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## Factor Affecting Consumer Behaviour in Online Apparel Shopping

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### ABSTRACT

Consumer behaviour in online fashion shopping is influenced by personal, social, economic, technological, psychological, and cultural dimensions. Personal elements such as age, lifestyle, fashion preference, and digital comfort level determine purchase patterns. Social influences—including family opinions, peer behaviour, and exposure to influencers on platforms like Instagram and YouTube—strongly affect buying decisions, especially among young consumers. Emotional motivations have also become an important part of online apparel shopping. A sample size of 50–100 respondents has been selected for data collection through both primary and secondary data. A quantitative research approach has been used. Since the study deals with measurable factors such as pricing, discounts, brand preferences, delivery experiences, and ratings, numerical data is essential for accurate analysis. Results shows around 33.9% of respondents shop online for apparel once a week and another 33.9% shop every few months, indicating strong and regular engagement with e-commerce platforms. Meanwhile, only 10.8% shop once a year or less. Size and fitting concerns emerged as one of the biggest barriers. Around 83.9% of respondents (Always + Sometimes) worry about whether the product will fit them correctly

**Keywords:** Emotional motivations, cultural dimensions, delivery experiences, family opinions, purchase patterns.

### 1. Introduction

The rapid expansion of online shopping in India over the past decade has transformed the retail landscape, particularly in the apparel sector. With the increasing use of smartphones, affordable internet services, and secure digital payment systems, consumers now prefer the convenience of selecting outfits from home rather than visiting physical stores. Popular e-commerce platforms such as Amazon, Flipkart, Myntra, and Ajio offer access to multiple brands, styles, and price ranges, making online apparel shopping highly attractive. Features like product images, detailed descriptions, customer reviews, and comparison tools allow buyers to make informed decisions. Promotional offers, discounts, cashback schemes, fast delivery, and easy return policies further enhance consumer interest in digital apparel shopping. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated this shift, pushing millions of consumers towards online purchasing due to store closures and social distancing norms. However, despite the growth, online apparel shopping also presents challenges. Consumers cannot touch fabrics, check quality, or try on outfits before purchasing, which raises concerns about size accuracy, fit, colour, and product authenticity. Payment security issues, fear of fraud, and uncertainty regarding return or exchange processes also influence decision-making. These factors collectively shape consumer trust and their willingness to purchase apparel online.

Consumer behaviour in online fashion shopping is influenced by personal, social, economic, technological, psychological, and cultural dimensions. Personal elements such as age, lifestyle, fashion preference, and digital comfort level determine purchase patterns. Social influences—including family opinions, peer behaviour, and exposure to influencers on platforms like Instagram and YouTube—strongly affect buying decisions, especially among young consumers. Emotional motivations have also become an important part of online apparel shopping. For many consumers, buying clothes online is not only a functional activity but also an emotional experience linked with excitement, trend involvement, entertainment, and self-expression. Generational diversity plays a significant role in shaping online apparel consumption. Gen-Z and millennials prioritize trendy designs, global fashion exposure, and aspirational branding influenced by social media. Working professionals focus more on comfort, brand reliability, and work-friendly outfits, whereas homemakers emphasise value for money and trusted brands. These demographic variations highlight that online apparel consumers have multi-dimensional psychological patterns, making the study of consumer behaviour both complex and meaningful. Cultural and regional preferences further enrich the online apparel market, especially in a country like India where traditional wear, regional textiles, and festive clothing coexist with western and fusion styles. Online platforms have democratized access to diverse fashion categories, enabling buyers from different regions to explore national and international styles. Festivals, weddings, and cultural events significantly influence online apparel demand, with consumers increasingly preferring digital platforms for purchasing ethnic wear. Technological advancements also play a critical role in shaping online apparel shopping behaviour. Artificial Intelligence (AI), personalized recommendations, virtual try-on features, size guides, and detailed product visualizations have improved the digital shopping experience. These tools help reduce the sensory gap between physical and virtual shopping environments and enhance consumer confidence. Despite these innovations, issues related to size mismatch, fit suitability, and style expectations continue to affect consumer satisfaction and post-purchase experience.

