

Fashion awareness and peer pressure among adolescents

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■ **ABSTRACT** : In seeking to expand our understanding of fashion, present study examines the relationship between personal characteristics. The result clearly indicated that female respondents were perceived to be more fashion conscious than males and also females shopped more often than males. The awareness of fashion trends and brand conscious was also high among female whereas male are more affected by peer pressure. But common governing factor among all the respondents was the economic status of the families corresponding to their family size. The study thus indicated that the correlation between adolescents, fashion, brand, and peer pressure was found to be affective in Indian scenario as well.

■ **KEY WORDS**: Adolescent, Consciousness, Fashion trend

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Behold the many faces of fashion: fun, fantastic, frivolous, frantic, fabulous, futuristic, flirtatious, fresh, and financial. Fashion is all of this, and much more fashion is the most dynamic of Indian businesses. It thrives on change –and change is the engine that fuels it change can be traumatic and never-wracking. Life might be easier if we never had to change. However, if fashion business did not change, it would not survive (Elaine, 2001).

Most fashion conscious group or stage of life cycle is adolescents where each individual looks forward to be identified as 'someone out of the crowds'.

Originated from the Latin word "adolescere", adolescence describes a period to go into adulthood (Steinberg, 1993), or grow up to come to maturity. Generally, "adolescent" and "teenager" are synonyms, and indicate the ages ranging from thirteen to nineteen. Moreover, the British Nutrition Foundation (2001) defines adolescence as the period of life between childhood and adulthood. Viewing from the behavioural perspectives, however, adolescence is not only a period of rapid physiological changes, but also a period that is vulnerable to the influences of external social factors. In a word, the complete discussions on adolescence should comprise the physiological, psychological and social growths of adolescents. This research focuses on the impact of peer pressure in social factors on adolescent brand loyalty. Peer is

generally acknowledged as siblings and friends (Pilgrim and Lawrence, 2001). However, this article defines peers more broadly as "those who may be seen as referents for adolescent future purchases, even they are not acquainted with each other". More specifically, the peers in this article are pretty much like the so-called "aspirational groups" in the area of consumer behaviour. Peer pressure is 'a social instance of social influence, which typically produces conformity to a specific way of acting or thinking.' (Lashbrook, 2000). Under peer pressure, adolescents may emerge desires for conformity, which has been associated with the needs for acceptance, approval and harmonious relationships with others (Batra and Lehmann, 1993).

Today fashion and beauty can be affordable for everyone. Mass fashion is moving so fast that fashion now moves in a weekly cycle and fashion trends are hot for a short time only. All created a need for fashion clothing designed for the way we live now. How we perceive our persona and what we want to say to society in a very visual camera obsessed culture, is still expressed through our bodies, the way we wear clothes, jewellery and body art.

When asked about group dynamics and the status of individual in the group, it was observed that most of the male and female respondents believed that their attitude or way of thinking makes them superior in their group. Many of them

believe that by personality they make superior in-group. And few adolescents said that their clothing style make them more identifiable and a very few respondents said that their action/deeds make them superior in group. About fashion consciousness, both male and female behaved similarly. It was evident that it is a misconception about fashion that fashion is for women only. Most of them supported that fashion influences women only whereas today men and children are equally influenced by fashion as women. Fashion is a force that influences men and women both, because fashion is a fact of social psychology. The present research was planned with the objective to study the adolescent interest towards the fashion. The result of the study will be useful to boosting up the energy of our country adolescents.

■ RESEARCH METHODS

The study was conducted to find out the attitudes and perception of fashion among adolescents. The information elicited from various primary and secondary sources can be summarized as under. The sample study consisted of total 75 adolescent females and 75 adolescent males. Female adolescent girls were selected from Banasthali and adolescent males were selected from different cities. Area of the study-keeping in mind the time, the availability, the settings required, along with feasibility of data collection, the study was conducted at Banasthali and different cities of India (Bhopal, Delhi, Kolkata, Varansi, Jaipur, Mumbai, Allahabad, Gorakhpur, etc.) via Email. The questionnaires were filled by the respondents in person or through e-mail. Sampling technique used for data collection was purposive sampling. Survey method was used with the help of self-constructed questionnaire and purposive sampling used for data collection. The data obtained from questionnaire-cum-interview schedule had been analyzed both statistically and subjectively to obtain exhaustive information on fashion consciousness and peer pressure among adolescents.

■ RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Data were analyzed to examine the relationship between personal characteristics and fashion consciousness, brand and peer pressure, the responses were treated objectively and tabulated statistically. Also subjective answers were treated as individual expression and generalizations were made accordingly. The information received has been presented in the form of tables, and histograms. According to the respondents' profile, an effort was made to find a correlation between disposable income and purchasing behaviour. The data revealed the following :

The analysis of data (Table 1) emphasized the fact that those individuals who belonged to higher income group have more disposable income and therefore are found more fashion conscious whereas middle and lower income groups have their

own less expensive ways of fashion adoption.

Table 1 : Socio - economic distribution of male and female respondents

Category	Number		Percentage	
	Mele	Female	Male	Female
High income	61	71	81.33%	94.66%
Middle income	11	2	14.66%	2.66%
Low income	3	2	4.00%	2.66%
Total	75	75	100%	100%

Table 2 shows that a fashion is a result of social emulation and acceptance. It may be clothing, accessories, house hold equipment and everything around us. Undoubtedly everything or each thing was accepted by a majority of group of people with similar interest or characteristics of many adolescent (males and female). On the other hand, many of them commonly correlated fashion to clothing style. Some accepted luxurious item, accessories and household equipment are considered fashionable.

Table 2 : Perception about fashion according to male and female respondents

Sr. No.	Perception of fashion	Male %	Female %
1.	Clothing	8.00	16.00
2.	Luxurious items	13.33	6.67
3.	Accessories	5.33	4.00
4.	House hold equipment/Accessories	9.33	5.33
5.	Everything around us	70.67	93.33

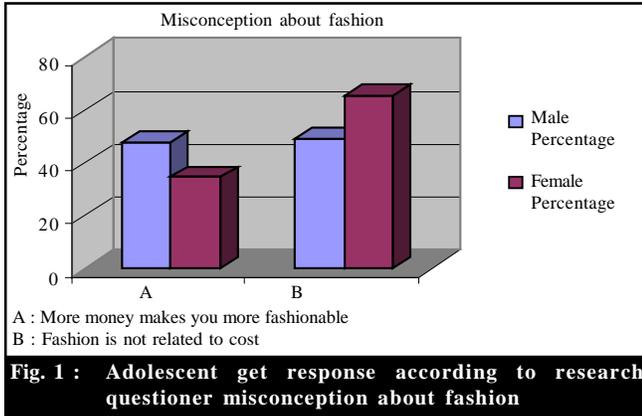
Fashion is and has been and will be, through all the ages, the out word form through which the mind speaks to the universe fashion in all languages design to make, shape, model, adopt, embellish and adorn.

Fashion involves our outward, visible lives. It involves the clothes we wear, the dance we dance, the cars we drive and the way we cut our hair, fashion also influences architecture, form of worship, and life styles it has an impact on every stage of life from the womb to the tomb.

The world of fashion operates in far different way today than it did years ago. It moves faster and reaches more people, and perhaps most important, it is more business like to understand the changes that have occurred and will occur in the future of fashion industry, you must first understand the dynamics that under lie the fashion business.

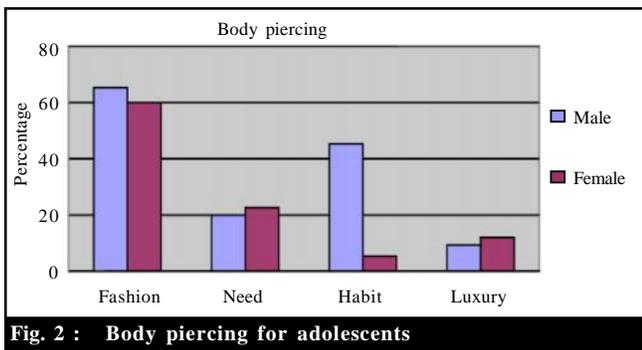
Fig. 1 shows that when questioned about the relation of fashion with cost, both male and female respondents said that fashion is not related to cost but many of them supported that fashion is related to money and it affects the per capita disposable income.

In contrast, in case of female respondents, most females



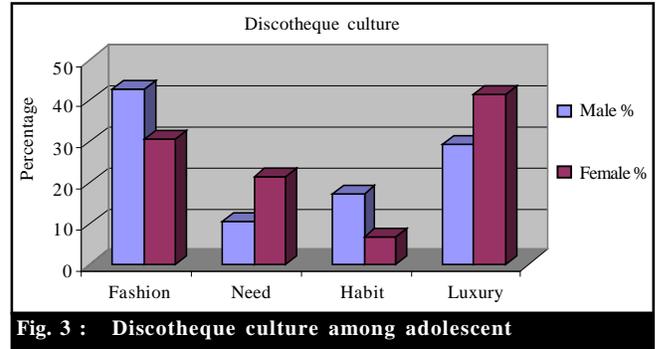
regarded fashion unrelated to cost and only a few respondents supported that fashion is always expensive.

