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## Buying behaviour and perception of people regarding brand: A study of Solan town

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### Abstract

A brand is a name, term, design, symbol or any other features that distinguish one seller's goods or service from those of other sellers. The objectives of this research are to study the influence of various factors affecting buying behaviour and to have an idea about the parameters which customer considers before purchasing the branded products. Hence, an approach is made in this study to investigate the buying behaviour of buyers of branded products in Solan Town. This research is descriptive in nature where primary data has been collected from 100 respondents through questionnaire. To fulfil the objectives of the study percentage analysis, mean, standard deviation & ANOVA test is used and descriptive statistics for demographics. Branded products are perceived as a sign of self-esteem symbol. The study has put forward that males are found to be more fashion conscious and latest trend & self-esteem are the most important factors that stimulates them to shop lifestyle branded products.

**Keywords:** Brand, brand awareness, self-esteem

### Introduction

The Indian customer has undergone a remarkable transformation. Just a decade or two ago, the Indian customer saved most of his income, purchased the bare necessities and rarely indulged himself. Today, armed with a higher income, credit cards, exposure to the shopping culture of the west and a desire to improve his standard of living, the Indian consumer is spending like never before. Organized retail with its variety of products and multitude of malls and supermarkets is fuelling their addiction. Most customer's preferences change according to the change in fashion. In the present days people's trust and loyalty depends on their experiences, and also on the effects of media on the public. India is witnessing change in life styles of large section of the population. The need to understand the emerging markets and consumers has become a big challenge for the corporate world especially in creating and managing a powerful brand. By developing a powerful brand, corporate can establish 'brand equity' and the equity assists firms in a variety of ways to manage competition and to maintain market share. Due to the globalization process, Indians are getting attracted to readymade dresses, particularly Multinational brands. Buying behaviour of men on branded shirts is changing one. Number of people visits the showroom with a brand in mind because the quality and comfort of that brand are suitable for them. It becomes important for the marketers to understand these relationships for successful design and execution of branding strategies. Nowadays due to the upsurge in media, boom in smart phone market, more internet usage, more information in hand, more leisure time, more exposure, small families, aspirations of higher standard of living, increase in the number of dinks (Double Income No Kids), more disposable income have made people more conscious about their lifestyles. Due to increase in mall culture and flood in the branded stores, people in India now have been using branded products especially in Metro Cities, Mega Cities and Smart Cities. Looking to this shifting of the mind-set, it was thought to undertake a study to know the behaviour and perceptions of people regarding branded and unbranded products. Due to increase in mall culture and flood in the branded stores, it was thought to undertake a study to know the behaviour of people regarding branded products.

For the present study the efforts have been made to examine factors that influence the buying behaviour of consumers for brand and to get an idea about the parameters which customer considers while purchasing a product.

### Literature Review

Uggla (2001) <sup>[1]</sup>, explains two different types of consumer behavior: cognitive and experience oriented. The consumers who have cognitive behaviour are rational and logical consumer while the experience oriented consumers have more emotional motives for buying a product. In comparison, have defined four types of consumer behaviour: Rational, unconscious, learned and social behaviour. The different behaviours are characterized by the order of the three steps: Knowledge, attitude and action. Rational behaviour: if consumers have rational behaviour, they start to get some knowledge about the product and what the market may offer. By evaluating the information they get an attitude towards the product or not. This behaviour is more common when consumers are buying expensive products like car.

Philip Kotler and Kevin Lane Keller, (2006) says that People from same subculture, social class, and occupation may lead quite different lifestyles. Lifestyle is the persons' pattern of living in the world as expressed in activities, interests, and opinions. Lifestyle portrays the "whole person" interacting with his or her environment. Lifestyle helps marketers to classify products according to the activities interest, and opinion. Since most of customer is achievement-oriented. Therefore the marketers may aim the brand more clearly at the achiever lifestyle.