Economic factors—including income levels, price sensitivity, perceived value for money, and broader economic conditions—add another layer of influence on online apparel behaviour. Premium consumers may seek branded or luxury apparel, while middle-income groups often look for affordable options during sales and discount seasons. The evolution of digital payment options, EMI choices, and exclusive online releases has reshaped spending patterns and made fashion more accessible to different economic segments. Overall, understanding consumer behaviour in online apparel shopping requires examining the interaction between psychological motivations, technological adaptation, cultural values, social influences, and economic conditions. As online fashion platforms continue to grow, the ability to decode consumer expectations and emotions will enable businesses to design better strategies, build trust, and provide seamless shopping experiences. Therefore, this study aims to examine the key determinants that influence consumers' behaviour in online apparel shopping and analyse how these factors contribute to the changing dynamics of digital fashion consumption.

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## 2. Literature Review

Understanding consumer behaviour in online apparel shopping has been a growing area of interest among researchers. Numerous studies have explored the influence of social, personal, economic, psychological, technological, and sustainability-related factors on fashion consumption. This section reviews major contributions by different scholars to provide a foundation for the present study.

### Study 1: Consumer's Buying Behavior on Fashion Wears (Sahu & Abedi, 2025)

Sahu and Abedi (2025) examined the decision-making patterns of consumers purchasing fashion wear. Their study highlighted the role of lifestyle, social identity, and peer influence in shaping buying behaviour, especially in online contexts. The findings showed that brand image, fashion trends, and social approval were strong motivators for apparel purchases. The study further emphasized that online shopping is gaining preference due to its convenience and time-saving nature. This research is significant because it demonstrates the strong impact of personal and social factors on consumer decisions, forming a basis for analysing similar influences in online apparel markets.

### Study 2: Understanding Impulse Buying Behavior in Online Fashion Clothing (Sahu & Abedi, 2025)

This study explored why consumers make unplanned purchases when shopping for fashion items online. The researchers found that promotional offers, attractive website design, limited-time discounts, and visual appeal significantly trigger impulse purchases. Younger consumers, especially students, were more prone to impulsive buying. The study highlights the importance of website aesthetics and promotional strategies in influencing spontaneous buying behaviour, suggesting that psychological factors and sales techniques are powerful drivers in online fashion consumption.

### Study 3: Online Consumer Shopping Behaviour: A Review and Research Agenda (Singh, 2024)

Singh (2024) conducted a comprehensive review of 197 research articles focusing on online shopping behavior. The study identified convenience, price competitiveness, trust, product quality, and website usability as primary factors influencing online purchase decisions. The review noted that existing literature predominantly focuses on developed countries, leaving a gap in understanding consumer behaviour in developing nations like India. The study's emphasis on trust-building, user-friendly interfaces, and contextualized research provides a valuable direction for future studies, including the present one.

### Study 4: A Study on Online Shopping Behavior for Apparel (Sahu & Abedi, 2025)

This literature review-based study focused on consumer behaviour in the South Indian apparel market. It highlighted key determinants of consumer satisfaction, including website usability, clarity of product information, brand familiarity, and return policies. Price discounts and brand image were found to significantly affect purchase behaviour. The study reinforces the idea that website features and transparent policies play a crucial role in improving customer satisfaction and increasing sales in online apparel platforms.

### Study 5: Consumer Preferences and Behavioral Patterns in Textile Purchases (Sahu & Abedi, 2025)

This study analysed consumer preferences in textile and apparel shopping across online and offline modes. The results showed that quality, price, style, and brand reputation are major factors guiding purchases. The study also found that while online shopping is preferred for convenience, offline shopping remains important for physically checking fabric quality and fit. The findings underline the importance of product quality, variety, and detailed information for e-commerce platforms to increase consumer trust and purchase likelihood.

### Study 6: Sustainable Behavior Towards Fashion Products (Sahu & Abedi, 2024)

This systematic review investigated consumer attitudes toward sustainable fashion consumption. Reviewing 27 research articles, the authors found that environmental awareness, positive attitudes toward sustainability, and social influence drive the purchase of eco-friendly apparel. Consumers were also willing to pay a premium price for sustainable products. The study stresses the importance of promoting sustainability-related information and providing eco-friendly alternatives for conscious buyers, making sustainability an emerging determinant in online apparel behaviour.

