



BRANDING TOWARDS CUSTOMER LOYALTY ON APPARELS BY THE CUSTOMERS OF SELECTED CITIES OF TAMILNADU

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ABSTRACT

The Indian retail industry has enormous growth over the last decade with an evident shift towards organized retailing formats. The industry is inspiring towards a modern concept of retailing. The Indian Retail sector is an emerging one, which is expected to emphasize a promising growth. The Indian textile and apparel industry is one of the largest in the world which offers huge employment openings domestically and there is also a great demand for Indian textiles and apparel in foreign markets. In this study an attempt is made to study the branding towards customer loyalty and its related factors. Also, this study attempts to test the significance of socio-economic characteristics of customers towards the factors of customer loyalty.

Key words: Customer loyalty, Apparel, Branding.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The apparel industries dwell in a unique and vital position in India. Apparel industry is one of the most basic industries to arrive into existence in the country. Apparel industry provides the most fundamental necessities of people and grasps the value of the extended development for quality of life improvement. Value addition is added in every stage of production up to the delivery of the products to the end consumer. This sector has established a major contributor to the National Income of India.

When the customer purchases the similar products and services again and again with commitment feeling consistently over a period of time and they deeply held committed to re-

buy the same brand in future is known as customer loyalty which is one of the significant factor among the other factors of a company's success (Gopinath, 2019a). Customer loyalty relates to the overall spending power of customers. In short, it is the money-saving offers. Brand loyalty on the other hand not concerned about the money but how the consumers perceive about a particular brand.

The customer loyalty is termed as customer commitment to do business with particular organization, purchasing their goods and services repeatedly and recommending the products and services to friends, acquaintances and associates. Loyalty is more than just repeat purchase.

Customer switching has become a key issue at the recent competitive business environment (Gopinath, 2019b). It is a decisive factor to deal with the issue why customers leave a retail store without making a purchase. (Keaveney, 1995; Vyas & Raitani, 2014; Lianjv & Xin, 2014; Usharani & Gopinath, 2020b; Manrai & Manrai, 2015). customer switching has been received a considerable attention in the consumer behaviour studies. since marketers face a huge challenge for their long-term survival and growth due to this high tendency of customer switching.

Brand switching reveals that a customer switch from one branded apparel to other brands due to various reasons. Since this has become a key issue, this study attempts to identify the factors affecting switching decisions in the field of apparel industry. Kurt Salmon Associates (2000) has identified ten factors such as cannot find the quality items, cannot find an appealing style, cannot find the right size, the item is out of stock, nothing fits, no sales help is available, cannot get in and out of the store easily, prices are too high, in-store experience is stressful, cannot find a good value, store is not merchandised conveniently, seasonality is off which influence on customer switching without making purchases

1.1. Research design

The research design has been drawn by briefing the objectives of the study, methodology of the study, sampling techniques, and tools used for data collection. Statistical tools used limitations of the study and chapter scheme.

1.2. Objectives of the Study

- (i) To study the socio-economic characteristics of customers of apparels in selected cities in Tamilnadu
- (ii) To analyse the factors of branding towards customer loyalty on trending fashion.
- (iii) To test the significance between the demographic, profile characteristics and factors determining branding and customer loyalty.

1.3. Methodology

The present study is carried out only on the selected city of Tamilnadu. The present study is based on the data pertaining study is based on the data obtained from the customers. The study area is restricted to major cities of Tamilnadu such as Chennai, Coimbatore, Tiruchirappalli and Madurai.

These two cities were selected on the basis of trending fashion. In order to analysis the brand trust, the sample of 695 customers was selected using stratified random sampling method.

1.4. Source of Data

To draw useful inference about brand trust the required data were collected through both primary and secondary sources. The primary data were collected from the customers through a

structure interview schedule. The other related secondary data and information regarding the meaning, concept were collected from the books, periodical and journals.

1.5. Limitation of the study

Due to time and cost constrain the study area is restricted to only the major cities such as Chennai, Coimbatore, Tiruchirappalli and Madurai of Tamil Nadu.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Michaelidou, Nina & Dibb, Sally. (2009) explored the similarity perceptions on brand-switching propensity in clothing purchases and the impact of internal factors such as variety-seeking drive, loyalty, involvement, perceived risk, pleasure using multiple-regression. From the model, the result explains that five internal factors including involvement, perceived risk, loyalty and variety-seeking drive have an impact on brand switching propensity. The results emphasize that very anxious and loyal consumers are expected to confirm brand-switching propensities in their clothing purchases, thus buying from a repertoire of brands and stores. These findings entail that retailers should make sure that their clothing brands or stores are among those in the multi-brand repertoire of the consumer.