(Junxiu Jia Rong Du Qiying Hu, 2007) <sup>[7]</sup> said that TV and advertising together present a lethal combination and has become an integral part of modern society. It is the most convenient route to reach not only adult consumers but also the adolescents. Adolescents are manipulated by advertisement promise that the product will do something special for them which will transform their life. The results revealed that advertisements played a vital role in introducing a new product in the family list & making better choice during shopping. The girls utilized their pocket money received every month for shopping. The main items purchased from the pocket money were- food, cosmetics, gifts and cards. The parent's choice and advice was important in their purchase decision. (Andrew Caplin, John Leahy, 2004) <sup>[4]</sup>. The influence of gender, age, education, and income on the likelihood to purchase over the Internet is empirically examined. Findings show that these variables significantly influence the likelihood to purchase over the Internet and can be used to profile, segment, and target markets and develop public policies to bridge the digital divide.

Susan Auty and Richard Elliot (1998) <sup>[2]</sup> conducted sixteen focus group interviews to study the importance of social identity in the interpretation of brands of jeans as measured by Snyder's revised Self-Monitoring Scale, which discriminated between people who were highly motivated to respond to social cues and those who remained 'true to themselves'. It was found that self-monitoring is a significant mediator of meaning with regard to unbranded jeans but not branded jeans. 14 to 17 year olds are more positively disposed to many of Levi's attributes than older age groups. There were significant differences between the youngest and oldest age groups in the perception of Levi's with regard to cut, fit, stylishness, desirability and trendiness. It was also found that women had more favourable opinions and attitudes to

branded jeans, specifically to image, modernity, practicality, quality and trendiness than men.

Reeti Agarwal and Ankit Mehrotra (2009) <sup>[5]</sup> with an objective of determining customer perception regarding branded and unbranded clothes conducted a survey with 353 respondents from Northern part of India. The findings highlighted that out of the various parameters taken into consideration, cut and fit of the clothes is considered to be the most important by customers while choosing clothes. Findings of regression analysis indicated that variety was found to have the maximum impact on customer's choice of branded or unbranded clothes. The only difference in the perception of Indian customers regarding various attributes of branded and unbranded clothes is that branded products are treated as status symbol.

Mahalaxmi Krishnan, VS Pande, *et al.* (2012) <sup>[6]</sup> with the objective of ascertaining the determinants for consumer preference for branded and unbranded products, conducted a survey. Findings of the study revealed that quality of the products is the prime motivator for branded products, easy availability and price are the reasons for choosing unbranded products. Respondents stated that branded products fulfil their expectations.

Syed Akif Hasan and Muhammad Imtiaz, *et al.* (2012) <sup>[6]</sup> with an objective to understand and judge the co-movements between the consumptions of branded and unbranded products on the basis of consumer's income, quality and the prices of both the products undertook a study with data collected from the economic survey of Karachi, Islamabad and Lahore - all the major cities of Pakistan found that an increase in consumer's income level increases their consumption of branded products. Similarly, consumers prefer to purchase branded product as there is a strong perception that branded items have good quality. While, it was also found that if there is an increase in the prices of branded or unbranded products then both have the same pattern for being consumed which is the co-movement of their consumption patterns.

### Research Methodology

For the present study Solan district of Himachal Pradesh has been selected due to the prominence of this town in state, literacy and income proximity of this town to the bigger markets of the plains and inflow of tourists throughout the year who bring in the diverse market culture from all over the country. Total 100 respondents have been chosen for the collection of primary data and secondary data was extracted from reputed journals, research paper, newspapers, published resources and various website.

### Data analysis

Data analysis refers to computing of certain measures along with searching on pattern of relationship that exist among data groups. The data collected from different sources was classified and tabulated according to the requirement of the study. The analysis of present study has been done through appropriate statistical and mathematical tools. Arithmetic mean, percentage, standard deviation and ANNOVA (Analysis of Variance).

