

Comparative study on clothing practices and buying practices among female

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■ **ABSTRACT :** Clothing, this is considered as the second skin of human's play a very vital role in our life especially for female. Appropriate clothes help to make one happy. The present study was done to compare the clothing behaviour and buying behaviour among teenagers (13-19 years) and early adult (20-35 years) females of district Ghaziabad. To evaluate the effect of age and socio-economic status on clothing behaviour, buying behaviour and knowledge among the population of district Ghaziabad, total 500 subjects who were selected by stratified multistage random sampling technique from Modinagar and Ghaziabad. Majority of respondents were educated, unmarried belonged to nuclear family and from lower income group (LIG). LIG was found to be more concerned for cost than durability in selecting clothes used for different occasion. The data reflect some important aspects of clothing behaviour, buying behaviour and fashion awareness and knowledge, which can be used as guide line for manufacturer to meet the requirements of different ages from different socio-economic status.

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Clothing refers to the various articles of apparel used to cover the body. Textile refers to the raw as well as finished materials made from fabrics. The different functions attributed to the clothing are modesty, as a body covering to call attention to it, protection and utility, and ornamental values which provide aesthetic sensuous satisfaction in the search for beauty. The last function includes all the many aesthetic use of clothing. In the view point, clothing is used as a sexual lure as well as indicator of bravery and skill. It indicates one status in the society and obtained for the wearer the rewards of recognition, approval and identification.

One spends considerable time and money on purchasing of clothes. If one can manage his or her clothing needs and also other thing like availability, family income, order of importance, the shopping can be made valuable and economic. It depends on the buyer's understanding of the forces, such as values and needs that influence their personal decision and choice. Five basic facts should be kept in mind before purchasing clothes: problem recognition, pre-purchase information search, evaluation of alternative, purchase decision and post-purchase behaviour.

Present study is aimed at following objectives: To study the clothing and buying behaviour in teenagers

and early adult females in different income groups. To study the factors which are responsible for making awareness of clothing and buying behaviour in females. To know the views of females about clothing and buying behaviour belonging to different classes. To suggest the importance of buying among above mentioned age group.

RESEARCH METHODS

Present study was conducted in Ghaziabad district of Uttar Pradesh. To evaluate the effect of age and socio-economic status on clothing behaviour, buying behaviour and fashion awareness, and knowledge among the population of district Ghaziabad, total 500 subjects who were selected by stratified multistage random sampling technique from Modinagar and Ghaziabad.

Questionnaire and interview methods were used to collect data regarding different variables. After collecting the data, it was tabulated and analysed, to see the statistical significance between inter group and intra group.

250 respondents were from 13-19 years age group (teenagers) and rest 250 was from 20-35 years age group (early adult). These were further subdivided on the basis of income into low income group (LIG) middle income group (MIG), and high income group (HIG).

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Above Table 1 shows in 13-19 years, for LIG group, only two factors were considered during cloth purchase, cost and fashion. 50 per cent of respondents looked for fashion only while rest 50 per cent worried only for cost. Among MIG, major percentage (52.1%) preferred to go for latest fashion. Print came next to fashion in this group and according to results very less people cared for cost among MIG. In case of HIG 75 per cent respondents again went for fashion and rest for texture that means quality in indirect way. In the age group of 20-35 years majority of the LIG respondents 63.2 per cent checked cost and then for fashion and print. Print again is another criterion to identify fashion. In MIG fashion dominated over all other factors, while in case of HIG, fashion and

Table 1 : Factors influencing selection of clothing for special occasion

Factors	13 -19						20- 35					
	LIG		MIG		HIG		LIG		MIG		HIG	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Design	-	-	5	5.3	-	-	-	-	3	3.5	0	0
Print	-	-	30	31.9	-	-	21	19.3	7	8.3	27	47.3
Cost	68	50	7	7.4	-	-	69	63.3	9	10.7	-	-
Fashion	68	50	49	52.1	15	75	19	17.4	63	75	27	47.3
Texture	-	-	3	3.1	5	25	-	-	-	-	3	5.2
Durability	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Easy to care	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Comfort	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2.3	-	-
Total	136	100	94	100	20	100	109	100	84	100	57	100

$X^2 = 4.373, df=2, p<0.05$ $X^2 = 25.666, df=2, p<0.05$

Table 2 : Distribution of respondents according to their choice for place of buying clothes

Places	13 -19						20- 35					
	LIG		MIG		HIG		LIG		MIG		HIG	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Boutique	0	0	23	24.4	2	10	0	0	9	10.7	9	15.7
Departmental store	0	0	6	6.3	2	10	0	0	12	14.2	7	12.2
Sale/Exhibition	53	38.9	19	20.2	0	0	34	31.1	18	21.4	7	12.2
Retail	70	51.4	6	6.3	6	30	69	63.3	15	17.8	9	15.7
Mall	0	0	34	36.1	10	50	0	0	20	23.8	25	43.8
Any other	13	9.5	6	6.3	0	0	6	5.5	10	11.9	0	0
Total	136	100	94	100	20	100	109	100	84	100	57	100

$X^2 = 61.292, df=2, p<0.05$ $X^2 = 67.569, df=4, p<0.05$

print was given equal and more importance than any other factor.

