An Analytical Study on Consumer Preferences towards Private and National Brands in Men's Apparel

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The purpose of this research was to study preference towards private and national brands in men's apparel among consumers in Delhi NCR. Variables to be investigated include psychographic & demographic characteristics.

The current study argues, based on theoretical framework that psychographic and demographic dimension also have an impact on attitude toward men's apparel. Delhi-NCR has been selected for the study. The research design is crosssectional based on descriptive methodology. The mall intercept survey, structured questionnaire was employed to collect the primary data in Delhi NCR. A total of 460 respondents completed and returned useable questionnaires.

Brand preference of men's wear depended on the demographics and psychographics, thus a combination of demographic factors and psychographic factors are useful in determining brand preference. The major implication for the retailer is that they need to develop favorable attitude towards private brands among consumers. No significant relationships were found between consumers' preference for brand (i.e. private and national brand) and demographics; for psychographic factors were found positively correlated with brand preferences. Price & quality consciousness were found significant determinant across the most of the variables studied under psychographic factors.

Key Words: *Men's apparels, National brand, Private brand*

INTRODUCTION

A brand of which the copyright is owned by a party other than the producer of the product such as a retailer, wholesaler or other intermediary is called a private brand (Sampson, 2006). A brand name of a distributor, retailer, or a brand name owned by the seller may be carried by the product, but the name of the producer or manufacturer remains unknown to the customer. Private brands are generally sponsored by large wholesalers, departmental stores, cooperative chains or consumer cooperatives. These brands are also known as store brands, private labels, distributor's brands, reseller brands, middleman brands, own brands and dealer brands. Generic products which are also described as brand-free, no-names, house brands and unbranded products are also a type of private brand.

Since there are such a variety of different terms worldwide to describe these brands, the term private brand is used, for the purpose of this study.

Major Private Brand Players

Major players in private brands which are offered by giant retailers such as Raheja's Shoppers Stop offer stop! In apparels, Future group owned by Kishore Biyani having apparels brands John Miller, Bare DJ&C, Shrishti. Major retailers Pantaloon retail, Globus, Reliance Retail Trendz, Vishal Mega Mart, Vishal fashion also lies in this category

AMITY BUSINESS SCHOOL

National Brand (manufacturer brand), which is available nationally and is distinct from a regional or test-market brand, is also known as a national brand (Baker, 1990). National brands are advertised nationally by the manufacturer and often carry a distinctive and widely recognised brand name or trademark.
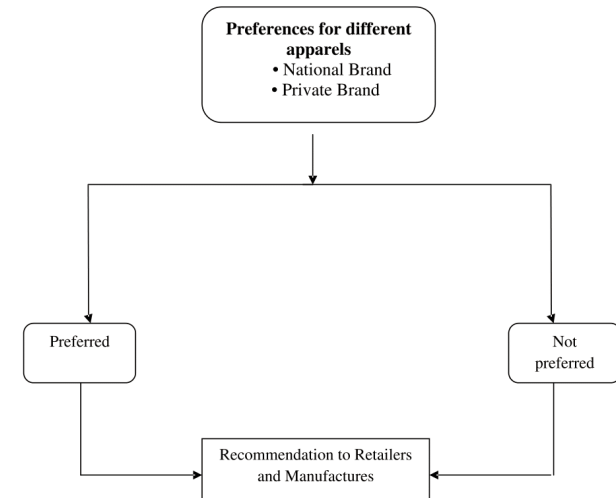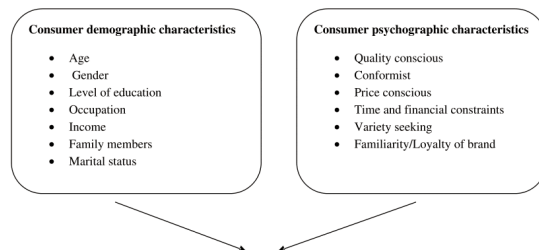
Major National Brand Players

Players in this group include Madura garments (Louis Phillippe, Van Heusen, Allen Solly, Peter England, Byford), Arvind Mills (Arrow, Newport, Lee, Wrangler, Flying Machine, Ruggeres, Excalibur, Ruf and Tuf), Zodiac, Raymond (Raymond, Park Avenue, Parks) and Colour Plus. These are mainly the domestic brands including strategic partnership, licensing agreement with foreign brand, which have established themselves very firmly in the market and have created substantial customer awareness. A large number of players from the international markets are already operating in India through the licensing route-lee, Benetton, Levi's, Lacoste, Nike, Reebok, Adidas, Mango, Lee Cooper and John player among others.

