

IMPACT OF CULTURE ON LUXURY CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOUR OF INDIAN CONSUMER: A CASE OF LUXURY MEN'S APPAREL BRANDS

Mohini Tyagi, MIB, 2nd Year, IMS Ghaziabad (University Courses Campus)

Nishant, MIB, 2nd year, IMS Ghaziabad (University Courses Campus)

Introduction

Living has started to closely resemble consumption, as people now use consumption not just for fulfilling their essential requirements but also for shaping their identity and social status. Consumption has evolved into a tool for self-expression and self-definition, with consumers not merely acquiring products but also ingesting the symbolic significance and image associated with those products.

Luxury consumption is a fascinating aspect of spending because it's not driven by survival needs. People worldwide indulge in luxury items, but it's essential to recognize that the motivations behind these purchases can vary across cultures. While the luxury industry often follows a universal rule of success, assuming that consumers worldwide share the same motives may not be accurate. Numerous studies show that cultural values significantly influence consumer behavior. Luxury products transcend borders, but marketing them must consider cultural nuances. This raises the question of whether culture plays a role in luxury consumption. Some marketing experts challenge the idea of a global market, emphasizing that culture remains a key factor in understanding consumer behavior and motivations. Even if people from different countries buy the same luxury product, their reasons may differ due to cultural values. Culture shapes preferences, decision-making processes, actions, and perceptions, reflecting an individual's internalized value system acquired through socialization within their cultural group. This value system internalized over time and like there is a trend now Indians like to wear western whereas most of the people in Western country like to wear Indian Sarees and this shows that people are globalize day by day.

"In the modern Indian market, the concept of 'brand' plays a pivotal role, largely due to the country's deep-rooted traditions. Traditional attire for men in India, like the Dhoti, gradually gave way to tailored clothing. However, with the process of globalization, Indians have shown a growing interest in ready-made garments, especially those offered by multinational brands. The growth of the ready-made men's wear industry in India was initially sluggish until the early 1980s. This was primarily because Indians were accustomed to buying fabric and having their outfits custom-made, typically by local tailors in the unorganized sector. However, by the mid-1980s, there appeared to be a gradual shift in customer preferences. This change was influenced by increasing urbanization, shifts in social and economic status, evolving lifestyles, and a growing inclination among men to invest in luxury clothing brands like VK Fashions, Fashion

Planet, Raymond Show Room, Bombay Dyeing, John Player, Gokul Emporium, Peter England showrooms, and Santosh Lifestyle. Notable unlisted players in the market include Indigo Nation, Basic, and Sting."

Luxury fashion brands are increasingly recognizing the significance of the men's clothing market and are stepping up their efforts in this segment. Men's fashion is growing at a faster pace compared to women's clothing, particularly as styles become more relaxed and streetwear items like hoodies gain popularity with a new audience. This surge in the men's fashion sector over the past few years demonstrates that men are becoming significant consumers of luxury attire.

Men typically approach shopping as a task to complete quickly, focusing on making specific purchases rather than browsing for new items. They often don't shop for fashion items regularly and do so when there's a specific need, sometimes indulging in impulse buying. Research suggests that men see shopping as a competitive endeavor, seeking out unique items to stand out, which can lead to a preference for luxury brands and Men exhibit higher brand loyalty than women, with 41% of men preferring familiar and trusted brands compared to 22% of women. Consequently, as more men make non-essential purchases, once a brand captures a male customer, they are more likely to retain that customer for the long term. Both Genders factors in Price when making choices, but men are often willing to trade quality for a lower price – conscious and opt for the best available deal. Men favor objective details like brand, model, and performance specs. Since men's apparel category has the largest chunk of the apparel pie, this study focuses on men's apparel category only.

Research Objective

- To study the male consumer behavior towards luxury apparel and their intention towards purchase of luxury product.
- To study the impact of ethnicity on Indian consumer value perception towards luxury products.
- To study the factors that affect young generation towards purchase of luxury apparel products.
- To identify the antecedents that influences the purchase of luxury products.