Most important thing which can be identified from above results is that almost nobody cared for durability, comfort, easy to care while buying clothes for special occasions.

Table depicts that the first choice for purchasing

clothes amongst LIG was retail stores and for MIG and HIG was mall in both age groups. Next preferred choice among MIG and LIG was sale/ exhibition. Boutiques were chosen for shopping by MIG and HIG only.

According to market compilation by third eye sight apparel on line September 1-15 2006- currently India has the highest retail density in the world at 6 per cent.

Table 3 : Distribution of respondents on the basis of dress they like to wear on special occasion

Dresses	13 -19						20- 35					
	LIG		MIG		HIG		LIG		MIG		HIG	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Kurta/Salwar / churidar	53	38.9	46	48.9	3	15	50	45.8	36	42.8	12	21
Saree	8	5.8	9	9.5	0	0	18	16.5	32	38	35	61.4
Lehenga and choli	14	10.2	21	22.3	0	0	28	25.6	14	16.6	10	17.5
Skirt/top	40	29.4	6	6.3	4	20	0	0	0	0	0	0
Parallel and top	0	0	3	3.1	5	25	4	3.6	0	0	0	0
Jeans/Trousers and top	21	15.4	9	9.5	8	40	9	8.2	2	2.3	0	0
Total	136	100	94	100	20	100	109	100	84	100	57	100
	$X^2 = 12.784, df=4, p<0.05$						$X^2 = 37.581, df=4, p<0.05$					

Table 4 : Markings as relevant sources of information

Sources	No. of respondents											
	13 -19						20- 35					
	LIG		MIG		HIG		LIG		MIG		HIG	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
No	121	88.9	22	23.4	3	15	70	64.2	19	22.6	7	12.2
Yes	15	11.0	72	76.5	17	85	39	35.7	65	77.3	50	87.7
Total	136	100	94	100	20	100	109	100	84	100	57	100
	$X^2 = 127.036, df=2, p<0.05$						$X^2 = 49.344, df=2, p<0.05$					

Table 5 : Buying behaviour of consumers regarding fabric without stamped marking

Responses	No. of respondents											
	LIG		MIG		HIG		LIG		MIG		HIG	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Buy	0		0		0	0	6	5.5	0		0	
Consultant and clarify	123	90.4	86	91.4	17	85	77	70.6	68	80.9	53	92.9
Do not buy	3	2.2	8	8.5	3	15	26	23.8	16	19	4	7.00
Total	136	100	94	100	20	100	109	100	84	100	57	100
	$X^2 = 0.001, df=1, p>0.05$						$X^2 = 3.823, df=1, p>0.05$					

Table 6 : Consumer's habit regarding getting bills after purchasing of fabric/apparel

Responses	No. of respondents											
	LIG		MIG		HIG		LIG		MIG		HIG	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
No	80	58.8	64	68.0	12	60	53	48.6	53	63.0	23	40.3
Yes	56	41.1	30	31.9	8	40	56	51.3	31	36.9	34	59.6
Total	136	100	94	100	20	100	109	100	84	100	57	100
	$X^2 = 2.082, df=2, p>0.05$						$X^2 = 7.720, df=2, p<0.05$					

Retail outlet of which small family household run 80 per cent. A key driver for organized retail in the surge in mall growth. There are 120 malls in the country today and by 2010 the number of malls in the country is expected to be close to 600.

Statistically chi square test was applied to test the level of significance at p, 005 levels according to which shows that socio-economic status was found to be significant among the respondents aged 13-19 year.

Among the respondents aged 20-35 years. Socio-economic status was significantly associated with the place of buying clothes.

