



Garment Purchase – Factors responsible for the “Need turned Greed”

KEYWORDS

Garments, Greed, Demand drivers

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ABSTRACT Clothes, which are considered as basic need has crossed various stages of need from social, esteem to self actualization. Today, the drivers for demand for garment purchase are beyond the basic intention. This review article analyses various factors which drives people to purchase garments more than their requirement. This article emphasizes on the significance of various factors which play a major role in increasing the greed of customers towards purchasing garments. Demand drivers are found different for various demographic segments and interestingly, brands are playing emotionally to attract customers than targeting them with benefit segmentation. Today, garments are purchased to satisfy social and ego needs and the emotional cues in purchasing garments are also playing a major role in garment industry.

Introduction:

Recently, a tamil talk show, named “Neeya Naana”, had topic for discussion, titled “Ladies who have more than 200 sarees in their wardrobe”. Crazy for clothes are in an upward swing and there are various reasons behind that. In that show, it was said that ladies purchase clothes without any valid reason and they feel good about having more sarees. With an increasing purchasing power of customers and with the industry’s innovative technical and engineering incorporation, demand for garment is growing up with an annual rate of 8 to 12 percent. Apparel industry is the second largest contributor in retail sector, next to food and groceries. With the increase in disposable income and with larger population, India remains as the attractive sector for retail business, shares economic survey 2014- 15. It also says that 58.5 % of Indian population is below 30 years and 31.1 percent of it is residing in urban areas with an increasing disposable income. With the technology proliferation, online selling has emerged as another turning point in the retail sales, accounting for 8% of the total retail market. (Fibre2fashion, 2015)

Clothes, in the mind of consumers:

Clothes, which once were the part of the personality, now became a status symbol for many. Everyone is in the verge of creating a unique identity for them through clothes. Clothes define the character, be it “English vinglish” sridevi or Chennai express “Deepika Padukone. Clothes define the region, character and thought process of a person. Clothes is another language through which everybody speaks. It also reveals the information about the society in which we live and the era in which we live.(Shuk–Ching Liu, 2009) As the phenomenon for clothing has changed broadly from day to day clothing to personality oriented or profession oriented clothing, consumers’ purchasing behavior towards clothing is also showing lots of modifications. The process of cloth purchasing has witnessed various phases and there are many significant factors which affects the purchasing behavior of consumers.

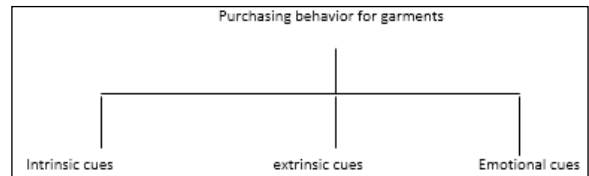


Fig. 1. Factors affecting consumer behavior towards purchasing garments.

Intrinsic Cues:

Many research studies have found that consumers have the habit of impulsive purchasing, when they visit malls. (Mogelonsky, 1998; Nichols, 2001).The fast information sharing process and the globalised trends fuels consumers to shop more. (Hoffman, 2007).According to previous studies colour, fit, fabric quality, style, workmanship etc., are some of the intrinsic cues that customers consider while purchasing clothes. When it comes to daily wear, a cue like durability may be important. When customers consider party wear or office wear clothes, the priority may differ. For example, in selecting Jeans, customers consider fit and fabric as important intrinsic cues than any other. (Zhang, 2002). Generally, people give more importance to comfort and fit.(Zhang, 2002) It includes the feel of the fabric when we wear, ease in maintenance and suitability of the fabric with our body structure. Colour, weight of the fabric and the appearance are other important cues, which are considered commonly by people before purchasing clothes. As me too products have occupied the market to a larger extent, people giving importance of intrinsic cues is in high swing than the extrinsic cues.

Extrinsic cues

Common extrinsic cues are brand name, price, packaging and COO(Country of Origin). When the other cues are present, in market place, consumers give least importance to COO in product evaluation.(Zafar U.Ahmed et al, 2004). Wall et al (1991) found that consumers give more importance to price than COO in evaluating basic commodities. All these studies say about the importance of such extrinsic cues in deciding purchase intentions for a brand. In the

present competitive era, there are so many me-too brands for consumers at an affordable price. Brand familiarity leads to a positive impact on leading brands and me-too products also. So, it is very clear that, in today scenario, the me-too competitors also have equal opportunity to gain consumer attention. The perceived quality and brand familiarity of all the brands are equal, as consumers shop around and analyze the quality of different brands.(Phau, 2013). As the information sources are in plenty today, consumers are aware that many generic versions too have similar quality of a leading brand. Further research is needed to understand the reasons behind the actual purchase of such me-too brands or local brands or store brands, which are not in the evoked set of customers.

