

Consumer Culture and Purchase Intentions towards Fashion Apparel

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Abstract

This study examines the effectiveness of different fashion marketing strategies and analyzes of the consumer behavior in a cross-section of demographic settings in reference to fashion apparel retailing. This paper also discusses the marketing competencies of fashion apparel brands and retailers in reference to brand image, promotions, and external-market knowledge. The study examines the determinants of consumer behavior and their impact on purchase intentions towards fashion apparel. The results reveal that socio-cultural and personality related factors induce the purchase intentions among consumers. One of the contributions that this research extends is the debate about the converging economic, cognitive and brand related factors to induce purchase intentions. Fashion loving consumers typically patronage multi-channel retail outlets, designer brands, and invest time and cost towards an advantageous product search. The results of the study show a positive effect of store and brand preferences on developing purchase intentions for fashion apparel among consumers.

Keywords: Consumer behavior, purchase intention, socio-cultural values, designer brands, store brands, fashion apparel, brand promotion, personalization, fashion retailing, psychographic drivers

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Introduction

Globalization has catalyzed the growth of fashion industry and the marketplace attractions have driven the cultural attributes of consumers significantly across various consumer segments. Shifts in the cultural values, consumer preferences, and purchase intentions towards designer products is arguably the most critical issue faced by the marketing managers today. Many researchers argue that increasing globalization is reducing the homogeneity of consumer behaviors within countries, while increasing communalities across countries (Cleveland and Laroche, 2007). Most firms manufacturing designer apparel are trying to bridge intercultural differences and building cultural consonance across consumer segments on a variety of contexts that stimulates interest in fashion apparel. Customer centric market strategy developed on self-esteem attributes of consumer is used by the firms to enhance purchase intentions towards fashion apparel (Horowitz, 2009).

Powerful market stimulants such as fashion shows on television, fashion advertisements, in-store displays, and fashion events in the urban shopping malls have influenced the transnational cosmopolitanism among consumers. Such interactive marketing strategies of fashion apparel have shown convergence of traditional and modern values and lifestyle to develop a homogeneous global consumer culture. The conventional method of using societal icons as the cultural drivers have now been replaced by global fashion players with flagship brands as a basis for product position and market segmentation. It is found that multi-channel systems of brand building and differentiation influence the consumers towards fashion apparel and need is created at local levels supportive of, and constituted by, cultural industries. The Italian city of Milan shows how the city has become a destination brand, where different various channels are being negotiated and integrate service fashion and design branding strategies (Jasson and Power, 2010).

Globalization and increasing competition, and short product life cycles in fashion retailing cultivate asymmetric consumer behavior and pose a number of marketing challenges for retail firms in Mexico. In order to survive in this industry, it is vital for manufacturers and

retailers to develop and leverage core marketing capabilities. This study examines the effectiveness of different fashion marketing strategies and analysis of the consumer behavior in a cross-section of demographic settings in reference to fashion apparel retailing. This paper also discusses the marketing competencies of fashion apparel brands and retailers in reference to brand image, promotions, and external-market knowledge. The study examines the determinants of consumer behavior and their impact on purchase intentions towards fashion apparel.

Consumer market for fashion apparel has become more diverse by designer brands, store brands, personalization, advertising, and ethnicity in the global marketplace. If manufacturers and retailers of fashion apparel can identify the target consumers' preferences, they may be better able to attract and maintain their target consumer group. However, little research has been conducted to investigate the factors influencing the apparel shopping behaviors among Hispanic consumers. Thus, the purpose of the present study is to investigate the attributes of shopping designer apparel among consumers in Mexico.

Theoretical Motivation

According to Optimal Distinctiveness Theory, individuals strive to maintain a balance between the need to be assimilated by the peers and family, and the need for autonomy and differentiation (Sorrentino et al, 2009). The purchase intention for fashion and designer apparel is stimulated among consumers in the social contexts. The distinctiveness of fashion features (e.g., designer brand, celebrity endorsement, media reviews) that are consistently associated with emotional expressions plays the strongest role in the buying behavior among consumers (Clavo and Marrero, 2009). Some studies suggest that the perception of a person on his personality is a distinctive and salient trait that differentiates behavior. Individuals who have high social standing and are adaptive to change in lifestyle are driven by the fashion demonstrations. (Arpan and Peterson, 2008)

The distinctiveness theory supports the notion that ethnicity can influence consumer responses to various marketing stimuli such as sales promotions and advertisements.

One of the principal drivers of consumer behavior towards fashion apparel is the dominance of social interactions. The involvement of consumers in fashion products depends not only on their own perceptions but also on peers' response to their personality and change proneness (Pinheiro, 2008). The relation between clothes and identity is perceived by the consumers from the perspective of their values generated in various social interactions. Consumers get involved in exhibiting fashion and lifestyle as an aesthetic way of presenting their personality. Hence, clothing is often considered as an opportunity for communicating a new order of identity of a person. In this process there are both cognitive and affective incentives that translate into potential welfare gains (or indifference) for the consumer in a given social and work related environment (Bianchi, 2002).

It has been observed by some researchers that cultural values affect the purchase intentions of fashion apparel. In the societies that exhibit hedonic values, fashion apparel are promoted by manufacturers and retailers to induce a sudden, compelling, socially complex buying behavior through the promotional programs to increase disposable income by facilitating credit to consumer (Venkatesh et al, 2010). Manufacturers and retailers apply both push and pull strategies to make the promotions of fashion apparel effective and advantageous to the consumers. Promotions targeted at final consumers, known as pull promotions, directly offer extra value to consumers, with the primary goals of attracting consumers to retail locations and stimulating immediate sales. Though both push and pull promotions are designed to speed up the selling process and increase sales, at least in the short term, their strategic implications as well as their impacts on fashion sales and profits are believed to be different. Such promotion led fashion retailing culture stimulates fashion oriented attitudes, debt and spending behavior on clothing among consumers (Martin-Herran et al, 2010).

The designer brands and departmental stores have redefined the strategies of retailing fashion apparel in Mexico considering global-local buying preferences. The central and

northern regions of Mexico have witnessed increase in specialized apparel stores, which imposes new demands on manufacturers, wholesalers, and consumers (Chavez, 2002). It has been observed that the attributes determining overall acceptance of fashion apparel and accessories among Mexican consumers are significantly influenced by product attractiveness and price sensitivity. Purchase intent was influenced by overall appearance, brand appeal, and overall liking (Rajagopal, 2006^a; Herrera-Corredor *et al*, 2007). Fashion apparel is largely penetrating in Mexico through cross border (American) consumer influence. Outshoppers literally go extra miles to outshop for better quality and assortment of merchandise, higher quality of personal service, more pleasant shopping atmospherics, and more competitive prices (Guo and Wang, 2009).

Consumers in Mexico are largely influenced by the product attractiveness and show higher store-loyalty, irrespective of price and shopping ambience. When choosing apparel and store, consumers evaluate both the fixed and variable utilities of shopping; the fixed utility does not vary from trip to trip whereas the variable utility depends on the size and composition of the shopping list (Rajagopal, 2006^b; Tang, 2001). Preferences and perceptions of Mexican consumers on fashion apparel also depend on the social and cultural values. Designer brands introduced in the Mexican market are generally expensive and price is considered as a major factor influencing consumption. Mexican consumers put more emphasis on the country of origin of products than on brand names. The product-country evaluations of Mexicans seemed to be affected by a strong home country bias (Ahmad and d'Astous, 2006). Fashion promotions in Mexico are derived considering socio-psychographic background of consumers such as age, gender, country of origin, social class, and income status, which are critical to the success of interethnic communications with the Hispanic population (Valdez, 2000). Hispanic consumers' distinctive apparel shopping behaviors, along with a huge market potential, deserve attention from apparel retailers who plan on tapping into this market (Seock and Baily, 2008).