### Study 7: Consumer Behaviour and Consumption Patterns Related to Sustainable Apparel (Mishra, 2023)

Mishra (2023) conducted a survey to evaluate consumer behaviour towards sustainable apparel. The findings revealed that product quality, brand reliability, sustainability information, and social media influence strongly affected purchase choices. Consumers also valued convenience, price, and trust while choosing sustainable fashion products. The study highlights the need for e-commerce platforms to provide transparent sustainability information, quality assurance, and attractive promotion techniques to encourage eco-friendly shopping.

#### Study 8: Virtual Try-On Systems in Fashion Consumption (Batoool, 2024)

Batoool (2024) examined how Virtual Try-On (VTO) systems influence online fashion consumption. The study found that VTO technology increases consumers' confidence by allowing them to visualize outfits before purchase, thereby reducing perceived risk. Factors such as ease of use, usefulness of technology, and trust in virtual systems significantly influenced purchase intentions. The study demonstrates that advanced technological tools enhance the overall online shopping experience and encourage consumers to make better purchasing decisions.

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### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology outlines the systematic process used to conduct this study and explains the tools, techniques, and procedures followed to obtain reliable findings. Since this study examines the factors influencing consumer behaviour in online apparel shopping, the methodology has been designed to ensure accuracy, relevance, and clarity.

#### 3.1 Research Approach

Data has been collected from both primary and secondary data. A quantitative research approach has been used. Since the study deals with measurable factors such as pricing, discounts, brand preferences, delivery experiences, and ratings, numerical data is essential for accurate analysis. The quantitative approach helps in identifying trends, making comparisons, and determining the relative importance of various factors influencing online shopping decisions.

#### 3.2 Sampling Plan

**Population:** The population for the study includes online apparel shoppers residing in the Haridwar region of India.

**Sample Size:** A sample size of 50–100 respondents has been selected. This is considered adequate to obtain meaningful and interpretable results within the given time and resource constraints.

**Sampling Method:** The study uses convenience sampling, where easily accessible individuals such as students, professionals, and homemakers who shop online are approached for responses. This method is practical due to budget and time limitations, and it aligns well with the nature of online shopping research.

#### 3.3 Research Instrument

The primary research instrument is a structured questionnaire. It is divided into two sections: Section A: Demographic information (age, gender, occupation, etc.)

Section B: Online shopping patterns (frequency of purchase, preferred platforms like Amazon, Myntra, Flipkart, etc., and importance of various factors).

Close-ended questions ensure easy comparison and statistical analysis, while a few short-answer options provide additional insights.

#### 3.4 Data Collection Method

Data is collected using digital tools such as Google Forms, WhatsApp, and email, making it easy to reach active online shoppers. This method aligns with the research topic since respondents are internet users familiar with online platforms. Online distribution also helps reduce time, improve accessibility, and lower costs associated with data collection.

#### 3.5 Data Analysis Techniques

After collecting responses, the data is organized and analysed using tools such as Microsoft Excel and MS Word. Statistical techniques like percentages, averages, frequency distribution, bar charts, and pie charts are used to interpret the results. These tools help identify dominant trends, preferences, and factors influencing consumer behaviour in online apparel shopping.

#### 3.6 Limitations of the Study

Despite careful planning, the study has some limitations:

The sample size of 50–100 respondents may not represent the entire Indian population. Convenience sampling may introduce bias, as responses come from easily accessible individuals. The accuracy of the findings depends on the honesty and understanding of respondents. The study focuses only on apparel, excluding other product categories such as electronics or groceries.

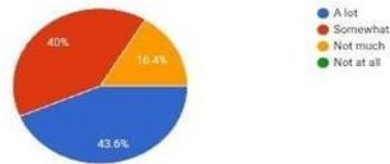
#### 4. Analysis and Interpretation

This section presents the analysis of primary data collected from 56 respondents through a structured questionnaire. The data has been analyzed using simple percentages and presented in table form, followed by meaningful interpretation. The analysis helps identify the major factors influencing consumer behaviour in online apparel shopping.