The data from the above Table reveals that in the age group of 13-19 years majority of females choose salwar/ churidar and suit on special occasions. Second option is lehenga. Saree comes at third choice among all income group except in case of HIG where a majority of females go for mainly jeans/trousers and top or parallel and top in place of salwar/churidar suit and saree. Very few among this group go for lehenga/choli. The reason which immediately comes to mind is that most of samples in this group are very young girls and if we go for fashion this is most comfortable and popular dress among them. Jeans can be worn for a special occasion and same dress can also be used for regular wear while lehenga is not a cloth which can be used generally. So a choice of jeans and top is very economical also.

It is evident from the results that even though western wear is fast gaining popularity but when it come to situations like traditional special occasion, Indian women still prefer to be dressed in style reflecting our rich heritage.

Journalist Mallica Singh quoted in an article, "Though we are all educated women and know that we are not heroines, that do not stop us from wanting to dazzle the world on our weddings and numerous other functions (Elite-Indian Express Group, 1999). Traditional Indian apparel suffices this desire very well.

As we know that markings are very important source of information for quality, a comparison of views were done in between all groups and it was found that LIG in both the age groups were less aware of importance of marking on clothes. MIG and HIG were found to be well aware of the importance of this factor.

The buying behaviour speaks about her knowledge and awareness about the goods. The attitudes of the respondents for buying a fabric, which did not have

stamped markings, revealed that in majority of cases they consulted and clarified this doubts with shopkeepers and then bought the fabric. This again strongly focused the attention to signify the importance of marking in any textile products and the need to consult marking information before making the purchase irrespective of whatever information salesman provides.

The result indicates that among the age group of 13-19 years most of the respondents 58.8 per cent do not take bills in the low income group and in the middle income group and high income group respondents also 68 per cent and 60 per cent, respectively did not take bills. Among the age group of 20-35 years 51.3 per cent among LIG and 59.6 per cent respondents of HIG used to take bill and 63 per cent of respondents of middle income group did not take bill.

From the results it is observed that textiles products are being sold either without cash memo or with cash memo, but even if they provide bill, they carry no guarantee of exchange or replacement or encashment in lieu of some defects emerging while in use. This needs to be amended to benefit the consumers so also the statement seen in cash memo, "Goods once sold will not be taken back" should be abolished as it is illegal to mention the same. Cash memo should be considered as a full proof evident of goods purchased from shop, also serve as guarantee for consumer to be helped by the shopkeeper in suitable way related to flaw or defects.

Socio-economic status was found to be non-significant among the respondents aged 13-19 years the socio-economic status of respondents aged 13-19 affect the behaviour regarding getting bills after purchasing of fabric/apparel.

Among the respondents aged 20-35 years socio-economic status is significantly associated with the respondents habits regarding getting bills after purchasing of fabric/apparel.

Summary and conclusion:

Targeted population comprised of 49 per cent LIG, 35.8 per cent MIG and 15 per cent HIG respondents.

In selecting clothes for special occasion in 13-19 years age group LIG cared for two factors cost (50%) and fashion (50%). For MIG and HIG, fashion was the most important criteria. In 20-35 years age group LIG looked for cost (63.3%) first than fashion. MIG were interested for fashion, and HIG were interested for

fashion and print.

Majority of LIG teenagers as well as adults preferred retail stores and sale/exhibition to purchase clothes. MIG teenagers were interested in malls, boutique and sales shops. MIG adults showed preference for malls and sales. HIG teenagers and adults first opted malls than retail stores and boutiques as their choice to purchase clothes.

Preferred dress for special occasion among teenagers and adults LIG was salwar/ suit. But the second choice was different in LIG teenagers (skirt/top) than adults (Lehanga/choli). In MIG first choice was same (salwar/suit) but second was different for teenagers Lehanga/choli those in adults was saree. In HIG teenagers preferred jeans/top in comparison to adult, who preferred saree.

Majority of the respondents lacked Information about the products they purchase. They were dependent on shopkeepers for clarification.

Majority of LIG teenagers and adults did not respond positive for labels as relevant source of information. Other groups agreed labels to be important source of information.

Most of the respondents among target population believed that the garments without stamped labels should be bought only after proper consultation and clarification.

Majority of early adult population was found out to be more particular for getting bills after purchase than the teenager population.

The present study indicates certain factors to be kept in mind for the textile manufacturers and government agencies with increasing number of consumers. Manufacturers are suggested to include more desirable and eliminate the undesirable properties especially from blended fibres which are most preferred by majority of the population. On the other hand increasing production of natural fibre like cotton should also be encouraged by government agencies because they are extremely comfortable to wear.

One factor which was found to be common in target population was their lack of awareness regarding different aspects of clothing and buying behaviour. Keeping in view a small effort has been made by preparing a consumer awareness booklet with the hope that it will help them in solving their basic problems of textiles.

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