Review of Literature and Hypotheses Framework

Shifts in Consumer Fashion Culture

Traditional clothing practice is often assimilated to the generic preferences of ethnic dressing. Thus, modern fashion apparel market has emerged with the announcement that ethnic dressing comes from the core of the traditional culture whose gorgeous fabrics have been face lifted as convenience apparel within societal value and lifestyle (VALS) system. The fashion apparel has built the image in the market by characterizing as sexually ardent designs for passionate male and female shoppers (Narumi, 2000). It is argued that shifts in consumer culture provide a stimulus to dynamic innovation in the arena of personal taste and consumption. Such dynamism in consumer preferences is considered as part of an international cultural system and is driven by continuous change in VALS. The consumer values like functionality, fitness for purpose and efficiency significantly contribute in driving cultural change and recognizing suitable fashion to strategically fit with the lifestyles (Hartley and Montgomery, 2009). The growing technology led apparel selling is one of the major stimulants for inducing change in fashion and consumer culture. The three-dimensional *Automatic Made-to-Measure* scheme for apparel products, demonstrated through computer simulation in large departmental stores and lifestyle centers play major role in generation consumer arousal on the fashion apparel. Freeform design platform is adopted by the apparel designers, manufacturers, and retailers to represent the complex geometry models of apparel products. Apparel products are essentially designed with reference to human body features, and thus share a common set of features as the human model. Therefore, the parametric feature-based modeling enables the automatic generation of fitted garments on differing body shapes. Consumers lean towards buying such apparel that are largely sold as designer apparel (Wang et al, 2005). Hence, the following hypothesis can be laid:

H₁: Consumer culture on fashion apparel is influenced by life style and value simulations by gaining product experience

Retailers have adopted personalization to successfully market a wide range of designer products, such as eyeglasses, bicycles, coffee, greeting cards, and apparel. The intention of purchasing of designer products differs across cultures. Customer preference and value

placed on designer apparel is largely influenced by the social differentiation of products and self-esteem of the consumer (Moon *et al.*, 2008). These attributes are likely to vary depending on the customers' cultural orientation. The cultural dimensions of individualism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance, and masculinity should be a useful framework to explain cross-cultural differences in customer acceptance of designer products (Hofstede, 1980). Apparel is often used for its symbolic value reflecting the personality and status of the user. When the apparel holds a designer brand, it may be perceived as an ostentatious display of wealth. Thus consumers are motivated by a desire to impress others with their ability to pay particularly high prices for prestigious products (Solomon, 1983). Such personality dimensions often play a critical role in shifting the consumer culture towards brand-led buying behavior of utilitarian goods. The designer apparel brands are perceived by the consumers as prestigious brands encompassing several physical and psychological values such as perceived conspicuous value, perceived unique value, perceived social value, perceived hedonic value and perceived quality value (Prendergast and Wong, 2003). Consumption patterns are largely governed by the social value of the product, which determines the purchasing intentions, consumer attitudes, or perceptions on brand or advertising slogan. Consumer experience with high socio-economic power perceptions creates qualitatively distinct psychological motives towards buying designer apparel that develop unique consumption patterns (Rucker and Galinsky, 2009). Therefore, the research proposition may be drawn as:

H₂: Personalization of fashion apparel stimulates self-esteem among consumers that enhances social values

Apparel designers lay a significant impact on the success or failure of fashion apparel and accessories. It has been observed that the demographic (e.g. gender and generational cohort) and psychographic (e.g. fashion fans, attitudes and impulse buying) drivers influence frequency and levels of expenditure on buying fashion apparel. The consumer Attitudes towards fashion has higher bearing on female buying tendency than male that is more often and significantly different from males on yearly expenditure, fashion *fan*ship, attitudes and impulsive buying. The younger generation in the present context has

higher purchase frequency, fashion *fan*ship, and impulse buying as compared with other cohorts in the society (Pentecost and Andrews, 2010). Buying pleasure of consumers to stand unique with fellow consumers has also been a strong behavioral driver for designer apparel manufacturers. Fashion apparel consumers have shown favorable attitude towards exotic fashion apparel products and higher purchase intention. It has been observed that consumers leaning towards buying designer apparel show higher cognitive motivations, and a different shopping orientation from their followers. Lead buyers enjoy shopping more and are not as cost-conscious, traditional, or conservative as the followers (Belleau and Nowlin, 2001).

Manufacturers and marketers of fashion apparel develop their strategies through four processes in order to induce change in the consumer culture. These include chartering, learning, mobilizing, and realigning that pave the way for successful institutionalization of a strategic change initiative. The elements rely much more on an understanding of the mix of task-related, emotional, and behavioral factors than is fashionable in today's metrics-driven environment. This also drives the shift in conventional wisdom about programmatic change, arguing that managers need to set in motion a series of processes right at the start if widespread changes are to stick (Roberto and Levesque, 2005). The cultural change in buying apparel from low price brands to designer brands in emerging markets has been institutionalized in a family environment. It has been observed that parental and sibling influences decreased with age, whereas peer and media influences expanded with increasing age. The television and celebrities also play a significant role in influencing adolescents' clothing choices irrespective of gender categories. Among the most common two forms of media that children largely use are magazines and television while, teens are primarily influenced by visual merchandising, hand on experience, and spotting the fashion apparel users (La Ferle et al., 2000; Seock and Bailey, 2009).

Shopping behavior of consumers is also influenced by the attributes of Social Cognitive Theory that explains how variables such as self-regulation and self-efficacy direct the spending behavior and determine consumer lifestyles. Product attributes influence consumer perceptions of the personal relevance of a product or service to their

needs and consumer preferences for product attributes are significantly linked to their lifestyle. The lifestyle theory suggests that the consumers' perceived hedonic attributes and social identity factors determine the shopping behavior of urban consumers (Zhu *et al*, 2009). The shopping behavior of consumers is driven by the social, economic and relations factors. The shopping ambiance, advertisements and retail promotions develop pro-shopping behavior. The social learning theory explains this phenomenon as positive reinforcement and it occurs when a behavior (response) is followed by a favorable stimulus (commonly seen as pleasant) that increases the frequency of that behavior. In the conceptual foundations of social learning theory, respondent conditioning and observational learning are empirically-supported approaches to understanding normative human development and the etiology of psychosocial problems (Thyer and Myers, 1998). Accordingly, the hypothesis may be constructed as:

H₃: Family and external lifestyle and values impel consumer culture on designer brands and fashion apparel

Store Brands Response

Departmental stores and Lifestyle Centers develop their apparel store brands to generate store loyalty among consumers. The store brands are displayed in these stores alongside the designer apparel brands. The changing dynamics of the fashion industry have forced retailers to aim at low cost marketing strategies and flexibility in design, and improving speed of penetration in market to gain competitive advantage. The concept of 'throwaway' or fast fashion had emerged since 1990 in the global marketplace, which describes that fast fashion drifts from a manufacturers to retailers and consumers. The store brands have emerged rapidly in the fashion market considering the fast growth of fashion (Bharadwaj and Fairhurst, 2010).