OBJECTIVES

- To examine consumers' preferences for private and national brand in men's apparel.

- To study the relationship between demographics and consumer preferences for private and national brand in men's apparel.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Consumer demographic characteristics
• Age • Gender • Level of education • Occupation • Income • Family members • Marital status

Consumer psychographic characteristics
• Quality conscious • Conformist • Price conscious • Time and financial constraints • Variety seeking • Familiarity/Loyalty of brand

- To study the relationship between psychographics and consumer preferences for private and national brand in men's apparel.

RESEARCH GAP

Studies on private and national brands have mostly focused on the United States and European markets. Whereas there has been relatively little research of markets, like India where brands in men's apparels are not so well established or where they are in earlier stages of development. In other words as the concept of emergence of private brands through malls is of recent origin in India, so not much researches has been conducted in this area covering Indian markets. Furthermore, research on preferences to private and national brand has been largely examined in general, even though there is some evidence to suggest that preference to specific label/brand is more important than generalized attitudes. Few studies have examined preference to specific label/brand in the grocery market and various product categories and the evidence from those few studies is mixed. Consequently the research problem to be addressed in the current study is: consumers' preferences for private and national brand men's apparel attributes through a study of the psychographic and demographic characteristics in Delhi NCR malls. On the basis of literature review, it identified across time and geography that psychographic and demographic alignment leading to preferences of specific brand is yet to be established in apparels.

HYPOTHESES

- **$H1_0$**: There is no relationship between demographics of consumers and their preference for specific men's apparel brand.

- **$H2_0$**: There is no relationship between consumers' psychographics and their preference for specific men's apparel brand.

SAMPLING DESIGN

Area of Study National Capital Region (NCR)

Sampling frame and unit primary sampling units (PSU) -20 selected malls. Secondary sampling units (SSU) - consumers visiting these malls

Sampling Method cluster sampling. Out of these clusters, sample malls have been selected through randomization so as to avoid any bias in the study. The respondents for the study were approached through interception in the vicinity of the mall and as per the judgment of researcher & convenience of the respondent.

Sample Size Sample size was calculated using Mendenhall et al. (1993) formula. Accordingly 413 respondents were to be approached for data collection. Instead of 413 we approached 500 respondents which yielded 460 usable questionnaires.

List of Malls Selected For Primary Data Collection

Out of total population of 83 malls (As per report of Asipac Mall Services Pvt. Ltd. on May 2011) in Delhi NCR, a sample of 20 malls was chosen for the study. The malls were chosen from all the segments of the region the breakup of which is given below:

DATA COLLECTION AND PROCEDURE:

The data for this study is based on primary and secondary sources. Primary data has been collected through a questionnaire. The questionnaire so administered was pre-tested before actual use.

TABLE 1				
DELHI	**GURGAON**	**NOIDA-GREATER NOIDA**	**GHAZIABAD**	**FARIDABAD**
MGF Metropolitan Mall (Saket)	Sahara Mall (MG Road)	Great India Palace (Sector 38)	East Delhi Mall (EDM) (Kaushambhi)	Eldeco Station (Mathura Rd.)
North Ex Mall (Rohini)	Ambience Mall (NH-8)	Centre Stage Mall (Sector 18)	Pacific Mall (Sahibabad. Industrial Area)	Ansal Crown Plaza (Sector 15)
DLF Emporio (Vasant Kunj)	Central Mall (MG Road)	MSX Mall (Pari Chowk)	Shipra Mall (GT Road)	Crown Interiorz (Mathura Rd.)
V3S East Centre Mall (Luxmi Nagar)	DLF Grand Mall (MG Road)	Omaxe C. Place (Beta 2)	MMX Mall (Mohan Nagar)	SRS Mall (Sector 12)

Primary Data:

Intercept Survey method has been used to collect the primary data in the vicinity of the malls visited after seeking permission from the mall managers to do so in and around the store premises. Primary Data collected during June2014 to December 2014.

Secondary Data:

Secondary data has been collected mainly from related publications of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu India Private Limited (Consultancy), Retail Authority of India (RAI), Retail books, KPMG, Confederation of Indian industry (CII) and also through web sources, books, journals and newspapers.

PILOT TEST

The combination of psychographic and demographic variables needed to be tested. The data collected through pilot study was not included in the actual data collected for the study.

TABLE 2: Reliability			
Construct (Multi-Item Measure)	**Number of Items**	**Cronbach Alpha (α)**	**Scale**
Psychographic Behaviour statements	20	.694	5 Point

SCALE PURIFICATION FOR FACTOR ANALYSIS

In order to check the reliability and validity of overall collected data through questionnaire, the Cronbach Alpha for each sub dimension of psychographic statements has been calculated. (Refer below table no. 4). It was found that the value of the Cronbach Alpha for each dimension of the psychographics was more than .76 except familiarity/loyalty of brand which was reported on lower side being 0.61.

PSYCHOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

The data analysis is attempted to identify the key psychographic factors among the NCR consumers. Factor analysis was conducted to reduce the number of variables and compressed the data into a more meaningful manner that makes it more manageable and easier to understand.

The table below shows two tests which indicate the suitability of our data for factor analysis. KMO and Bartlett's test were used to verify the factor analysis for consumer preferences for private and national brand, and provided a value of 0.722 which is a high score.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

TABLE 3: Demographic Profiles of Consumers		
Demographic Profile	**No. of Valid Responses**	**Percent**
Gender		
Male	257	55.9
Female	203	44.1
Total	**460**	**100**
Marital status		
Single	183	39.8
Married	277	60.2
Total	**460**	**100**
Age		
18 – 28	172	37.4
29 – 39	107	23.3
40 – 50	82	17.8
51 – 60	99	21.5
Total	**460**	**100**
Education		
Below Matric	37	08.0
Undergraduate	113	24.6
Graduate	169	36.7
Post Graduate	141	30.7
Total	**460**	**100**
Occupation		
Service	91	19.8
Business	117	25.4
Student	145	31.5
Home Maker	73	15.9
Others	34	07.4
Total	**460**	**100**
Yearly Household Income		
Less than 2 Lac	87	18.9
2 Lac-up to 6 Lac	105	22.8
6 Lac- up to 10 Lac	162	35.3
More than 10 Lac	106	23.0
Total	**460**	**100**
Family members		
1	68	14.8
2-3	166	36.1
4-5	134	29.1
6 and above	92	20.0
Total	**460**	**100**
Place		
Delhi	94	20.4
Noida Gr. Noida	97	21.1
Ghaziabad	80	17.4
Faridabad	94	20.4
Gurgaon	95	20.7
Total	**460**	**100**

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test shows the suitability of Factor Analysis. It Measures sampling adequacy which indicates the proportion of variance. This measure varies between 0 and 1, if it is close to 1.0 then factor analysis is useful for the given data. If the KMO value shows less than .50, the results of the factor analysis won't be very useful. In this study KMO measure is .722 thus confirming the appropriateness Factor Analysis.

Bartlett's test of sphericity indicates that whether the correlation matrix is an identity matrix, which indicates about the relation of variables. The significance level shows the result of the test. If value is less than .05, it means that there are probably significant relationships among given variables. A value higher than .10 or so may indicate that given data is not appropriate for factor analysis. As indicated above in table 5 that significance level has a very small value i.e. .000 which is less than .05.Hence, given variables are highly correlated.

The most common method of factor analysis is the Principal Component Analysis and the most common method of factor rotation is the varimax rotation. So Principal Component technique looks at the correlation of different variables to reveal the relationship between them, and then reduces the variables by empirically summarising them or combining them into a small number of factors under common themes. Usually, a few components will account for most of the variation, and these components can be used to replace the original variables.

The mathematical technique for simplifying the results of the factor analysis results is called factor rotation. Varimax rotation was favoured since it minimized the correlation across factors and maximized within the factors. This helped to yield 'clear' factors. Psychographic characteristics were tested using Principal Component Factor Analysis with varimax rotation.

TABLE 4: Scale Purification for Factor Analysis

Factor (Psychographic statements)	Item (Label)	Convergent Validity	Reliability (Cronbach Alpha α)
Quality Conscious	Q 10.5	.822	.916
	Q 10.7	.743	
	Q 10.11	.734	
	Q 10.13	.010**(Deleted)	
Conformist (Pre Conceived Mindset)	Q 10.2	.694	.916
	Q 10.6	.676	
	Q 10.14	.969	
	Q 10.18	.713	
Price Conscious	Q 10.8	.792	.765
	Q 10.10	.617	
	Q 10.16	.745	
Time and Financial Constructs	Q 10.12	.973	.974
	Q 10.19	.888	
	Q 10.20	.916	
Variety Seeking	Q 10.1	.939	.986
	Q 10.9	.961	
	Q 10.17	.977	
Familiarity/Loyalty of Brand	Q 10.3	.511	.613
	Q 10.4	.597	
	Q 10.15	.602	

** One item loaded poorly on the Quality conscious construct, therefore caution need to
take while interpreting the construct.
Note: - Item with poor loading have been deleted

TABLE 5: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.722
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	8309.733
	Df	171
	Sig.	.000

Through Factor Analysis we have been able to extract six (6) factors out of 19 psychographic related behavior statements. In other words we have transformed 19 statements of psychographic into 6 representative Factors.