During recent years, the general interest in fashion has increased enormously. Fashion is one of the greatest economic forces in present day life. To a great extent, it determines what people will buy. Change in a fashion is the motivating factors for replacing clothes, cosmetics, furniture, housewares, and automobiles. Fashion causes changes in consumer goods and at the same time makes people want new products (Fig. 2).



It is needless to mention that adolescence is the most important period in human development about which poets, writers and historians have made occasional references and have held in high esteem the sacrifices made by adolescents. It is a period of transition and a turning point in the life of individual. If this energy is properly guided and channelized, it can prove to be boon to the nation particularly in developing countries that are engaged in national development. Adolescents take keen interest in physical appearance and body building. Thus, the present studies focus the group of adolescents (Fig. 3).

Adolescents spend most of their time outside the home with member of peer group. It is understandable that peer would have a greater influence on adolescent attitudes, speech, interest, appearance and behaviour than the family. Their



chances of acceptance are enhance similarly, if members of the peer group experiment with alcohol drugs, or tobacco, adolescents are likely to be same regardless of how they feel about these matters.

In the society with few artificial social barriers, law or custom prevents any person from buying the newest and most prestigious styles in dress and accessories. For most of the group buying behaviour was affected by society and then family values and some respondents were found to be affected by culture or peer pressure.

In contrast female buying behaviour was less affected by society and peer group than male (Fig. 4).

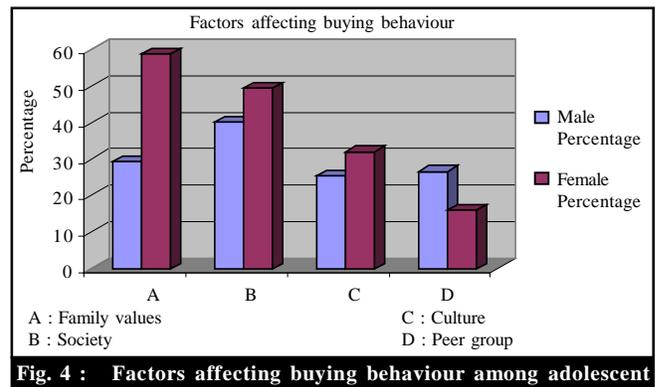


Table 3 shows that as the adolescents become more fashion conscious and even more conscious towards “self”,

Table 3 : Adolescents purchasing behaviour

Sr. No.	Purchasing behaviour	Male %	Female %
1.	Personality attributes	89.33	86.67
2.	Occasion	33.33	45.33
3.	Quality of fabric	40	57.33
4.	Colour/print of fabric	32	50.67
5.	Cost	20	34.67
6.	Latest trend	38.67	37.33
7.	Durability	22.67	24
8.	Innovative fabric design	13.33	33.33
9.	Group/ peer fashion	22.67	24

their purchase patterns get altered according to their personality attributes (like height, built, complexion, figure etc.), quality of the fabric, colour or design of fabric, occasion for which the dress is meant to be, latest fashion trend, cost, innovation, durability of dress. The behaviour towards fashion was largely influenced by peers.

When the opinions were sought about the relation of brand with fashion, most of the respondents highlighted that brands make garments more fashionable whereas only some believed in contrast that brand does not make garments distinct, it is only by style that the garments become distinct (Fig. 5). Adolescents highlighted that brands make garments more fashionable. While adolescents were aware of and were using Indian brands and less Indian designer ranges. Females are more affected by brand and cost than male adolescents.