Literature Review

Luxury brands are essentially the perception consumers hold, encompassing notions of high prices, top-notch quality, appealing aesthetics, rarity, extraordinariness, and a wealth of non-functional associations (Heine, 2012, p.60). Luxury goods are products or services of exceptional quality that stand apart from ordinary items due to their exceptional craftsmanship, exclusivity, and renowned reputation. The essential characteristics of luxury goods encompass their quality, cost, scarcity, distinctiveness, prestige, and personal significance. The concept of luxury

embodies elegance, style, a fashion statement, premium quality, exclusivity, identity formation, ego gratification, uniqueness, and social recognition (Jain et al., 2015). Categorizing items as luxurious or not can be challenging (Salajeghe and Mousavi, 2012), and the classification often hinges on our perception of their distinctiveness, extraordinariness, and quality.

The consumption of luxury brands holds great importance for individuals seeking elevated social status. Luxury goods are essentially non-essential commodities in life, especially when considering the abundance of everyday items available in supermarkets and the convenience of credit cards. This consumption is driven by a few key factors, including brand self-congruence and conspicuous consumption, influencing purchase intentions and brand loyalty in consumer behavior. Seo and Oliver's study in 2015 underscored the unique role of luxury brands as conveyors of distinct socio-cultural and personal significance to their followers. These meanings have been significantly influenced by various cultural, social, and external trends and trends are changing day by day.

Historically, luxury brands primarily targeted women as their main customers, but this is evolving. Recent research indicates that in 2018, men spent \$39 billion on luxury items, surpassing women who spent only \$28 billion. When it comes to online shopping, millennial men tend to be significant spenders. In fact, a Global Web Index survey found that men aged 25-44 accounted for 67% of customers who frequently purchased luxury items for themselves. Analyses by Indian Fashion Brand Annual (2014) and Samsungdesign.net (2020) delved into the current state of the men's fashion market and its changes over the past decade.

Menswear market share was at 21.8% in 2005, but dropped to 14.6% in 2014, which was 33% decline. It has continuously declined over the last decade. However, strengthened by continual growth of the overall fashion market, menswear market size increased from KRW 5,240 billion in 2005 to KRW 5,377 billion in 2014, showing an increase of 2.61% over the period. The cause of this increase can be attributed to changes in men's purchasing patterns as they have become more concerned with their outer appearance, as well as an increase in clothing consumption due to availability of more diverse and upscale clothes. And BeauPal.com's 2015-2016 Indian Beauty Annual Survey reveals that men are becoming more conscious about their looks and grooming.

Those male shoppers who regularly treat themselves to a luxury purchase are often purchasing travel, household and automotive items. But they aren't focused exclusively on things- splurging on experiences is also important to these "regular traders,".

According to the Indian Fashion Brand Annual (2014), there were 200+ menswear brands as of 2014/2015. The yearly trend since 2000 shows that number of menswear brands fluctuated in 3-year intervals, as the pattern showed 3 years of brand increase followed by 3 years of decrease.

During the late 2000's, the number of brands increased, but that number has once again been declining as mid-2010.

According to the reports published by Samsungdesign.net, a total of 110 new menswear brands have launched in the past 10 years. Up until the mid-2000, the past decade. Number of brand launches showed an even distribution each year. The yearly numbers, however, started to show drastic differences after 2005. This result is a reflection of substantial changes in the menswear market over

Brand positioning analysis results were used to get a better understanding of menswear, and the results categorized menswear, into 8 zonings. They are as follows: formal wear, foreign contemporary, domestic contemporary, town casual, character casual, road shop formal wear, road shop character casual, and road shop casual. The zoning could also be divided into 4 classes: 1) Suit-based formalwear, representing traditional menswear 2) Casual wear, which origin. The ate from formal wear 3) Character casual and 4) domestic and foreign contemporary wear. Also, the zoning can be divided into two groups based on price: the traditional prestige brand zoning, and road shop brand zoning, which is more mainstream and affordable (Fashion Market Analysis'' 2005~2014) the current positioning grouping suggest that reshuffling of the menswear market is ongoing. The dominant zone is menswear has changed from formal wear to casual wear. During this time, town casual wear was formed. Also, contemporary zone branched off of character casual zone, as young men have sought out trendier clothes. Furthermore, changes in value consumption and distribution channel have led to an expansion of road shop brands. (''2015 Prospect and counter strategy by clothing types'', 2015)

From these results, we can see that the main factors needed to understand the trends of menswear brands are development style of domestic and foreign market, zoning, target, price level, and distribution channels, This study aims to do a definitive analysis of the present state and trends of menswear brand by understanding the characteristics of menswear brands currently in business, as well as those brands launched in past 10 years.