As far as extrinsic cues are concerned, price stands as significant criteria in purchasing decisions, whereas the importance of other cues is different from place to place and country to country. (Sanjeev Agarwal, 2004). They have concluded in their research work that transferring or applying such market research work across various cultural borders is risky. Customers do check the price suitability for the garments they usually purchase and for occasional wears. They are admitting that lower priced products lack certain intrinsic values like durability and quality.(Veronica Gabrielle, 2013) Thus, the external factors and its influence change largely and has a link with other cues, when researched in various geographic locations.

With increasing globalization and information awareness, people giving importance for COO is increasing. The weightage of the factors vary from country to country. A study says that Chinese consumers give more importance for COO and consider heavily the products produced outside china. (Mc Donald, 1995)

As far as brand name is concerned, many marketers concentrate on creating trust for their brand. But, the prime mantra for success is to eliminate distrust associated with brands. Purchased intensions are influenced greatly by marketer distrust. Particularly, Chinese consumers have no trust towards the quality and safety of domestic products. Thus distrust on domestic products leads to increase in sales of imported products (Jan-Eun Chung et al, 2012). So, further research is required to find out the reasons behind foreign country products. Other extrinsic cues are promotions and TV commercials. When people are exposed to various marketing tools like mails, store displays, TVCs, it actually increases the exposure to clothes, which in turn increases the chances of purchasing.(Dawson, 2010) . Interestingly, displays in shops and TV commercials play a role of reminder in many cases. That is the prime reason for success of Malls. When we see certain products, we either realize the need of it or will feel better to possess it. So, customers recollect the elapsed needs after watching the commercials or the products.(stillley, 2010). There is a lack in market research studies to find out the difference in significance level of these factors for various age groups (Peter Hulten., 2014).

On the other hand, online purchasing increases the rate of cloth purchasing and there are many online shops like yepme .com to attract consumers towards purchasing clothes. As clothes are sensory products and websites cannot provide the physical presence of products to check the texture, feel etc., online shops should concentrate on providing superior information or customization to compensate it.(Cho, 2002). Online buyers are not satisfied with the information they receive or the cost they pay for

sensory products like clothes through online, as they have to spend more time and efforts for information search. (Yooncheong Cho., 2003)

Emotional cues:

Emotional cues are strange, as they depend on the mood of the consumer. It affects the consumers in their subconscious mind and provide a motivation to select a product or service, as they feel positive and good about the same. (Williamson.M, 2002). A positive feeling may be due to internal factors like elevated mood or external factors like better shopping atmosphere. Emotional cues affect consumers purchase behavior to a larger extent and marketers always try to decode and match their products or services artificially. Time spent on stores and the purchasing decision depends largely on the depth of belief created in the mind of consumers about the store atmosphere or on the products.(Steol, 2004). Interestingly, the attitude toward store atmosphere largely depends on social expectations too. A mannequin which is not decently dressed leads to negative feeling towards the store, shares a research study. (Dery Law., 2012).

Emotional cues also include the mood management of consumers. Many times, people purchase clothes to reward themselves. Coming in a new cloth elevates the mood of people. Women are more excited to purchase clothes than men.(Amenda Coley, 2003). Significance of emotional changes is based on gender and it was proved that women are more impulsive in purchasing apparels and cosmetics, whereas men are more impulsive in purchasing hardware, technical products and entertainment related products.(Amenda Coley, 2003)

With online shops, the emotional factors started playing a pivotal role in the purchasing behavior of consumers. Internet is turned as a convenient purchasing channel and it induces people to purchase impulsively. (Phau and Lo, 2004).

Conclusion:

With growing technology and fashion, factors affecting garment purchasing behavior has become endless. There are lots of variations in the influence of factors in different regions through various modes of purchase. Indepth research studies are therefore needed to analyse the factors and to support marketers to entice various segments of consumers.

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