Karunaratna (2015) endeavored to present an approach to recognize the major factors which influence customer switching in apparel stores and understand the customer switching behaviour. Clothing has happen to a key prerequisite for all customers in this modern society. Customers become loyal to specific apparel store/s to select their preferred brand, cloth, design etc, so that they can get pleasure from the purchase in choosing preferred clothing items. This study tried to find out the factors which cause customer switching in apparel stores. The research study was conducted in the textile shops in the city of Matara in Sri Lanka. The results of the exploratory factor analysis, five major factors such as inferior quality, unavailability, service failure, stressful atmosphere and high price were recognized as the major factors which influence the switching decision in retail apparel store.

Nina Michaelidou (2009) has studied the impact of internal factors such as variety-seeking drive, loyalty, involvement, perceived risk, pleasure and similarity perceptions on brand-switching propensity in clothing purchases using multiple regression. The model derived shows that five internal factors including involvement, perceived risk, loyalty and variety-seeking drive have an impact on brand switching propensity.

Richa Gupta(2017) analyzed brand switching behavior of consumers of fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) and tried to underline other emerging measures of promotion mix and their impact, the role of brand equity and various switching costs in this relationship are also analyzed. This study presented a research plan and theoretically viewed guidelines for promotion mix and brand switching behaviour through a theory based conceptual framework.

Indah Fintikasari & Elia Ardyan Lifestyle (2018) studied about the smart-phone brand switching and the factors influencing brand switching are variety seeking, customer trust and promotion. 385 smart-phone users who have experience of brand switching were taken as sample of respondents are used in this study. Consumer trust in a exacting brand still not capable to lessen their desire to switch brand significantly, another result also indicated that promotion unable to increase the desire to switch brands

Nina Michaelidou (2005) examined the relationship between consumers' general need for variety in their lives and their brand switching behavior when shopping for clothes. On the other hand, the research explained the consumers' internal need for stimulation (optimal stimulation level) as an antecedent of variety-seeking behavior and brand switching. This relationship is experienced in the background of consumer shopping for clothes, determining variety seeking levels and investigating their outcome on brand switching behavior.

PanteaForoud et.al.,(2016) investigated the outcome of innovation capability and customer experience on reputation and loyalty. With the sample of 606 consumers of international retail brands, the results add to the literature on innovation, customer, and brand management and the result showed to create customer value in the retail environment through technical innovation capability (new services, service operations, and technology) and non-technical innovation capability (management, sales, and marketing).

Rizwan et al., (2014) pointed out that in their research that service quality, trust and reputation are positively influences customer's loyalty. There is a positive relationship between service quality and customer loyalty and the factors such as reputation and trust. Authors added that service quality should be given more importance while formulating strategies for developing customer loyalty.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results and discussion are central steps in the research process. The aim of the analysis is to organize, classify and summarize the collected data so that they can be better comprehended and interpreted to give answers to the questions that triggered the research. Interpretation is the search for the broader meaning of findings. Analysis is not fulfilled without interpretation; and interpretation cannot proceed without analysis; so, both are inter dependent.

A detailed analysis of the collected data has been attempted as per the objectives stated earlier. In this study the following statistical techniques for the analysis of the data gathered for the present study viz., Descriptive analysis and inferential statistics etc.

Table 1 Demographic characteristics of customers

Demographic characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	612	77.0
	Female	183	23.0
	Total	795	100.0
Age (in years)	Below 25	138	17.4
	26 - 30	176	22.1
	31 - 35	190	23.9
	Above 30	291	36.6
	Total	795	100.0
Educational status	High School	145	18.2
	Undergraduate	406	51.1
	Postgraduate	244	30.7
	Total	795	100.0
Marital Status	Married	421	53.0
	Unmarried	374	47.0
	Total	795	100.0

Source: Primary data

The table 1 summarizes the demographic characteristics such as gender, age, education, and marital status of the customers in the study area. Majority of the customers in this study were male 612(77.0%) and 183 (23.0%) were female. Regarding the distribution of age, majority 36.6% of them under the age group of above 30 years, 23.9% of them were between 31 and 35 years. . The educational status of the customers, 51.1% of them were undergraduates and 30.7% of them were postgraduates. Regarding the marital status of customers, 53.0% of them were married and 47.0% of them were unmarried.