Store fashion brands are designed and developed considering consumer perceptions on the store image. The shopping satisfaction of fashion apparel includes consumers' perceptions of store attributes as well as subjective evaluations of products purchased from the store by the consumers themselves or by their fellow shoppers. Store brand impact is largely derived also through the word-of-mouth interaction. However, response to the store brands appears to be more complex in nature than a simple affective summary of the relative frequencies of positive and negative emotion during consumption experiences (Torres et al, 2001). Another factor that affects the consumer decision on store brands is the recognition of the role of store sales personnel in a retail environment. It has been observed that effective sales people not only influence the shopping process but may also influence the consumers to switch their store patronage. Consumers may abandon one store brand to follow specific sales and service personnel to a new store brand (Terblanche and Boshoff, 2005). The retail stores play major role in influencing consumers for both store and manufacturer's brands. Attitude toward promoted brands is characterized by positive store image, smart shopper self-perception, need for affiliation, and money attitude regarding power-prestige and anxiety. However, attitude of consumers towards store brands is determined by more positive store image, price advantage, range of products to exercise buying options, and loyalty and trust related factors (Liu and Wang, 2008).

In view of the above discussion, the hypothesis may be framed as:

H4: Consumers develop loyalty for store brand fashion apparel considering the store image and informal communication among fellow shoppers

There is an increasing trend of carrying store brands in a apparel retailing segment with growing importance in terms of market share. There are reports to the effect that the sales of store brands account for about one-fifth of total volume sales in the United States (Sethuraman, 2003). Manufacturers make available their brands in various stores, and as such they do not affect loyalty to a particular store. Own brands in fashion and apparel on the contrary are believed to possess the power to enhance loyalty in reference to the store they are associated with. The brand name thus influences consumers' overall

quality perceptions of the product (Labeaga, et al, 2007). The success of the store-branded category depends, in analogy with brand extension theory, on the perceived quality of the parent brand (i.e. the store) and the fit between the parent brand and the sub-brand category. It is considered essential that the store image, associated with the parent brand, somehow supports the store-branded product category and mitigates the perceived risk of buying the category (Liljander et al, 2009).

Some studies have observed that store brands drive a positive relationship between customers' familiarity with and loyalty to the retailer's own brand, and customers' loyalty to the retailer results from the competitive advantage of the store brand. Although the purchase intentions of consumers towards store brands relate positively to higher loyalty to the retailer, the scope of such relationship narrows down the consumer preferences due to the degree of exclusivity of store brands within the customer's shopping basket (Martos-Partal and González-Benito, 2009). Often consumers realize that whenever the gap between store brands and manufacturer brands on fashion apparel gets smaller with regard to quality, perceived value and confidence, price ultimately becomes the only clearly distinguishing characteristic. Consumer decision on buying fashion apparel is also governed by the price sensitivity factor to a large extent. In this situation, retailers have the opportunity to use store brands in the process of 'branding' the store formula (Luijten and Reijnders, 2009). The store brands for fashion apparel in a large number of markets have been favored by a set of factors that include actions by manufacturers and distributors on price and differentiation, market competition at both a manufacturer and a retailer level, and the economic-financial results of the latter for the product categories in which they work with the store brands (e.g. Oubiña et al, 2007). Therefore, the hypothesis may be structured as:

H₅: Relatively low prices, range of designs, and image of store motivate consumers to choose store brands for buying fashion apparel

Purchase Intentions

The fashion apparel has short product life-span and is influenced largely by the celebrity promotions, visual merchandizing, and store ambience. The multi-channel systems of brand building and differentiation at regional and local levels supported by cultural forums in the local markets drive the purchase intentions of consumers. Besides retail stores, fashion and design-based industrial actors also contribute to creating images and myths that support consumers' orientation towards buying fashion apparel (Jansson and Power, 2010). Purchase intentions of consumers on fashion apparel are influenced by psychodynamics and social factors. Consumer perceptions on buying fashion apparel are based on five factors that include perceptual leadership and perceived role models in the society, matching attire status to employment and workplace ambience, socialization with peers and people they like, self-esteem and fun, and respectful treatment in the society (Stanforth, 2009).

In recent past conscience among men and women on a body of critical scholarship emerged globally that stimulated the feel of newness and feminisms. Fashion magazines have become emblematic of feminism, a form of 'third-wave' feminist engagement that revalues activities and interests traditionally associated with femininity, such as knitting, fashion clothing, and make-up (Groeneveld, 2009). Fashion magazines are the perfect medium to influence the fashion adaptation within the larger thesis of global-local effects. These magazines along with television fashion shows influence consumers on the process of fashion adaptation, which begins with product conceptualization and self-esteem in the society (Tay, 2009). As women's purchase behavior is very different from men's, it is essential for businesses that target female consumers to make a shift in marketing strategies and include factors other than socio-cultural characteristics. Fashion-involved female consumers are considered as the drivers and legitimists of the fashion adoption process (Belleau, et al, 2008). Considering the previous studies discussed above, the hypothesis may be developed as:

H6: Purchase intention on fashion apparel is largely influenced by the the socio-cultural movements and media shows that drive involvement with the products and message

Celebrity based promotions have become very popular way of pushing the fashion clothing in the market, which include celebrity owned brands and celebrity anchored brands. Fashion clothing, accessories and perfumes may be cited as best examples of the celebrity involvement in product promotion. The relation between fashion performance and celebrity media appears to be a general promotional effort by a manufacturer but such promotion strategy has a strong hold in triggering arousal and purchase intentions among consumers. The popular appeal of the celebrity drives the sales of fashion apparel significantly and leads the brand (Treme, 2010). A study demonstrates that the consumer attitudes toward a promoted product are governed by the popularity and image of the celebrity and expressions of the message. Accordingly, the purchase intentions of consumers are driven by the product attributes, price, and endorser performance as perceived by consumers. The celebrity endorsement can significantly influence consumer purchase attitudes via both direct and indirect effects through product-attribute construct (Sheu, 2010). As the fashion cycle gets narrowed because of increasing competition, manufacturers promote their brands through countless agents including celebrities. In the past, fashion used to be a highly centralized industry where new trends were diffused from a single location. The Paris Collections presented by a small network of *couturier* became the trends that everybody in the world imitated. However, this process has become decentralized and now Fashion originates from many sources and is profoundly influenced by popular culture, celebrities and consumers themselves who, in many cases, inspire designers in the development of their collections (Rinallo and Golgetto, 2006). Therefore,

H₇: Celebrity promotions of fashion apparel intensely drive purchase intentions as consumers involve in personating celebrities

Consumer research has indeed shown that celebrity endorsement may enhance the recall of advertising messages, increase the recognition of brand names and make advertisements more believable and influential. Some studies revealed that commercials using celebrities did enhance consumers' likelihood of buying the advertised brand (Stallen et al, 2010). A neuroimaging study supported the hypothesis that the celebrity endorsement

incurs positive influence on consumers. A single exposure of an expert celebrity with a product may result in a long-lasting positive effect on memory and purchase intention for the product (Klucharev et al, 2008). The purpose of decent clothing was primarily for self-esteem and fashion by women of all ages. Thus, investment on fashion apparel is largely related to self-evaluative salience, while the motivational salience builds arousal and enjoyment of clothes during the post-shopping period (Tiggemann and Lacey, 2009).