Menswear brand information in the Indian Fashion Brand Annual (2014) of which there were 168, were utilized to research the current state of the brands in domestic market. The coding sheets previously developed to code information from reports, Brand Annual and previous studies. The contents of the coding sheets were composed of business year, sales scale, brand type, imported country, zoning, target, price zone, distribution channel.

And this study used reports published by Samsungdesign.net, which provided trends of new brands for S/S, F/W from 2005 to 2021, in order to analyze the trends of new menswear brands-launched during that period. The contents of survey about new brands were limited of brand type, imported country, zoning, target, price zone, distribution channel. This study used nominal and two-point scales: unavailable (0) and available (1). Data collection was conducted for 2 month (July 2018 to August 2018).

Findings and analysis

Element of questionnaires asked by these sample

Dimension	Measure	Items
Luxury Acceptance of clothing Among male in India	1. Loyalty	Men are loyal towards their brands
2. Growth	Luxury men's market	Are growing day by day
3. Concern	Men are more	Conscious about their Clothing
Effects of culture on role in customer purchasing	1. Culture plays a	major luxury brand
2. Culture of the people	Influences design and	fabric selection
3. Believes	Indian believe in their	tradition and value
	their cultural and	religious traits.
	and like to wear	Traditional ethnic
	wears in festivals.	
Customer Loyalty towards the means to cap Luxury brands cultural ethos	1. Believes 2. Status	Luxury loyalty the brands

Result

The result obtained from the calculation of the collected data is presented in a tabular manner, explaining the frequency of the sample from the different particulars per the inclusive criteria.

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
20 to 30 years	11	14%
30 to 40 years	29	36%
40 to 50 years	24	36%
50 to 60 years	6	14%
TOTAL	70	100%

The question here is distributed among 100 people of high income group with the age limit of 20 to 60 years. Question is distributed among 100 people out of which only 70 were included in the study. The rest were excluded due to improper filling or not meeting eligibility criteria.

Conclusion and Discussion

This research investigated how culture influences the consumption of luxury apparel among Indian consumers. The luxury market in India is rapidly growing and has gained global attention. Consumers are now well-informed about luxury brands due to increased visibility through retail, advertising, and exposure to other Indian consumers. Interestingly, luxury clothing is no longer exclusive to women; men are now equally concerned about their clothing and are spending more on luxury clothing brands, as indicated in the research. Factors such as fashion trends, lifestyle choices, an open-minded attitude, increased spending capacity, perceived social and emotional value, perceived utility, and perceived economic value significantly affect consumers' willingness to pay for luxury fashion brands. Additionally, several studies suggest that ethnicity plays a role in shaping the attitudes of male consumers towards luxury, as they compare themselves with other ethnic groups within society. The findings also highlight that younger consumers tend to be more open-minded, brand-conscious, and tech-savvy compared to older consumers. Men, in particular, engage in luxury shopping but often conduct research beforehand, seeking inspiration from fashion magazines, celebrities' wardrobes, and staying up-to-date with

the latest fashion trends. They also enjoy the shopping experience, which includes visiting stores and proudly showcasing their luxury fashion items.

Research also indicates that marketing luxury brands to men differs from marketing to women due to differences in their goal orientation. Men tend to prioritize agentic goals, which are task-oriented and performance-driven, and are less influenced by social and emotional factors in their buying behavior compared to women. This is particularly noticeable among college-going boys who are increasingly conscious of their clothing choices. Young and working-class individuals also show a growing interest in luxury fashion as it offers them a sense of status and personal satisfaction. Men are now more open to experimenting with their clothing and are becoming more fashion-conscious, especially when it comes to wearing ethnic attire for special occasions, given India's rich festival culture.

It has been established that luxury products are not purchased for the same reasons as inferior products. Instead, they are bought because they hold a psychological and personal value for the individual. This personal value is influenced by their perceptions of materialistic, hedonic, and self-identity values. The main objective of the study was to examine how culture influences the luxury clothing consumption behavior of Indian consumers.