Table 2 Profile characteristics of customers

Profile characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Location	Urban	538	67.7
	Semi-urban	257	32.3
	Total	795	100.0
Annual Income (Rs. In lakhs)	Below Two	280	35.2
	Two – Four	183	23.0
	Above Four	332	41.8
	Total	795	100.0
Type of brand	Domestic	322	40.5
	International	365	45.9
	Others	108	13.6
	Total	795	100.0

Source: Primary data

The table 2 reveals the profile characteristics such as location, annual income and type of brand preferred by the customers in the study area. Majority of the customers, 67.7% were from urban area and 32.3% of them were from semi-urban area. 41.8% of the customers were under the income group of above rupees four lakhs and 23% of them were between rupees two and four lakhs income group. 45.9% of the customers in this study prefer international brands and 40.5% of them prefer domestic brands.

Research Hypothesis: There is a significant mean difference between male and female towards factors of branding among the customers.

Table 3 Student t test for testing the significant mean difference on factors of branding across gender

Factors of Branding	Gender				t -value
	Male (n=612)		Female (n=183)		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Brand Preference	17.78	1.78	15.34	2.99	13.648**
Brand Experience	22.53	2.80	19.16	3.89	12.946**
Brand Switching	25.56	3.56	23.01	3.67	8.450**

**Significant at 1% level

Table 3 on t-test reveals that, the two tail significance for the two groups of gender (male and female) indicates that $p < 0.01$ and, therefore, is significant. It shows that there exists a significant mean difference among the customers on factors of branding such as brand preference ($t = 13.648$, $p < 0.01$), brand experience ($t = 12.94$, $p < 0.01$) and brand switching ($t = 8.450$, $p < 0.01$).

Research Hypothesis: There is a significant mean difference between married and unmarried towards factors of branding among customers.

Table 4 Student t test for testing the significant mean difference on factors of branding across marital status

Factors of Branding	Marital Status				t -value
	Married (n=421)		Unmarried (n=374)		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Brand Preference	17.63	2.01	16.76	2.62	5.281**
Brand Experience	22.38	3.00	21.05	3.66	5.595**
Brand Switching	25.52	4.18	24.36	3.04	4.427**

**Significant at 1% level

Table 4 on t-test reveals that, the two tail significance for the two groups of marital status (married and unmarried) indicates that $p < 0.01$ and, therefore, is significant. It shows that there exists a significant mean difference among the customers on factors of branding such as brand preference ($t = 5.281$, $p < 0.01$), brand experience ($t = 5.595$, $p < 0.01$) and brand switching ($t = 4.427$, $p < 0.01$).

Alternative Hypothesis: There is a significant mean difference between monthly income towards factors of branding among customers

Table 5 ANOVA for significant difference between monthly income towards factors of branding among customers

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
Brand Preference	Between Groups	356.283	2	178.142	34.808**
	Within Groups	4053.309	792	5.118	
	Total	4409.592	794		
Brand Experience	Between Groups	504.339	2	252.169	23.113**
	Within Groups	8640.831	792	10.910	
	Total	9145.170	794		
Brand Switching	Between Groups	494.741	2	247.370	18.501**
	Within Groups	10589.705	792	13.371	
	Total	11084.445	794		

****Significant at 1% level**

One – way ANOVA was applied to find the significant mean difference between annual income towards factors of branding among customers and the result showed (Table 3.05) that there is a significant mean difference in the annual income towards brand preference (F-value = 34.808, $p < 0.01$), brand experience (F-value = 23.113, $p < 0.01$) and brand switching (F-value = 18.501, $p < 0.01$).

Discriminant analysis of opinion of brand switching behaviour on apparels by the customers of selected cities of Tamilnadu

The factors loaded on of brand switching behaviour are analysed with the help of stepwise discriminant analysis and the results are given for each item separately and analysed. Discriminant analysis is used to discriminate the level of brand switching behaviour opinions on apparels.

The factor such as, “Promotional activities of other brands attracted me”, “Availability of new brands in the show room” and “Impulse buying” have greater mean score and these are excelled in the low level group. Also, the factors such as, “Promotional activities of other brands attracted me”, “Availability of new brands in the show room” and “The previous brand not satisfied me with good fit” have greater mean score and these are excelled in moderate level group. casual, The factors such as, “Promotional activities of other brands attracted me”, “The other brands offer me various styles and current fashion” and “Availability of new brands in the show room” have greater mean score and these are excelled in high level group

Table 6 Mean score on the level of brand switching behaviour on apparels by the customers

Brand switching factors	Low (n=226)		Moderate (n=320)		High (n=249)	
	Mean Score	Rank	Mean Score	Rank	Mean Score	Rank
The variety of other brand attracts me	1.66	7	2.08	7	2.65	7
The other brands offer me various styles and current fashion	1.55	6	2.30	5	3.00	2
The previous brand not satisfied me with good fit	1.93	5	2.48	3	2.78	5
I expect quality when I purchase the new branded apparel	2.10	4	2.29	6	2.70	6
Impulse buying	2.12	3	2.34	4	2.86	4
Availability of new brands in the show room	2.15	2	2.68	2	2.96	3
Promotional activities of other brands attracted me	2.31	1	2.77	1	3.10	1

Source : Computed values

Wilks' Lambda = 0.193; Chi-square value = 129.606^{**}; d.f.= 6; (^{**}p<0.01)

The Wilk's lambda of 0.193 is closed to zero and it confirms that the discrimination among the various factors of brand switching behaviour in these three groups are better. Also the result of chi-square test reveals that the mean score of brand switching behaviour significantly differs between the low, moderate and high level group, since the p- value is less than 0.01 for the degrees of freedom 5.