Study Design

Sampling

In order to measure the purchase intentions of consumers for fashion apparel driven by the arousal and merriment situation, respondents including both men and women between the age group of 18-45 years were selected. The study was conducted among the shoppers of five departmental stores in Mexico specialized in retailing fashion and designer apparel. Of selected departmental stores for the study, Liverpool, SEARS, and Palacio de Hierro were catering to consumers of the A/B and C+ demographic segments, while Modatela and Suburbia served the consumers of C and D+ demographic segments. All the selected stores also had their store brands in fashion apparel. The September- December has been identified as leisure period as the early sales for the Christmas begin from September in Mexico. The data was collected on 35 variables that were closely related towards influencing the customer values. These variables include various perspectives of brand equity, social value, store image, customer satisfaction and promotional strategies applied in positioning the fashion and designer apparel for gaining optimal market share and aggregate value on shopping. In all 11 fashion apparel designer brands spread over men (Scappino, Lacoste, Dockers and Oscar de la Renta) and women (Nautica, Penney Black, Raulf Lauren, Folly's, Ivonne, Liz Clabourne, and GAP). Besides the designer appareel brands 5 store brands of above mentioned retail stores were covered under this study. The data sets were categorized into the relational and economic variables selected for the study as illustrated in Table 1

//Table 1 about here//

Data was collected from 236 respondents purposively selected, who were involved in shopping at chosen retail self-service stores in Mexico City, administering a semi-structured questionnaire. Of the total sample respondents, men constituted 23.72 percent and women shoppers represented 76.28 percent. The data of 19 respondents were omitted from the data analysis due to paucity of information. The respondents were involved in buying the trend apparel of contemporary designs including designer fashion brands. In all, the data of 217 observations were analyzed in the study. It has been found that the overall response rate in the survey was 91.94 percent. The data collected from respondents were tested for its reliability applying the Cronbach Alfa test. Variables derived from test instruments are declared to be reliable only when they provide stable and reliable responses over a repeated administration of the test. The test results showed high reliability ($\alpha = 0.81$) on an average for all observations included for analysis in reference to all variables pooled under different segments.

Data Collection Tools

Initially focus group discussion was carried out of a representative sample from selected industries in order to assess the responsibility of direct supervision of salespeople in industrial selling situations and the sale administration process in general. Based on the process flow in sales administration, major variable segments were identified keeping in view the objectives of the study. Accordingly pre-coded questionnaires were developed for the study and administered to the respondents. Besides questions with pre-coded options, some open ended questions were also administered separately for qualitative assessment of the responses. The content analysis was done to summarize the open ended questions using software QSR NVivo2. This software has powerful tools for combining subtle coding with qualitative linking, shaping and modeling qualitative information. The analysis of qualitative responses has largely benefited in deriving appropriate managerial implications of the study.

Questionnaires were initially drafted in English and later translated in Spanish for use in Mexico. Principal questions administered during the study have been listed in Appendix-A. Items were modified to fit the Spanish language, and to accommodate all customers and questionnaires were double back-translated (Churchill Jr., 1979). A pilot test showed that consumers understood the questions correctly. Questionnaires were administered by the undergraduate students of marketing program. In translating some questions the technique of equivalence or reformulation has been used to give a correct sense to the sentence.

Attributes of Instrument

Data was collected on the variables closely related towards influencing the buying behavior of fashion apparel encompassing overall customer satisfaction, in-store shopping arousal, and retailing strategies. The results on the analysis of the selected variables refer to the short term customer values associated with the arousal and happiness on the fashion apparel.

Seven sources of influence included co-workers, peers in school, family members, spouse, friends, public celebrities (e.g. movie stars) and salespeople at the store. Eight impersonal sources of influence included fashion magazines, non-fashion magazines, catalogues, internet, television programs, fashion models, observed street-wear, and store displays. Respondents were asked to indicate on a four-point Likert scale (1 – Totally agree; 4 – Totally disagree) when they make a purchase decision on fashion apparel. Much research in academia uses a five-point scale because researchers believe that it may produce more reliable or valid results. However, the response format of this study used a four-point scale because the researchers believed that deleting the neutral point might result in more accurate responses. The general information on respondents included age, gender, education, annual household income, and country-of-origin.

Analyzing Non-responsiveness

Questionnaires were administered to 236 respondents. However, the information of only 217 respondents qualified for the data analysis. The non-response bias has been measured applying two statistical techniques. Firstly, telephonic conversations were made with those respondents who either did not respond to the questions of survey or gave incomplete information of their preference to marketplace, store brands, lifestyle perceptions and logistics related issues (Gounaris et al, 2007). It was found that the main reason for the lack of response showing 42.10 percent respondents of the non-response cases was low confidence level of participation while 31.57 percent subjects failed to respond all questions of the survey due to paucity of time and 26.33 percent subjects depended on their accompanying persons to offer responses who could not do so. The customer response is considered as unit of analysis of this study. Secondly, *T-tests* were used to ascertain emerging differences between respondents and non-respondents concerning the issues pertaining to market orientation and customer services strategies. No statistically significant differences in pre-coded responses ($\alpha = 0.05$) were found. A second test for non-response bias examined the differences between early and late respondents on the same set of factors (Armstrong and Overton, 1977) and this assessment also yielded no significant differences between early and late respondents.

Construct of Measures and Data Validation

The constructs of the study were measured using reflective indicators showing effects on the core variables. Purchase decision on fashion apparel is derived from the product attributes, store based, and product economy related variables (VS₁, VS₂, and VS₃). The effect of these decision variables on making purchase decisions were measured with 21-variables (Product related VS₁-7, Store based-VS₂-8, and product economy let variables-VS₃-6) on a self-appraisal perceptual scale derived originally on the basis of focus group analysis as referred in the pretext. Motivation about this construct has been derived from an original scale developed by Jimenez and Cegarra-Navarro (2007) on market orientation, who conceptualized it as a multivariate construct comprising customer orientation, competitor orientation and inter-functional coordination as principal behavioral components. This scale also comprised triadic decision coordination among store sales

ambiance, brand and consumer preferences including long-term business horizon and shoppers' value (*e.g.* Rajagopal 2009a; Ruekert 1992; Hunt and Morgan 1995).

Constructs related to cognitive factors affecting buying decisions, variables related to store based and cognitive (VS₄ and VS₅) were measured using 13-variable 'self-appraisal perceptual scale' comprising shopping preferences of customers, customer relationship effects and shopper's perceptions. The perceptual behavior of consumers that support the buying decision (VS₄) were measured using 8 variables including display of fashion apparel, store promotions, availability of brands, personalization, store brands, designer brands, simulation and product-mix (adapted from Kim and Lee 2008; Jindal *et al* 2003; Jimenez and Navarro, 2007). Other variables were selected on the basis of focus group discussion. Construct of arousal and merriment (VS₅) was measured in reference to 5-variable 'self-appraisal perceptual scale' consisting of hands-on experience, celebrity promotions, creative styles, in-store advertising and newness of the product (*e.g.* Rajagopal, 2008c).

All reflective constructs for all variable segments of the study were analyzed through the factor analysis model as a single confirmatory test. The goodness-of-fit statistics¹ comprising chi-square statistics (2.18), root mean square error of approximation (0.174), Tucker-Lewis fit index (0.614), comparative fit index (0.731) and incremental fit index (0.738) indicate that the model used for analysis in the study fits the data adequately. All variables were loaded significantly on their corresponding segments which revealed significant p-value at 0.01 to 0.05 levels.

The data collected from respondents was tested for its reliability applying the Cronbach Alfa test. Variables derived from test instruments are declared to be reliable only when they provide stable and reliable responses over a repeated administration of the test. The test

¹ The goodness-of-fit statistics that the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) also known as the Bentler-Bonett non-normed fit index (NNFI), comparative fit index (CFI) and incremental fit index (IFI) tend to range between 0 and 1, with values close to 1 indicating a good fit. The TLI (NNFI) has the advantage of reflecting the model fit very well for all sample sizes. It is observed in past empirical studies these indices need to have values above 0.9 before the corresponding model can even be considered moderately adequate.

results showed acceptable reliability level ($\alpha = 0.741$) on an average for all observations included for analysis in reference to all variables pooled under different segments.

