because of their good quality. Knowledge regarding the brands is also good.

Factor 3 includes 3 variables

1. How much importance you are giving to wear fashionable clothes?
2. How much excitement you are getting in purchasing new clothes?
3. Do you purchase clothes because you get bored with wearing the same type of clothes all the time?

The factor can be named as Trendy Responses of **Trendy factor**

	S9	S10	S11

Never	3	4	21
Not very often	11	8	27
Neutral	40	30	46
Usually	89	64	61
Always	57	94	45

Analysis:

Most of the people show their consent that they give much importance to wear fashionable clothes, they are excited to buy new clothes and that they buy clothes because they get bored by wearing the same type of clothes. From this factor we conclude that wearing the same type of clothes makes them bored. They like to wear new and fashionable clothes.

Factor 4 includes 3 variables

1. Do you think that brand ambassadors used by the company have any impact on your Brand preference?
2. Do you think that your brand gives you recognition?
3. Do you think that branded clothes give you more comfort than non-branded clothes?

The factor can be named as Reasons for Buying Responses of Reasons for buying factor

	S12	S13	S14
Never	35	16	21
Not very often	36	14	18
Neutral	52	68	42
Usually	44	70	60
Always	33	32	59

Analysis:

Most of the people have shown that the brand ambassador doesn't influence their decision so much, that they usually get recognized because of branded clothes and it gives them more comfort to wear branded clothes. From this factor we conclude that they wear branded clothes because of comfort and recognition that they give. Promotion of the brand by a well-known personality hardly affects their decision.

Factor 5 includes 4 variables

1. Would you like to switch the brand when others are giving you better offers?
2. Do you change your brand by looking on new offers?
3. Do you think that it is the style and design of the product that motivates you to buy the branded apparel?
4. Do you have more self-confidence when you wear Branded clothes of your choice?

The factor can be named as Brand Loyalty Responses of **Brand Loyalty factor**

	S15	S16	S17	S18
Never	17	22	5	16
Not very often	18	26	15	16
Neutral	54	57	43	48
Usually	59	62	77	63
Always	52	33	60	57

Analysis: This factor shows that people are less loyal towards the branded clothes. People get influenced by price offers, design and style of products to change the brand. From this factor we conclude that price, design and style change the loyalty of people towards a particular brand

Factor 6 includes 2 variables

1. Are you being, pressurized by Latest fashion to change the brand?
2. Are you being, influenced by family/friends to wear new apparels?

The factor can be named as **Influencers** Responses of Influencers factor

	S19	S20
Never	25	27
Not very often	38	37
Neutral	67	56
Usually	54	55
Always	16	25

Analysis: Factor shows that people get influenced by new fashion but not always. They get influenced in the range of neutral to usually.

Most of the people usually get influenced by friends and family. From this factor we conclude that fashion, family and friends influence the choice of brand

FINDINGS :

- ✓ People wear branded clothes to look attractive and to impress people
- ✓ Price of branded clothes is not a big issue for people.
- ✓ People prefer branded clothes over non-branded regardless of high price.
- ✓ People buy branded clothes because they provide more value for money and because of their good quality.
- ✓ Wearing the same type of clothes makes people bored. They like to wear new and fashionable clothes. People wear branded clothes because of comfort and recognition that they give.
- ✓ Promotion of the brand by a well-known personality hardly affects the decision.→
- ✓ People are less loyal towards the branded clothes.
- ✓ People get influenced by price offers, design and style of products to change the brand.
- ✓ Fashion, family and friends influence the choice of brand.

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