Further analysis is carried out to estimate the factors of brand switching behaviour responsible for discriminating the factor into low, moderate and high in future among the customers with the help of Fisher's linear discriminant function equation making use of the independent variables as, The variety of other brand attracts me (X_1), The other brands offer me various styles and current fashion (X_2), The previous brand not satisfied me with good fit (X_3), I expect quality when I purchase the new branded apparel (X_4), Impulse buying (X_5), Availability of new brands in the show room (X_6) and Promotional activities of other brands attracted me (X_7).

Table 7 Canonical and Fisher's Linear Discriminant functional coefficients on the level of brand switching behaviour on apparels

Brand switching factors	Level of brand switching			
	Canonical Discriminant function coefficients (n=795)	Fisher's Linear Discriminant function coefficients		
		Low (n=216)	Moderate (n=328)	High (n=251)
The variety of other brand attracts me	1.059	10.501	13.073	15.984
The other brands offer me various styles and current fashion	1.345	9.342	12.698	16.312
The previous brand not satisfied me with good fit	.670	8.185	10.270	11.674

I expect quality when I purchase the new branded apparel	.715	8.561	10.307	12.268
Impulse buying	.629	7.219	8.577	10.466
Availability of new brands in the show room	.888	12.052	14.601	16.669
Promotional activities of other brands attracted me	.745	10.254	9.541	12.145
Constant	-12.537	-54.546	-83.437	-119.237

Source : Computed values

Canonical Correlation = 0.895 (99% of original cases were correctly classified).

The table 7 reveals, the Fisher's linear discriminant function coefficient. The canonical correlation is 0.895 which is closure to unity, which infers that there is high degree of positive relationship between the discriminant scores and the brand switching behaviour. The equations of Fisher's Linear Discriminant coefficient for the three different levels low, moderate and high are,

$$Y_L = 10.501X_1 + 9.342X_2 + 8.185X_3 + 8.561X_4 + 7.219X_5 + 12.052X_6 + 10.254X_7$$

$$Y_M = 13.073X_1 + 12.698X_2 + 10.270X_3 + 10.307X_4 + 8.577X_5 + 14.601X_6 + 9.541X_7$$

$$Y_H = 15.984X_1 + 16.312X_2 + 11.674X_3 + 12.268X_4 + 10.466X_5 + 16.669X_6 + 12.145X_7$$

Table 8 Inter- Correlation on customer loyalty

Factors	Customer Loyalty	Brand Preference	Brand Experience	Brand Switching	Trending Fashion
Customer Loyalty	1	.857**	.825**	.439**	.430**
Brand Preference		1	.593**	.345**	.383**
Brand Experience			1	.543**	.266**
Brand Switching				1	.224**
Trending Fashion					

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed);

The correlation matrix presented in table 3.08, shows the significant and positive relation between customer loyalty and brand preference, brand experience, brand switching, trending fashion among the customers of apparels. The results shows, there exist a strongly significant positive relationship with the independent variables brand preference ($r = 0.439$, $p < 0.01$) and trending fashion ($r = 0.825$, $p < 0.01$).

4. CONCLUSION

This study explains the important factors that play an vital role in the development of brand trust of consumes in the Products and services of apparels in selected major cities of Tamilnadu. Different factors such as, brand preference, brand experience, brand switching and trending fashion towards customer loyalty were discussed in this study. It is concluded that all the factors were important and were effective to influence customer loyalty (Usharani & Gopinath, 2020a). This study highlighted the important factors of branding to develop a new thinking of customer loyalty for marketing managers in developing new ideas and differentiated products and services for consumers in developing countries (Gopinath, 2019c). This study was limited to project and investigate only few factors in view of past research, so it is suggested that for the likelihood of enhancing positive attitude of customers towards accepting apparels. Rapid

growth and rising urbanization have spawned a new class of consumers with more money to spend, and a growing passion for fashion. With the growth and rising of urbanization has given rise to fashionable generation consumers having attitudes of spending huge amount of money to look trendy.

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