Results and Discussion

Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Scale Reliability

Clothing theorists have devoted considerable attention to understanding the motivations and behaviors of fashion innovators. The results of the study are analyzed in reference to a wide range of variables such as personal values, attitudes and socio-economic considerations that affect the purchase intentions of consumers towards fashion apparel. It has been observed that the longer the consumers are attracted by the advertisement, innovation, technology, perception drives through ‘do it yourself’ (DIY) tools, celebrity promotions, and store attractions, the more spendthrift they become as purchase intentions get stronger.

//Table 2 about here//

The confirmatory factor analysis presented in the Table 2 suggests to measure product attractiveness ($\rho_c^{SCR} = 0.76, \rho_c^{AVE} = 0.68$), economic drivers ($\rho_c^{SCR} = 0.79, \rho_c^{AVE} = 0.66$), and cognitive determinants ($\rho_c^{SCR} = 0.84, \rho_c^{AVE} = 0.64$) as principal factor segments that affect the purchase intentions of consumers on fashion apparel. However, the store brands and factors that attribute to point of purchase arousal also need to be measured for determining the purchase intentions of consumers. These factor segments are considered to be a single construct made up of the 10 buying situations that influence purchase intentions of consumers towards fashion apparel.

The marketing strategy for fashion apparel includes creative designs, exclusivity, product accessories, celebrity anchored advertising, promotion, and membership programs as essential complements to the sales. Moreover, the development and personalized fashion products are of paramount importance for value generation among customers.

The attractiveness of a product depends on its design, quality and price, the user experience of a product in terms of user satisfaction, and brand loyalty (Chan et al, 2009). The results suggest a good fit of statistics² towards the measure of product attractiveness. The goodness-of-fit index- GFI (0.83), $\chi^2 = 2.84$, root mean square error of approximation- RMSEA (0.065), Tucker-Lewis fit index- TLI (0.729), comparative fit index- CFI (0.681) and incremental fit index- IFI (0.784) indicate that the model used for analysis in the study fits the data adequately. The RMSEA is below 0.10 and the root mean square residual (RMR) and the standardized RMR are 0.079 and 0.060 respectively, which are considered acceptable.

The economic stimuli towards purchasing fashion products are defined by three attributes: (i) uniqueness that add to the social image, (ii) price level that determines the value for money, and (iii) offering price discounts combined with cross promotions and credit facilities that induce purchase intentions. The results of the study suggested that the cue pertaining to high product involvement helps to enhance purchase involvement among consumers. There was also some evidence to suggest that those consumers who were high in product involvement place less importance on price and, on the contrary consumers who are low in purchase involvement place greater importance on price discounts (*e.g.* Hollebeek et al, 2007). The results suggest a good fit of the model with $\chi^2 = 18.21$, GFI=0.82, RMSEA=0.038, CFI=0.86; TLI=0.91; and IFI=0.84. All, GFI, CFI, TLI and IFI are the recommended 0.80 threshold level. The RMSEA is below 0.050 and the root mean square residual [RMR] and the standardized RMR are 0.012 and 0.027 respectively, which are very good levels.

The cognitive factors that affect the purchase intentions among consumers include visual and experiential determinants. It has been observed during the study that appearance of new goods (or of new attributes) has the visual effect while simulating, which develops personalized experience on the products, which either stimulates or stifles the purchase

² The goodness-of-fit statistics that the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) also known as the Bentler-Bonett non-normed fit index (NNFI), comparative fit index (CFI) and incremental fit index (IFI) tend to range between 0 and 1, with values close to 1 indicating a good fit. The TLI (NNFI) has the advantage of reflecting the model fit very well for all sample sizes. It is observed in past empirical studies these indices need to have values above 0.9 before the corresponding model can even be considered moderately adequate.

intentions. The utility of fashion products depends not only on the personalized preferences and type of consumers, but also on its value towards contributing to the lifestyle. The qualitative observation during the study had shown that when fashion cycles were shorter, the brand image and loyalty turned fragile. In this factor segment (cognitive determinants), the results indicate also a good fit of the model with $\chi^2 = 24.07$, GFI=0.88, RMSEA=0.027, CFI=0.92; TLI=0.90; and IFI=0.86. All, GFI, CFI, TLI and IFI are the recommended 0.80 threshold level. The RMSEA is below 0.032 and RMR and the standardized RMR are 0.027 and 0.031 respectively, which were found at significant for hypothesized variables.

Reliability of the measures is calculated with Bagozzi and Yi's (1998) composite reliability index and with Fornell and Lacker's (1981) average variance extracted index. For all the measures, both indices are higher than the evaluation criteria of 0.6 for the composite reliability and 0.5 for the average variance extracted.

Measurement of Trend

Regressions analysis and Pearson correlations are exhibited in Table 3 for the major variables of the study that play significant role towards influencing the purchase intentions. The regressions coefficients explain the buying behavior, perceived satisfaction, and store brand effectiveness. The interpretation of regression results exhibited in the above Table indicates that shopping arousal has greater significance in determining buying decision and augment retail effectiveness (Jiang and Rosenbloom, 2005).

//Table 3 about here//

The regression analysis presented above include shopping arousal (A_{pt}^r) being associated with the products (p) at a given time (t) and retail environment (r) as dependent variable and factors generating the shopping arousal as independent variables, as expressed below:

$$A_{pt}^r = \alpha + \beta_1(p_a) + \beta_2(p_s) + \beta_3(p_{ex}) + \beta_4(p_{br}) + \beta_5(p_{ce}) + \beta_6(p_{pd}) + \beta_7(p_{isa}) + \varepsilon \quad (1)$$

In the above equation α is constant while β indicates coefficient of various independent variables including fashion advertisement (p_a), social status of the product (p_s), product experience (p_{ex}), brand image (p_{br}), celebrity endorsement (p_{ce}), price discounts (p_{pd}), and in-store ambience (p_{isa}) which stimulate shopping arousal. In the equation ε is considered as error term.

It may be seen from the results exhibited in Table 3 that buying decisions are influenced significantly by in-store arousal, product attractiveness, product experience, and price discounts. Referrals by peers and family also influenced the purchase intentions for the fashion apparel and created shopping arousal towards fashion apparel. However, buying decision was found induced by the celebrity tagged promotions and media communications towards fashion apparel and accessories. Some previous research studies had used similar techniques to measure the customer satisfaction and sales efficiency in a competitive market environment and the measures used in this study are consistent with the methodology employed by earlier studies (Rajagopal 2008; Hallowell 1996; Bigné *et al* 2003). The results presented in the above Table reveal that purchase intentions for fashion apparel tend to increase during the leisure shopping season. The sales during this season are stimulated by the store attractions and through recreations as well as economic and relational advantages on products and services.

Tests of Hypotheses

The proposed structural model is presented in Figure 1. This model incorporates the six linkages of constructs of the study to test the seven hypotheses on the store, brand, economic, and cognitive factors affecting the purchase intentions of consumers towards fashion apparel. Conventional maximum likelihood estimation techniques were used to test the model (Joreskog and Sorbom, 1996, Jimenez and Navarro, 2007). The fit of the model was found satisfactory ($\chi^2 = 236.05$, $p < 0.05$; GFI=0.79; RMSEA=0.021; CFI=0.84; TLI=0.88; IFI=0.87), thereby suggesting that the nomological network of relationships that

could validate the hypotheses³. Accordingly, internal validity consists of three characteristics including content validity, criterion-related validity and construct validity (Emory, 1985).

//Figure 1 about here//

Table 4 shows the Measures of constructs and ANNOA results of variance model in which social status, product attractiveness, and price level were the factors and purchase intention was a dependent variable. Combined with the measures of the constructs, ANOVA results indicated that product attractiveness and economic drivers significantly affected consumers' purchase intention for fashion apparel.

