

Fashion buying behavior of college-going boys of Ludhiana city

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ABSTRACT

Survey method was conducted to study the fashion buying practices of 150 college-going boys in the age group of 20-25 years, selected randomly from five colleges of Ludhiana city. The statistical analysis of data revealed that a large percentage of respondents (52.00%) were brand sensitive to moderate level whereas, 24 per cent of college-going boys were highly brand conscious. Maximum percentage of respondents preferred Levis, Arrow and Pepe Jeans brands for shirts; Levis and Wrangler brands for jeans; and Nike and Reebok brands for shoes. Majority of college-going boys (84.67%) preferred companies' exclusive showrooms for buying their clothes followed by 34.67 per cent who preferred 'multi brand showrooms' for making clothing purchases. Designers and merchandisers need to plan their lines keeping in mind the varied requirements of their customers. Besides, salespersons need may be trained to assess the needs of their young customers so as to help them in making right decisions while choosing their clothes. The maximum percentage of college-going boys (24.67%) wanted to appear slimmer followed by 23.33 per cent who desired to appear taller. Also, 22.67 per cent boys wanted to look broader by creating illusions through clothing.

Key Words : Fashioning, Levis and Wrangler brands, Nike and Reebok brand

INTRODUCTION

Fashion is an important component of mass consumer culture. It is ever changing and captivating facet of our lives leading to enhancement and enrichment of life. All people seek an identity sense of belongingness through conforming to a given set of norms, and yet at the same time they strive to achieve some distinction as individual human beings (Kaur, 2005). A brand is any sign capable of being represented graphically, and capable of distinguishing goods or services of one undertaking from those of another undertaking. Each producer of goods and services attempts to obtain a share of the market potential by making consumers believe that they have the answer to all their personal needs and desires. Branding was

introduced to differentiate homogeneous products such as clothing. Clothing items can now be bought according to the psychological elements that they represent and not only for their physical characteristics and need-satisfying properties (Eck *et al.*, 2004). Fashion designers and merchandisers may understand and exploit the preferences of college-going boys for successful buying. Thus, the investigation was conducted with the following objectives:

Objectives :

- To investigate the factors considered by college-going boys while selecting their clothes.
- To study buying practices of college-going boys.
- To study the preference of brands worn by college-going boys.

METHODOLOGY

A sample of 150 respondents, aged between 20-25 years was selected randomly from five colleges of Ludhiana namely, College of Agriculture, College of Agricultural Engineering, College of Veterinary Sciences, Guru Nanak Engineering College and Government College for Boys was personally conducted by employing an interview schedule especially conducted for this purpose. These colleges were selected purposively to include the respondents of varied backgrounds and educational streams. Students of first year of graduation programmes were not included in the sample considering that period to be a transitional phase for them to adjust to the college environment. The data were analysed statistically by calculating percentages and mean scores.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Background information of respondents, maximum number of respondents were in the age group of 22-24 years(65.33%), pursuing B.Tech. degree programme (36.67%) and had their school education from private schools (55.33%). Equal percentages of the respondents (16.00%) were studying in B.Sc. and B.A. degree programmes. Only 14 per cent respondents were pursuing their post-graduation degree programmes.

A large number of respondents (44.00%) had total family's monthly income between Rs.20,000-40,000. Eight per cent respondents' monthly family income was one lac or more. Majority of the respondents, *i.e.* 77.33 per cent, belonged to nuclear families. Equal number of college-going boys had urban and rural backgrounds.

Factors considered by the respondents while selecting their clothes :

It is evident from the Table 1 that 'overall appeal' (mean score-4.50) was ranked first by the college-going boys for the selection of clothes followed by 'latest fashion' (mean score-3.51) which obtained second rank. Thus, boys considered 'overall appeal' and 'latest fashion' prior to the consideration of the cost of clothes. 'Seam allowances' (mean score-1.00) were considered least important by the respondents. Jacob (1992) found that the most important factors which were kept in mind by the adolescent boys while purchasing were style and design, which were followed by the other factors like the colour of the fabric, the

Table 1 : Factors considered by the respondents while selecting their clothes (n=150)*

Factors	College-going boys		
	Score	Mean score	Rank
Overall appeal	580	4.50	I
Quality of fabric	343	2.83	VI
Cost	287	2.99	IV
Style	266	2.77	VII
Latest fashion	225	3.51	II
Durability	154	2.30	IX
Reduced price	47	2.94	V
Colour combination	259	2.18	X
Workmanship	13	3.25	III
Seam allowances	6	1.00	XI
Fastness of colours	81	2.61	VIII

*Multiple responses

price range and the adoption of the prevailing fashions.

Preference of showrooms for clothing purchase :

It is clearly seen from the data in Table 2 that majority of college-going boys (84.67%) preferred companies’ exclusive showrooms of particular brand for buying their clothes followed by 34.67 per cent who preferred ‘multi brand showrooms’ for making their clothing purchases. Very small shops were least preferred by college-going boys (1.33%). Thus, small shop merchandisers must not target this age group of college-going boys. Reputed companies may offer a separate line of branded apparel for college-going boys.

Table 2 : Sale outlets patronized by the respondents (n=150)*

Type of sale outlets	College-going boys	
	f	%
Mill’s outlets	05	03.33
Exclusive showrooms	127	84.67
Multi brand showrooms	52	34.67
Small shops	02	01.33

* Multiple responses f = Frequency

Rebacca (1993) studied the buying behaviour of ready-made shirt consumers and marketing strategies of retailers. She reported that exclusive and departmental multi-brand shops were the outlets most favoured by the consumers, while boutiques and pavement shops were the least popular. Shop patronage depended mainly upon the variety of shirts in stock. Outlets having greater assortments appear to draw more consumers.