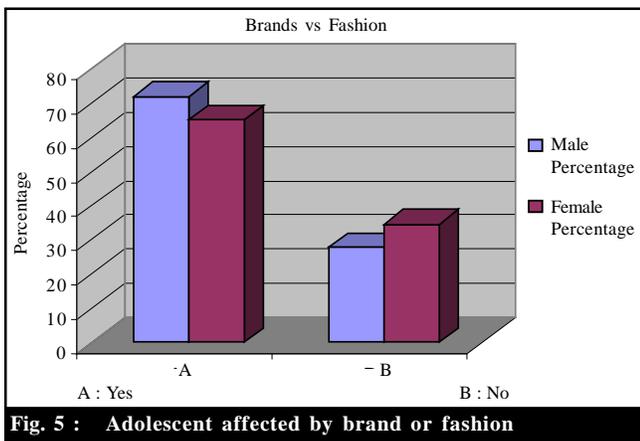


Fig. 5 : Adolescent affected by brand or fashion

Adolescents have a craving for “what is latest?” and these information needs of fashion are mostly are satisfied by the influence of movies, T.V. serials, fashion shows, internet, newspaper and magazines in descending order (Fig. 6).

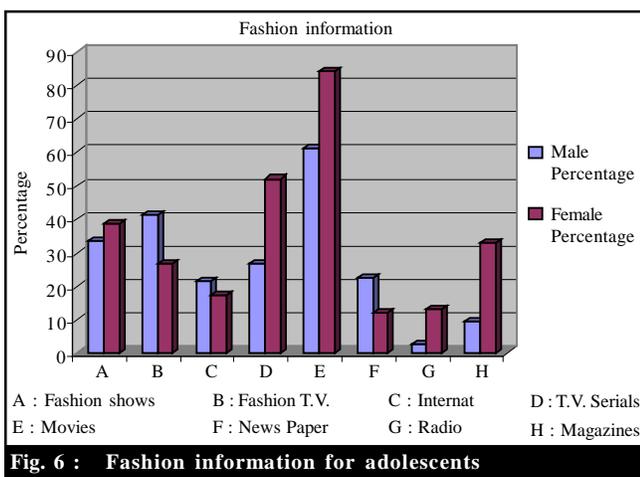


Fig. 6 : Fashion information for adolescents

Major findings :

- Female adolescents are more fashion conscious than

male adolescents.

- Adolescents are more conscious toward their personality attributes while purchasing garments for themselves.
- Buying behaviour among adolescents is more affected by social and cultural values.
- Adolescents feel more confidence when they wear clothes according to their own desire.
- Adolescents are influenced by celebrities and imitate their style.
- Adolescents are more sensitive to media.
- Male adolescents are more affected by peer group than female.
- Adolescents are more brand conscious as compared to designer wear.
- Adolescents want to change according to industrial growth. Example- mobile pouch attachment on waist belts etc.
- Urban adolescents are more affected by fashion than rural adolescents.
- Fashion adoption patterns were found to be correlated to the socio-economic status of families.
- Adolescents thought fashion is a force that influences male and female both.
- Fashion takes its impetus and influence from adolescents in every walk of life.
- Adolescents are mostly influenced by actors and actresses.
- Any fashion has been adopted by adolescents as part of their identity as fashionable people. Example- tattooing, body piercing, smoking, drinking, etc.
- In modern era, electronic chatting is a good time pass and entertaining medium for adolescents.
- Male adolescents thought that going to discotheques/ spending night out are the identity of fashionable people, in contrast female adolescents thought it is luxury.
- Most of the male adolescents expressed fact that involvement of opposite sex is the need of person. Female adolescents thought it is luxury.
- An adolescent is conscious toward own clothing and accessories. Adolescents purchase clothes and accessories occasionally as per necessity.
- Female went to shop more than male in every shopping trip since majority households have female home managers, therefore females tend to shop more than men.
- Majority of adolescents expressed new fashion are always ready to push existing ones out of the way.
- Adolescents thought that a fashion is a result of social emulation and acceptance.
- Female buying behaviour was less affected by society and peer group than male.

- Most adolescents regarded fashion unrelated to cost.
- As adolescents become more fashion conscious and even more conscious towards “self” their purchase patterns get altered according to their personality attributes.

Conclusion :

By concluding the above discussion we have come to know that family’s socio-economic status, of peer group changing fashion trends and education, area were the most important responsible factors. It was also revealed that the adolescent male and female were more impressed by the T.V., fashion shows and magazines, brand while bringing change in their clothing patterns, living pattern and their status. As the results have indicated, media exposure analysis revealed the most significant differences: female students were more likely to watch TV, listen to music (radio, CDs), and spend time online than were males. For influence from parents and peers, only gender played a factor: female students were more likely to be influenced by parents and peers than males. Other significant differences were found for brand consciousness across gender and ethnicity: female students were more likely to have higher brand-consciousness than males, while students of other ethnic groups were more likely to be highly brand-conscious.

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