The study's findings suggested that culture indeed has a significant impact on the luxury buying behavior of men when it comes to clothing. However, there is still room for improvement in the research, particularly by using a sample of male consumers who exclusively use luxury goods because most of the research is on Women's Apparel brand because of this the research on Men's Apparel brand is very less as compare to Women's Apparel brand. The Reason of this is that men consider shopping as a job and they want to complete the job on time or in shortest time possible on the other hand Women takes more time in selecting the clothes as compare to men.

Limitations

A significant limitation of this research was the uncertainty surrounding the sample. It consisted of just 58 participants, all from the author's social circle, varying in terms of age, income, and residential area. Notably, there were only a few married participants with children, which could explain the absence of significant differences in the results. The study intentionally used purposive sampling. For future studies, it's recommended to select participants from frequent luxury retail store shoppers, thereby narrowing the focus. However, it's important to acknowledge that this specific purposive sampling may not represent the entire population, but it might yield more precise results. Initially, these participants can be assessed for their sense of identity centrality, followed by an examination of the role of certainty in their lives.

Future Agenda of Research

This article primarily aimed to investigate how Indian male consumers' luxury consumption behavior is influenced by culture. Future research should persist in examining various theories within the luxury context. While prevailing theories have often centered on status, values, and social comparison to explain the desire for luxury, it is important to explore additional theories stemming from various academic disciplines. Moreover, there's a necessity for further exploration into variations in motivations for luxury consumption across product and service categories, gender, and cultural factors.

As the luxury market expands globally, there is a growing need for cross-cultural research to gain a better understanding of how Indian consumer behavior is influenced by their culture. There is currently no consensus on whether factors like individualism versus collectivism have a significant impact on luxury consumers, and further studies are required to explore when and how national culture matters. Additionally, when entering emerging markets, it's important to investigate whether a standardized or localized approach is more effective, with early research suggesting that a balanced approach might be optimal, depending on the specific firm and market. In a broader sense, as luxury brands grow internationally, there is a question of how they can manage global expansion while maintaining their exclusivity. This involves understanding how consumers in various countries perceive luxury differently, which is a crucial starting point for defining luxury brands.

Future research is necessary in the field of luxury brand management, with a specific focus on segmentation and social media marketing. Most studies on segmenting luxury consumers have concentrated on economically developed markets, so it would be beneficial to investigate how international markets can be segmented. Additionally, research on identifying the most influential consumer values and motivations for luxury consumption is crucial. The role of social media in luxury brand marketing is still evolving, but it's clear that it can enhance brand image and purchase intentions. Further research should explore strategies to differentiate luxury brands from standard ones.

This study introduces a new definition of luxury brands that can be widely applied in future research on the topics mentioned. It also outlines essential theoretical frameworks and relevant findings related to luxury values, consumer behavior, and brand management. The authors believe that this study builds upon existing conceptual and empirical work, providing a definition that will aid in advancing research in the field of luxury branding.

Key References

- Research gate (2014), <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/241422634> The impact of culture on luxury consumption behaviour among Iranian consumers
- Science Direct (2018), <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0148296311004140>
- Research gate (2019), <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/236605282> Is luxury just a female thing The role of gender in luxury brand consumption
- Hindustan Times (2020), <https://www.hindustantimes.com/fashion-and-trends/luxury-brands-are-finally-taking-the-menswear-category-seriously/story-eW6LXIEYjIwT1EppXdAp0K.html>
- Fashion Network (2021), <https://in.fashionnetwork.com/news/deloitte-forecasts-annual-luxury-market-growth-between-5-and-10-until-2021,995921.html>
- Mckinsey (2021), <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/retail/our-insights/state-of-fashion>
- Research gate (2015), <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Samit-Chakraborty/publication/319645693> An Explanatory study on Indian Young Consumers' Luxury Consumption The Underlying Relationship of Interpersonal Influence Brand Image Brand Consciousness and Demographic Components with Luxury Brand P/links/59b7d134458515c212b50f54/An-Explanatory-study-on-Indian-Young-Consumers-Luxury-Consumption-The-Underlying-Relationship-of-Interpersonal-Influence-Brand-Image-Brand-Consciousness-and-Demographic-Components-with-Luxury-Brand.pdf
- Taylor and Francis (2018), <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09593969.2018.1490332>