//Table 4 about here//

The findings for H₁, H₂, and H₄ [Product attractiveness → Arousal and merriment (γ_{31})] suggests that store and brand preferences ($\gamma_{11} = 0.468, p < 0.05$) and arousal and merriment ($\gamma_{31} = 0.379, p < 0.05$) showed a positive and significant effect on driving the purchase intentions among consumers towards fashion apparel. Additionally, the results revealed that store and brand preferences for fashion apparel [Store and brand preferences → cognitive determinants (μ_{12})] also affect purchase intentions among consumers for fashion apparel ($\mu_{12} = 0.384, p < 0.05$) over each fashion cycle. Accordingly hypothesis H₆ is consistent with the results. Globally, these findings support the hypotheses that product attractiveness develops the state of mind among consumers towards fashion apparel.

The relationships among economic drivers with cognitive determinants ($\gamma_{22} = 0.603, p < 0.01$), and store and brand preferences ($\gamma_{13} = 0.0421, p < 0.05$) support H₅. It can be

³ The concept of nomological network has been developed testing various psychological measures. The term "nomological" is derived from Greek and means "lawful", and used to measure the validity of research constructs. This network would include conceptual model for developing constructs and measures through an empirical framework, and specification of the linkages among and between conceptual and empirical frameworks (Cronbach and Meehl, 1955).

observed that fashion apparel foster brand image to gain sustainable consumer involvement and drive strong purchase intentions. So the store and brand preference has a direct impact on generating arousal and merriment among consumers [Store and brand preferences → Arousal and merriment(μ_{13})]. The results show enough evidence to accept hypotheses H₃ and H₇.

General Discussion

This study was aimed at testing empirically some of the hypotheses concerning the consumer behavior towards fashion apparel that has short life cycle and impulsive decision making process. One of the contributions that this research extends is the debate about the converging economic, cognitive and brand related factors to induce purchase intentions. Although many factors affecting purchase intentions of consumers towards fashion apparel have been discusses in support of the analytical model of the study, often the social and cultural values overpower the economic risks associated with buying fashion apparel. In addition the work-culture and family and peer environment also develop inclination for fashion apparel among consumers. Hence, manufacturers of designer brands focus their advertisements and promotions on building socio-cultural value of the brand keeping the prices high. This strategy is delineated as highly active strategy and is a key element for the sustaining competitive advantage in the fashion industry. These propositions have been discussed in Table 2 and incorporated into the model exhibited in Figure 1. Accordingly, purchase intentions of consumers were analyzed as a principal construct and it was found that economic factors, socio-cultural values, store and brand image, and point of sales promotions affect buying preferences.

The results of the study show a positive effect of store and brand preferences on developing purchase intentions for fashion apparel among consumers. As predicted, fashion apparel companies strengthen their ability to develop pro-brand consensus of customers and other retailers. In this process fashion stores build the local image of global fashion brands and try to offer higher social values and lifestyle to consumers. These results also support the thesis of store image discussed by Liljander et al (2009). It has been observed during the

study that the store personality or image among the consumers is considered as the way in which the store is defined in the shopper's mind, partly by its functional qualities and partly by an aura of cognitive attributes. In view of the results of the study it can be argued that the brand performance derived from social values, economic advantages, and lifestyle indicators depend on the ability to create a fashion movement in the market to acquire new consumers and inculcate satisfaction among consumers those are open to change.

Managerial Implications

Shopping motivation is one of the key constructs of research on shopping behavior and exhibits a high relevance for formulating strategies for marketing fashion apparel. Managers of firms engaged in fashion designing, advertising, brand promotion, and retailing need to orient customers towards social, experiential, and self-esteem aspects of fashion apparel, which could motivate consumers on pleasant, confident, value based, and quality led shopping of fashion apparel. The philosophy of fashion apparel retailing in urban markets should be transformed from self-reference criterion to value and lifestyle perceptions driven by peer and socio-cultural forces.

In view of increasing competition among fashion apparel, managers may choose to assist consumers in making dynamic shopping decisions by establishing price-value relationship to affirm their purchase intentions. Also, managers need to demonstrate such relationship through web based simulators. The fashion apparel may also attract the consumer on the multiple retail channels like catalogues, web sites and e-bays. Multi-channel retailing outlets including catalogue and virtual outlets on Internet offer quick product search, comparative data of product, price, promotion, availability and additional services to shoppers and build shopping motivation. Managers can take advantage of the positive linkage between web site design features and product search behavior by tracking the online consumers' expectation.

Managers of fashion stores must understand that shopping behavior among customers is governed by various platforms such as credit incentives, referrals, and shopping

motivations. Fashion brand should be able to develop platforms that successfully connect various customer groups with shopping interests continue to build strength to the fashion brands, stores and celebrities. Arousal among young consumers plays a key role in buying decisions. A Company may also need to consider emphasizing an integrated promotion strategy for new brands in reference to attributes, awareness, trial, availability and repeat (AATAR) principle. One of the challenges for the manager of a retail store is to enhance the in-store ambience to influence the young consumers for prolonged stay in the store for shopping and explore the zone of experience of new products. An augmented and sustainable customer value builds loyalty towards the product and the brand. Systematically explored customer preferences and arousal driven retailing approach towards new products would be beneficial for a company to derive long term profit optimization strategy over the period. This needs careful attention and the application of managerial judgment and experience to generate consumer arousal and develop appropriate point of sales strategies for stimulating the buying decision. Appropriate promotional strategies considering the economic and relational variables discussed in the study may be developed by the managers upon measuring the intensity of leisure shopping and the scope of expanding the tenure of leisure shopping in view of maximize consumer satisfaction and increase the volume of sales.

The promotional effects generated from various promotional programs may be monitored for longer periods of time and measured in reference to achieving the long-term goals of fashion apparel manufacturing and marketing firms. Also, variability of promotional response in different retail markets, channels and outlets should be analyzed for making required modifications in process of delivery of promotional programs to the customers. Such management strategy would allow for better promotion planning and marketing effectiveness, with consequences that extend beyond economic benefits for the retail company itself and reverberate on relationships with suppliers and cooperative promotion decisions. Fashion apparel retailers must expand aggressively into new markets and once the retailing firms saturate markets with outlets, they can sustain their earnings and business growth by improving the mix of products sold offering attractive sales promotions. At times, fashion stores also need to alter their promotion, advertising and merchandising

strategies to better respond to the preferences of potential customers. Thus, sales promotion programs should be strategically conceived considering long term effects on volume of sales and building loyalty among customers.

At the retail point of purchase convergence of customer loyalty, value for money and competitive product advantages drive the loyalty of fashion brands and stores. Also manager need to measure periodically the buying potential of customers and propensity of spending towards merchandise in retail store to plan the sales promotion programs effectively. Success of fashion apparel grows with the customer satisfaction, brand value, repeat buying behavior and increase in the sales of products overlooking the price and cognitive stigmas in shopping.

Conclusion

This study discusses the shoppers' perceptions towards fashion apparel in reference to purchase motivations, socio-cultural value, and life-style that mediate the emotions and shopping behavior. Fashion loving consumers typically patronage multi-channel retail outlets, designer brands, and invest time and cost towards an advantageous product search. The study suggests that consumers with sustainable purchase intentions for fashion apparel are motivated to seek benefits of the store and brand specific promotions and prices enhancing their shopping basket. The majority of shoppers rely on store patronage, brand value and building loyalty over time to continue benefits of the store and brand promotions. The shopping motivation, attributes of retailers and customer beliefs influence patronage behavior among shoppers. The discussions in the study also divulge that shopping arousal is largely driven by mall attractions, inter-personal influences, sales promotions and comparative gains among urban shoppers. Major factors that affect shopping arousal among fashion shoppers are simulation/trial facilities, brand reputation, personalization possibilities and store attractiveness in reference to products and services, brand value, and price.