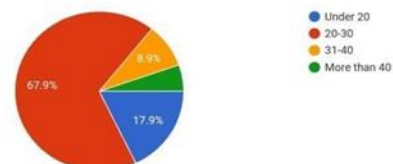
1. The primary data collected from 56 respondents provides deep insights into consumer behaviour in online apparel shopping. The analysis begins with the age distribution, where 67.9% respondents belonged to the 20–30 age group, indicating that young adults are the most active online apparel buyers. Additionally, 17.9% were under 20, showing rising interest among teenagers, while only 14.2% (31–40 and above 40 combined) belonged to older age groups. This clearly shows that online apparel shopping is largely youth-driven, with older generations being less involved.
2. Gender-wise, the sample reflects balanced participation, with 53.6% males and 42.9% females, highlighting that online apparel shopping is popular among both genders. Very few respondents (about 3.6%) selected “Other” or “Prefer not to say,” indicating that most participants were comfortable sharing their gender identity.
3. The frequency of purchase also reveals important behaviour patterns. Around 33.9% of respondents shop online for apparel once a week and another 33.9% shop every few months, indicating strong and regular engagement with e-commerce platforms. Meanwhile, only 10.8% shop once a year or less. This confirms that online shopping has become a frequent and routine activity for the majority of consumers.
4. Website usability is also a critical factor. A combined 70.9% respondents (Very Important + Important) said that easy navigation significantly affects their shopping experience. Only 11.8% considered it unimportant. This suggests that consumers expect clean, organized, and user-friendly interfaces to make purchasing decisions comfortably.
5. Product images emerged as one of the strongest influencing factors, with 83.6% respondents (A Lot + Somewhat) admitting that visual presentation greatly impacts their decision-making. Only 2% were not influenced at all. This is because, in the absence of physical touch, customers rely on clear, high-resolution images to judge quality, colour, style, and fitting.
6. Product descriptions also play a crucial role. A total of 84.8% respondents (Always + Sometimes) rely on written details such as fabric type, size, colour, and washing instructions. Only 4.5% said they never check product information. This shows that accurate and detailed descriptions help reduce uncertainty and improve purchase confidence.
7. Customer reviews and ratings are another major decision-making factor. Around 59.3% said reviews are very important, and 29.6% said they are important, making it a combined 88.9% influence. This clearly indicates that consumers depend heavily on the experiences of other buyers to make informed decisions, especially when purchasing clothing whose fit and quality may vary.
8. Payment security is also a strong concern, with 87.5% of customers (Very Concerned + Somewhat Concerned) expressing worry about safe transactions. Only 12.5% were not concerned. This highlights the need for secure gateways, trusted payment partners, and clear communication of safety standards.
9. The availability of variety significantly influences buying decisions. Around 71.4% of respondents prefer platforms that offer diverse styles, colours, and sizes. Meanwhile, 28.6% were less affected by variety, suggesting that for some consumers, factors such as brand or price may be more important.
10. Brand reputation is another strong influencing factor. More than 90.9% respondents said that brand image affects their decision at least to some degree. Half of them (50.9%) are highly influenced by brand names, showing that consumers trust reputed brands for consistent quality and reliable sizing.
11. Discounts and promotional offers play a major role in online shopping. A combined 87.5% look for discounts either always or sometimes. Only 12.5% rarely consider discounts. This indicates that price reductions, seasonal sales, and promotional campaigns greatly impact purchase decisions in the online apparel market.
12. Free shipping is also a crucial factor, with 91.1% respondents (Must + Nice Bonus) showing preference for platforms offering free delivery. Only 8.9% said that shipping cost does not matter. This clearly shows that free delivery increases purchase willingness and reduces cart abandonment.
13. Size and fitting concerns emerged as one of the biggest barriers. Around 83.9% of respondents (Always + Sometimes) worry about whether the product will fit them correctly. Only 5.4% said they do not worry at all. This indicates that online sellers need accurate size charts, virtual try-ons, and easy return/exchange options.
14. Similarly, 82.2% of respondents expressed concern about the difference between online product images and the actual delivered item. This highlights the importance of honest photography, 360° product views, and accurate product descriptions to reduce dissatisfaction.
15. Finally, return policies play a critical role in purchase decisions. Almost 94.6% of respondents (Very Important + Important) said that easy returns influence their choice of platform. Only 5.4% considered it unimportant. This shows that flexible, simple, and transparent return processes are essential for building customer trust.