Kaul (1982) reported that parents and close friends have influence on fashion adoption behaviour of college-going boys. Sisters’ influence obtained third rank for the college-going boys. Mothers' approval was least regarded by college-going boys (Table 3).

Table 3 : Consent of relations sought by the respondents for the adoption of fashion (n=150)*			
Relation	College-going boys		
	Score	Mean score	Rank
Mother	314	2.34	V
Father	307	2.50	IV
Sister	283	3.18	III
Brother	402	3.83	II
Friend	707	4.71	I

f - Frequency *Multiple responses

Purchase of branded items :

A brand is any sign capable of being represented graphically, and capable of distinguishing goods or services of one undertaking from those of another undertaking.

Each producer of goods and services attempts to obtain a share of the market potential by making consumers believe that they have the answer to all their personal needs and desires. Branding was introduced to differentiate homogeneous products such as clothing. Clothing items can now be bought according to the psychological elements that they represent and not only for their physical characteristics and need-satisfying properties (Eck *et al.*, 2004).

Extent of brand sensitivity among respondents :

The maximum per cent of college-going boys (52.00%) were brand sensitive to a moderate level, though 24 per cent college-going boys were highly brand conscious (Table 4). The minimum per cent of college-going boys (1.33%) never bothered about brands. Gadi (1982) was of the view that brand name plays an important role during the purchase of the ready-made garments. The popularity of brand in the market does, to some extent affect the purchasing power.

Table 4 : Extent of brand sensitivity among respondents (n=150)		
Level of sensitivity	College-going boys	
	f	%
High	36	24.00
Moderate	78	52.00
Slight	31	20.67
Least	03	02.00
Not at all	02	01.33

f = Frequency

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Brands preferred by the respondents :

The information pertaining to the brands preferred by the respondents is furnished in Table 5. For shirts, out of the total number of college-going boys, 63.33, 54.67 and 51.33 per cent college-going boys preferred Levis, Arrow and Pepe Jeans brands, respectively.

Table 5 : Brands preferred by the respondents for shirts, jeans and foot-wear (n=150)*		
Items	College-going boys	
	f	%
Shirts		
Provouge	55	36.67
Arrow	82	54.67
United Colors of Beneton	51	34.00
Levis	95	63.33
Pepe Jeans	77	51.33
Duke	42	28.00
Mango	05	03.33
Koutons	53	35.33
Spyker	70	46.67
Wrangler	68	45.33
Lee	62	41.33
Blackberry	42	28.00
Octave	70	46.67
Peter England	42	28.00
Outlaw	24	16.00
Wills	35	23.33
Banana Republic, Park Avenue, Blacks, Monte Carlo	04(1each)	02.67
Lower garments(Jeans)		
Lee	83	55.33
Levis	95	63.33
United Colors of Beneton	35	23.33
Lee Cooper	59	39.33
Wrangler	92	61.33

Table 5 contd...

Contd.... Table 5

Pepe Jeans	83	55.33
Koutons	37	24.67
Spyker	75	50.00
John Players	38	25.33
Sportking	14	09.33
Duke	26	17.33
Blackberry	50	33.33
Tommy Hilfiger	66	44.00
Wills, Adidas, Nike	03(1each)	02.00
Footwear's		
Levis	39	26.00
Lee Cooper	64	42.67
Nike	100	66.67
Reebok	100	66.67
Adidas	93	62.00
Liberty	13	08.67
Bata	53	35.33
Woodland	88	58.67
Peter England	05	03.33
Red Tape	08	05.33
Puma	09	06.00
Action, Campus	02(1each)	01.33

f = Frequency *Multiple responses

Banana Republic, Park Avenue, Black, Monte Carlo shirt brands were least preferred by the respondents (2.67% each). For jeans, Levis and Wrangler brands were most preferred by the 63.33 and 61.33 per cent respondents, respectively.

Also, a large and equal percentage of respondents (55.33%) preferred Pepe Jeans and Lee brands. Least percentage of the respondents (2.00% each) preferred Wills, Adidas and Nike brands for jeans. But, a large percentage of college-going boys (66.67% each) preferred Nike and Reebok brands for footwears followed by 58.67 per cent who preferred Woodland brand. The least percentage of respondents (1.33%) preferred Action and Campus brands.

Desire for creating illusions through clothing :

Designers and merchandisers need to plan their lines keeping in mind the varied

Table 6 : Desire of the respondents for creating illusions through clothes (n=150)*		
Types of illusions	College-going boys	
	f	%
Slim	37	24.67
Tall	35	23.33
Short	05	03.33
Heavy	21	14.00
Broad	34	22.67

f = Frequency *Multiple responses

requirements of their customers. Besides, salespersons may be trained to assess the needs of their young customers so as to help them in making right purchases. Types of illusions desired by the college-going boys through clothes are given in Table 6.

The maximum percentage of college-going boys (24.67%) want to appear slimmer followed by 23.33 per cent who desired to appear taller. Nearly equal percentage of the college-going boys (22.67%) wished broader.

Conclusion :

College-going boys preferred companies' exclusive and multi brand showrooms for buying their clothes. It was concluded from the results of study that, for the selection of clothes 'overall appeal' and 'latest fashion' are the factors considered by college-going boys prior to the consideration of the cost of clothes. They were highly brand conscious and preferred Levis, Arrow and Pepe Jeans brands for shirts; Levis and Wrangler brands for jeans; and Nike and Reebok brands for shoes.

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