The discussions in the paper emphasize major factors affecting purchase intentions of consumer towards fashion apparel in reference to socio-cultural determinants and perceived values associated with the product. It has been observed in the study that the perceptions on product satisfaction and brand differences are the interdependent factors affecting the buying decision for socio-culturally and peer appreciate fashion apparel. However, one of the decision intervening factors is perceived impact of fashion apparel in the society and among peers. Since the arousal on buying fashion apparel is largely driven by brand and store attractions, inter-personal influences, self reference criterions and comparative gains, consumers also feel risk averse and entrap in decision making.

Limitations of the Study

Like many other empirical studies this research might also have some limitations in reference to sampling, data collection and generalization of the findings. The samples drawn for the study may not be enough to generalize the study results. However, results of the study may indicate similar pattern of shopping behavior of urban consumers in shopping malls also in reference to other Latin American markets. The findings are limited to Mexican consumers and convenience sampling. Other limitations include the qualitative variables used in the study which might have reflected on making some causal statements. However, future studies could avoid these limitations by using data from several countries, representative samples, and additional variables.

Future Research

This research study raises various arguments on consumer behavior for fashion apparel affected by socio-cultural and economic factors. It has been observed in the study that peer pressures lay strong influence towards building purchase intentions for fashion apparel. However, research studies on various themes of fashion marketing have been contributed over a long period and there still remains the scope for exploring the notion of fashion-oriented impulse buying in reference to ethnic fashion and analyzing the relationship with consumer behavior and affective consumption factors such as fashion involvement. Future

research can also be addressed to explore the emotional response for fashion products as a powerful antecedent to evaluations of the purchase and subsequent attitudes. Future research may also be directed towards measuring the impact of psychographic drivers and fashion addiction that leads to impulsive buying of designer brands apparel. The triadic factors related to expenditure, hedonic pleasure and lifestyle can also be the future research directions.

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Table 1: Variables Chosen for the Study and Descriptive Statistics

(n=236)

Variable Segments	Product based (VS ₁ =7)	Perceptual (VS ₂ =9)	Economic (VS ₃ =6)	Store based (VS ₄ =8)	Arousal and Merriment (VS ₅ =5)
Hypotheses	H ₂	H ₁ , H ₄ , H ₆	H ₅	H ₄ , H ₂	H ₂ , H ₇
Data Variables	Appearance Sensory Durability Newness Accessories Fun Celebrity tag	Value and lifestyle Social status Workplace culture Personality Family motivation Brand image Store image Loyalty Shoppers' interaction Media communication	Value for money Price sensitivity Cross promotion Value additions Uniqueness Credit facilities	Display Store promotions Availability Customization Store brands Designer brands Fashion simulation Product-mix	In-store ambience Celebrity promotions Hands-on experience Take-home trials Customer involvement
Mean	6.720	4.288	5.761	4.503	6.065
Standard Deviation	1.030	0.735	0.810	0.879	1.226
Standard Error	0.054	0.038	0.042	0.046	0.064
Skewness	-0.906	-1.085	-1.050	-0.610	-0.463
Sample Variance	1.061	0.540	0.656	0.773	1.504
α -Scores	0.84	0.78	0.86	0.82	0.76

Figures in parentheses indicate variable segment (VS) and number of variables

Table 2: Measurement of Constructs: Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Scale Reliability

Factor Segments	Attributes (Scale: 1-Strongly Agree, 5-Strongly Disagree)	Standardized Loading	t-Value	Reliability SCR ^a /AVE ^b
Product Attractiveness	Consumers lean towards buying fashion apparel that exhibits newness, offers accessories, and holds celebrity tag (A₁)	0.86	14.26	SCR=0.763 AVE=0.681
	Fashion apparel should demonstrate sensory appeal and fun (A₂)	0.89	23.06	
	Consumers shift their preferences on fashion apparel in view of its socio-economic value and life style (A₃)	0.81	18.25	
Store and Brand Preferences	Designer brands are identified by the consumer in the context of store images (A₄)	0.63	13.48	SCR=0.836 AVE=0.724
	Consumers are attracted by the display and fashion simulation offered by the stores (A₅)	0.64	22.09	
	Store promotion of fashion apparel are attractive when combined with product-mix and personalization (A₆)	0.78	16.48	
	Store brands are more attractive to consumers as they are pro-fashion, low priced, easily available (A₇)	0.84	20.55	
Economic Drivers	Fashion apparel demonstrate uniqueness and value added social image (A₈)	0.88	26.14	SCR=0.791 AVE=0.663
	Purchase intentions of consumers for fashion apparel is stronger when it demonstrates value for money by earning self-esteem in the society (A₉)	0.82	18.01	
	Consumers are attracted towards fashion apparel with cross promotions, price discounts and credit facilities (A₁₀)	0.92	12.82	
Cognitive Determinants	Fashion apparel are purchased to exhibit value and life style to highlight personality traits (A₁₁)	0.87	24.92	SCR=0.845 AVE=0.648
	Purchase intentions for fashion apparel are supported by peer review and media communication (A₁₂)	0.84	15.76	
	Purchase decision are influenced by the brand and store images (A₁₃)	0.63	19.08	
	Buying fashion apparel is induced by the family motivation and workplace environment (A₁₄)	0.71	21.87	
Arousal and Merriment	In-store promotions and product experience drive purchase intentions for fashion apparel (A₁₅)	0.88	14.52	SCR=0.754 AVE=0.619
	Take home trials of apparel develop consumer involvement that induce purchase intentions (A₁₆)	0.56	13.28	
	Celebrity linked promotions on fashion apparel build brand loyalty and buying attitude (A₁₇)	0.66	19.77	

Fit statistics for measurement model of 17 indicators for 5 constructs: $\chi^2 = 246.51$; $p < 0.050$; GFI = 0.91; RMSEA = 0.037; CFI = 0.88; TLI (NNFI) = 0.86

^a Scale composite reliability ($\rho_c = (\sum \lambda_i)^2 \text{var}(\xi) / ((\sum \lambda_i)^2 \text{var}(\xi) + \sum \theta_{ii})$) (Bagozzi & Yi, 1998).

^b Average variance extracted ($\rho_c = (\sum \lambda_i^2 \text{var}(\xi)) / (\sum \lambda_i^2 \text{var}(\xi) + \sum \theta_{ii})$) (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Table 3: Regression, factor loading results and correlations ($n=236$)