16. Overall, the analysis demonstrates that online apparel shopping behaviour is shaped by a combination of convenience, trust, brand reputation, discounts, product variety, website usability, and return policies. Younger consumers dominate the market, and their expectations are centered around transparency, quality visuals, secure payments, and hassle-free returns.

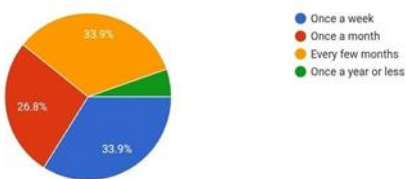
5. How much do high quality product photos influence your decision to buy?  
55 responses



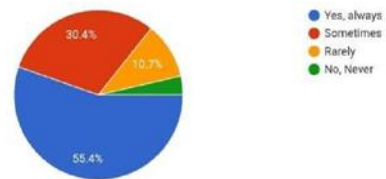
1. What is your age  
56 responses



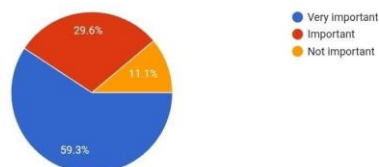
3. How often do you shop for Apparel online?  
56 responses



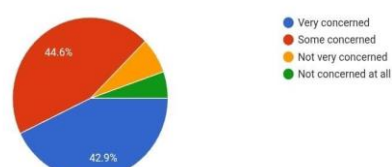
6. Do detailed product description ( fabric,fit,etc.) effect your purchase?  
56 responses



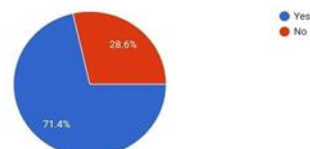
7. How important are customer reviews and rating for you?  
54 responses



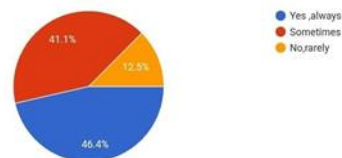
8. How concerned are you about online payment security?  
56 responses



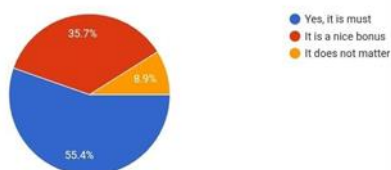
9. Do you think a wider variety of clothes make you more likely to buy from a store?  
56 responses



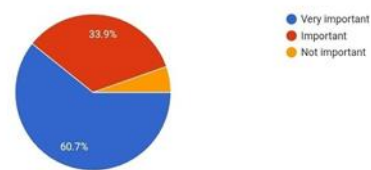
11. Do you look for discounts and sales when shopping for clothes online?  
56 responses



12. Is free shipping a major factor in your decision to buy?  
56 responses



15. How important is the ability to easily return and item?  
56 responses



## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The present study aimed to understand the major factors influencing consumer behaviour in online apparel shopping. Based on the responses collected from 56 participants, it can be concluded that online shopping has become a preferred choice among consumers, especially the younger generation. A large proportion of shoppers belong to the 20–30 age group, showing that digital awareness, comfort with technology, and interest in fashion trends strongly shape online buying behaviour. Consumer behaviour in online apparel shopping is shaped by a complex mix of personal, psychological, social, economic, cultural, and technological influences. Personal factors such as age, occupation, fashion orientation, and lifestyle determine preferences and choices. For instance, younger consumers often prioritize stylish, trendy, and social-media-inspired outfits, while professionals seek quality, comfort, and brand reliability. Psychological motives also play a significant role. Many individuals view apparel shopping not just as a functional activity but as a source of joy, entertainment, and emotional satisfaction. Online browsing has become a daily habit for millions, driven by the desire to explore new trends, follow fashion influencers, or simply enjoy the process of discovering new outfits.

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