### Results

This section presents the results and discussion of the data. Firstly, the demographic profile of the respondents has been discussed, then in the next part factors that impact the brand behaviour of the respondents have studied and in the last

section parameters that impact the customer behaviour for the selection of brand management. Based on the data presented in Table 1.1, it can be concluded that the majority of the respondents are male, as the detail to 56% of the total respondents being male and 44% being female. Along with that a significant majority of the respondents fall in the age category of 20-40 years, with 90% of the total respondents belonging to this category. The smallest group of respondents is from the age group of less than 20 years, comprising just 4% of the total respondents. Therefore, it can be inferred that most of the respondents in this study belong to the age group of 20-40 years. When it comes to occupation, the data reveals that 20% of the respondents are in service, 19% are businessmen, 10% are professionals, and 51% fall into the "other" category. Finally, table also shows that the majority of the respondents belong to the income group of 60,000 and above, which constitutes 58% of the total. The next highest income group is 20-40 thousand, which makes up 24% of the total. The income group of 40-60 thousand constitutes 14%, and the lowest income group is below 20,000 at 4%, representing the smallest percentage of respondents.

**Table 1:** Descriptive statistics: Demographic profile of the respondents

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	44	44
Male	56	56
Total	100	100
<b>Age</b>		
Less than 20	4	4
20-40	90	90
40-60	6	6
Total	100	100
<b>Occupation</b>		
Service	20	20
Business	19	19
Profession	10	10
Others	51	51
Total	100	100
<b>Monthly Income (Rs)</b>		
Less than 20,000	4	4
20,000-40,000	24	24
40,000-60,000	14	14
60,000 & Above	58	58
Total	100	100

**Purchase behavior with respect to gender**

Table 2 exhibits the mean difference in the preference for frequency of purchase behaviour of female and male. It is noted from the table that female respondents have mean score for frequency of purchasing branded products are (M=3.30) which is also the maximum score in whole table where as the male respondents have mean value for frequency of purchasing branded products (M=3.29) These values show

that both gender respondents i.e. female and male give more preference to purchasing branded products monthly. Further, it is observed that both female and male respondents having standard deviation i.e. (.51 and .56) which is lowest S.D. in whole table therefore meaning there by that it tend to be very close to the mean so it shows that there is a less variation in the preference for frequency of purchasing branded products monthly for both female & male. Hence the frequency of purchase behaviour of respondents have the significant value (.929) is more than  $\alpha$  value of 0.05, so purchase behaviour is found to be insignificant in relation to Gender.

**Table 2:** Frequency of purchase behaviour with respect to gender

Frequency of Purchase behaviour with respect to gender	Female		Male		F	Sig( $\alpha$ )
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D		
As often buying branded products	1.84	.86	2.02	.92	.96	0.33
First look to buy a branded product	1.45	1.04	1.82	1.25	2.44	0.121
Information before purchasing branded products	1.75	.89	1.82	.81	.17	0.677
Factor influencer to buy a product	3.05	1.01	3.00	1.03	.05	0.825
Amount of money spends	2.00	1.12	2.29	1.12	1.60	0.209
Advertisements changes perception for brand	1.98	.88	2.27	.82	2.91	0.091
Frequency of purchasing products	3.30	.51	3.29	.56	.01	0.929
Expensive products better or not	1.95	.96	1.79	.85	.87	0.354
Celebrity endorsement influence	2.14	.59	2.29	.59	1.56	0.215
Attraction towards brand	2.39	1.38	2.45	1.35	.05	0.827
Choosing brand over unbranded	2.32	.91	2.66	.79	4.04	0.047