Variables	Hypotheses Validation	β	SE	Factor Loading	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
1 Newness	H ₁	0.521**	2.16	0.78	1															
2 Celebrity tag	H ₆ , H ₇	0.487**	0.74	0.61	0.47	1														
3 Social status	H ₁ , H ₂	0.592*	1.45	0.83	0.31	0.42	1													
4 Personality	H ₁	0.428**	0.68	0.71	0.36	0.28	0.49	1												
5 Brand attributes	H ₃ , H ₅	0.504**	4.35	0.68	0.54	0.21	0.36	0.16	1											
6 Store image	H ₄ , H ₅	0.493**	9.03	0.81	0.19	-0.2	0.57	0.23	0.18	1										
7 Product experience	H ₁	0.610*	1.66	0.79	0.26	0.13	0.48	0.21	0.43	0.44	1									
8 Media effects	H ₄ , H ₆	0.411**	1.27	0.74	0.58	0.48	0.51	0.17	0.39	0.34	0.54	1								
9 Personal beliefs	H ₇	0.527**	8.02	0.82	0.46	0.39	0.49	0.56	0.27	0.33	0.41	0.40	1							
10 Credit and Promotion	H ₅	0.419**	0.38	0.86	0.48	0.55	0.48	0.37	0.62	0.39	0.59	0.72	0.26	1						
11 Price Discounts	H ₅	0.603*	1.82	0.74	0.42	0.19	0.14	0.16	0.47	0.14	0.55	0.59	0.45	0.61	1					
12 Store ambience	H ₇	0.537*	3.91	0.63	0.30	0.25	0.13	0.17	0.49	0.37	0.64	0.47	0.33	0.42	0.69	1				
13 Personalization	H ₁ , H ₂	0.235	2.86	0.76	0.41	0.32	0.58	0.29	0.55	0.37	0.57	0.60	0.59	0.72	0.51	0.67	1			
14 Peer and family effects	H ₃ , H ₄	0.481**	0.92	0.88	0.29	0.18	0.26	0.14	0.36	0.40	0.63	0.66	0.31	0.45	0.50	0.49	0.69	1		
15 Customer involvement	H ₆	0.324 ⁺	1.66	0.75	0.36	0.46	0.30	0.18	0.29	0.41	0.11	0.23	0.31	0.47	0.14	0.49	0.44	0.50	0.50	1

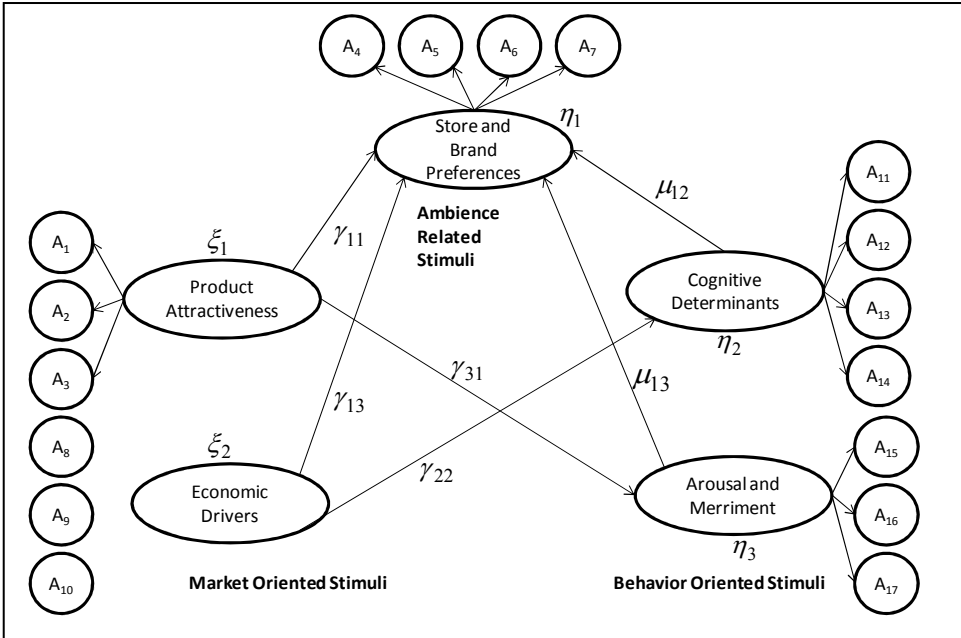
Note: The absolute value of correlations ≤ 0.21 is significant at the 0.10 level, between 0.22 and 0.47 is significant at 0.05 levels, and above 0.48 is significant at 0.01 levels

*p < 0.01, **p < 0.05, +p < 0.10, SE= Standard Error

Table 4: Measures of constructs and ANNOA results

Factor Association	Hypotheses	Estimates	F-Value
Product attractiveness \rightarrow Arousal and merriment (γ_{31})	H ₁ , H ₂	0.379	4.769
Economic drivers \rightarrow Store and brand preferences (γ_{13})	H ₅	0.421	4.185
Product attractiveness \rightarrow Store and brand preferences (γ_{11})	H ₄	0.468	3.017
Economic drivers \rightarrow Cognitive determinants (γ_{22})	H ₅	0.603	4.926
Store and brand preferences \rightarrow Arousal and merriment (μ_{13})	H ₃ , H ₇	0.522	4.205
Store and brand preferences \rightarrow Cognitive determinants (μ_{12})	H ₆ , H ₁ , H ₄	0.384	3.551

Figure 1: Interrelationship among Factors Influencing Purchase Intentions among Consumers



For details on A₁ to A₁₇, please see Table 2

Appendix A: Principal questions administered to the respondents

Product and Store Based

1. Which factors do you consider for buying fashion apparel? Design-1, Color-2, Brand-3, Celebrity Tag-4, Visual effects-5, Store-6
2. How do you determine product sensitivity? Touch-1, Fabrication-2, Peer appreciation-3, Price-4, Social value-5
3. What attributes do you look for in fashion apparel? Brand Image-1, Newness-2, Accessories-3
4. Which type of fashion apparel do you prefer? Celebrity endorsed-1, Public image driving-2, Premium quality-3, Long fashion life cycle-4
5. Do you prefer to have personalized fashion apparel? Yes-1, No-2, Indifferent-3
6. Which factors of store brands affect your purchase intentions? Price-1, Store Image-2, Personalization-3, Customer services-4

Economic value, arousal and merriment

6. What indicators do you use for comparing economic value of fashion apparel? Price-1, Value for money-2, Cost of searching-3, Uniqueness-4
7. Which augmented factors associated with fashion apparel that attract you? Public image of the product-1, promotions-2, Returnability-3, fashion simulation-4
8. How do you prefer to enhance performance of your fashion apparel? Original accessories-1, Personalization-2, Do not want to add value-3
9. How do you feel satisfied with the fashion apparel you choose to buy? Price-1, Performance-2, Status among peers-3, Other indicators-4
10. Do you like to buy products when there is promotional offer? Yes-1, No-2, Indifferent-3

Perceptual factors stimulating buying process

11. Which type of advertisement do you watch to buy fashion apparel? TV-1, Print-2, Internet-3, Store based-4, Direct or mail advertisement-5, Celebrity endorsement-6
12. Which type of promotions appeal you? Point of sales-1, Casual promotions (e.g. social gatherings, peer parties, fashion shows etc.)-2, In-store company promotions-3, Any promotion-4, None-5
13. Which in-store promotion helps you in buying decision? In-store trial-1, Take-home trial-2, Computer simulation-3, product videos-4
14. How do you form opinion for buying? Through referrals-1, Self assessment-2, Peer discussion-3, Family advise-4
15. Which major attraction(s) do you consider to buy a product from retail store? In-store ambience-1, Recreation at retail store-2, Post-purchase fun-3
16. Do you think that deriving short-run satisfaction is one of the significant determinants towards making buying decision? Yes-1, No-2, Indifferent-3
17. Which referrals help in decision making? Celebrity tags-1, Peers-2, Brand-3, Family-4
18. How do trials of apparel help your decision making on buying product? Fittings-1, Peer value-2, Suits to the best I wanted-3, Builds arousal-4
19. What is your post-purchase expectation in buying fashion apparel? Continued association with company's products-1, On-line access to new products of the company-2, Joining virtual clubs promoted by companies (e.g. Ralph Lauren, Nautica, Scappino, Folly's etc.)-3

Open ended questions

1. Describe the good promotion practices in retail stores leading to success.
2. What should be the appropriate economic and socio-cultural factors that can be associated with the retail brands addressing young consumers?
3. Which factors drive the arousal and satisfaction during the buying process?
4. How do you describe retail ambience?
5. Describe the process of your buying new fashion apparel.