Table 3 depicts the mean difference in the preference for frequency of purchase behaviour of respondents with respect to their monthly Income. It is noted from the table that people earning less than 20,000 has mean score for frequency of purchasing branded products are (M=3.50) and respondents earning 20,000-40,000 monthly have similar mean value for frequency of purchasing branded products (M=3.50) which is also the maximum score in whole table and the respondents who is earning 40,000-60,000 have the mean score (M=3.36) which is followed by the respondents who is earning more than 60,000 have the mean score (M=3.17). These values shows that people whose monthly income is less than 20,000 and people whose monthly income is even above 60,000 tend to purchase branded products monthly. Further, it is observed that all the respondents who have the max. Mean values having the Standard deviation i.e. (.58, .59, .50,.50) which are lowest S.D. in whole table therefore it shows that there is a less variation in the preference for frequency of purchasing branded products monthly for all the respondents whether their monthly income is less than 20,000 or it is more than 60,000. Hence the frequency of purchase behaviour of respondents have the significant value (.061) which is more than  $\alpha$  value of 0.05 means that there is no significant relation between frequency of purchase behaviour of respondents and their Monthly Income.

**Table 3:** Descriptive of the ANNOVA (Analysis of Variance) related to monthly Income

Monthly Income	Less than 20,000		20,000-40,000		40,000-60,000		60,000		F	Sig
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D		
As often buying branded products	2.50	1.29	2.17	.92	2.71	.99	1.62	.67	8.55	0
First look to buy a branded product	1.75	1.50	1.42	.72	1.07	.27	1.90	1.3	2.41	0.072
Information before purchasing branded products	1.75	.96	1.87	.90	2.00	.96	1.71	.79	.55	0.648
Factor influencer to buy a product	2.50	1.00	2.71	1.04	3.07	1.00	3.17	0.99	1.5	0.199
Amount of money spends	2.75	1.50	1.58	.78	1.64	.74	2.48	1.1	5.77	0.001
Advertisements changes perception for brand	1.75	.96	2.25	.90	2.21	.89	2.10	0.83	.47	0.7
Frequency of purchasing products	3.50	.58	3.50	.59	3.36	.50	3.17	.50	2.54	0.061

Expensive products better or not	1.50	1.00	2.13	.95	2.36	.84	1.66	.83	3.60	0.016
Celebrity endorsement influence	2.25	.96	2.17	.64	2.07	.62	2.28	.56	.52	0.67
Attraction towards brand	1.50	1.00	2.88	1.33	3.00	1.36	2.16	1.3	3.3	0.023
Choosing brand over unbranded	3.00	.00	2.58	.78	2.79	.70	2.38	.93	1.44	0.236

**Factors affecting the consumer behavior regarding brands**

Table 4 illustrates that majority of the respondents give more importance to the brand because of the Latest Trend (44%) It makes them attracted toward Brand, and is followed by need of the product (35%). Table also reveals that most of the respondents (43%) prefer the any other Factor for purchasing the branded products which is followed by the advertisement (25%) and work group (23%) and very few people purchase the branded products because of their peer group (9%). Data also depicts that the out of 100 respondents, (66%) respondents used to purchase the branded products for their Self-esteem and 21% respondents purchase the products for their status, and very few people purchases the branded products because of Society. Self -esteem is one of the most preferred factor among all the factors for purchasing the branded products.

**Table 4:** Factors affecting the consumer behaviour regarding brands

Factors	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Latest trend	44	44
Advertisement	5	5
Discount	16	16
Need for the product	35	35
<b>Group Pressure</b>		
Peer group	9	9
Work group	23	23
Advertisement	25	25
Any Other	43	43
<b>Self esteem</b>		
Status	21	21
Boast	10	10
Self esteem	66	66
Society	3	3

**Conclusion**

Looking to the shifting of the mind-set, it was thought to undertake a study to know the behavior and perceptions of people of Solan Town regarding branded products. Branded products are perceived as a sign of self-esteem symbol. Males were found more fashion conscious and Latest trend & Self-esteem are the most important factors that stimulates them to shop lifestyle branded products. So it is concluded that branding have a great impact on consumer buying behavior. The study will help the marketers of branded an unbranded product to understand the behavior and perceptions of people regarding products. It will help them to create the strategies to hook the people.

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