The set of questions measuring "Conformist (Pre Conceived mind)" all loaded onto Factor 1.

The set of questions measuring "Variety seeking" all loaded onto Factor 2.

The set of questions measuring "Time and financial constraints" all loaded onto Factor 3.

The set of questions measuring "Quality conscious" all loaded onto Factor 4.

The set of questions measuring "Price conscious" all loaded onto Factor 5.

The set of questions measuring "Familiarity/ Loyalty of brand" all loaded onto Factor 6

TABLE 6: Factor Analysis Results of Psychographics

Research variables (Psychographics)	Item (Label)	Factor loading	Eigen value	Percent of variance
F1 Conformist (Pre Conceived Mindset)	When I choose brand, I do not usually doubt myself.	.938	3.739	19.680
	I like tasks that don't require much thinking once I have decided.	.843		
	When deciding on a brand, I feel confident of my choice.	.837		
	I consider myself capable of choosing a good brand	.926		
F2 Variety Seeking	I am often among the first people to try new apparel.	.974	3.126	16.450
	I buy different brands to get some variety.	.980		
	I like to try new and different things.	.988		
F3 Time and Financial Constructs	I always seem to be in hurry during shopping.	.976	2.627	13.828
	My budget is always tight.	.985		
	I never seem to have enough time for the things I want to do.	.955		
F4 Quality Conscious	I always buy the best apparels.	.883	2.182	11.484
	A cheaper product makes me suspicious about the quality.	.931		
	Usually, I care a lot about selection of apparel.	.923		
F5 Price Conscious	I compare prices of at least a few brands before I choose one.	.876	1.958	10.304
	I find myself checking the prices even for small items.	.770		
	I am somewhat an expert in negotiation of price when it comes to shopping.	.822		
F6 Familiarity/Loyalty of Brand	I know the available brand well in apparel category	.838	1.670	8.790
	I am willing to make an effort to search for my favourite brand.	.626		
	Generally, I am quite familiar with all available brand	.779		
			Cumulative %	**80.536**

TESTING OF HYPOTHESES

The descriptive statistics discussed earlier and factor analysis results were used to further analyze the brand preference in men's apparel. Inferential statistical techniques like chi-square, Mean scores were used for testing the formulated hypotheses. The results are presented in the preceding paragraphs.

Brand Preferences of Consumer and Demographics

The relationship between consumer preferences for men's apparel brand and the demographic variables, namely gender, marital status, age, education, occupation, income level and family members were examined using Chi-Square. The hypotheses under discussion are:

H1$_0$a: There is no relationship between gender and brand preferences. (i.e. private and national brand)

The Chi-square analysis of the hypothesis shows (Chi Square $\chi2$ =0.120, df=1, p>0.05). As p=0.729 which is greater than 0.05 level of significance. Hence, we can conclude that the brand preference is not dependent on gender status.

H1$_0$b: There is no relationship between marital status and brand preferences. (i.e. private and national brand).

The Chi-square analysis of the hypothesis shows (Chi Square $\chi2$=0.401, df =1, p>0.05). As p=0.527 which is greater than 0.05 level of significance. Hence, we can conclude that brand preference is not dependent on marital status alone; there may be other demographic factors that affect the brand preference.

H1$_0$c: There is no relationship between age and brand preferences. (i.e. private and national brand)

The Chi-square analysis of the hypothesis shows (Chi Square $\chi2$ =2.702, df = 4, p>0.05). As p=0.609 which is greater than 0.05 level of significance. Hence, we can conclude that the brand preference is not dependent on age.

H1$_0$d: There is no relationship between education and brand preferences. (i.e. private and national brand)

The Chi-square analysis of the hypothesis shows (Chi Square $\chi2$ =2.322, df = 3, p>0.05). As p=0.508 which is greater than 0.05 level. Hence, we can conclude

that there is not enough evidence to support relationship between brand preferences and education. So, we accept H0 at the 5% level of significance.

H1$_0$e: There is no relationship between occupation and brand preferences. (i.e. private and national brand)

The Chi-square analysis of the hypothesis shows (Chi Square $\chi2$ =5.112, df = 4, p>0.05). As p=0.276 which is greater than 0.05. Hence, we can conclude that there is not enough evidence to support relationship between brand preferences and occupation. So, we accept H0 at the 5% level of significance.

H1$_0$f: There is no relationship between income and brand preferences. (i.e. private and national brand)

The Chi-square analysis of the hypothesis shows (Chi Square $\chi2$ =.864, df = 3, p>0.05). As p=0.834 which is greater than 0.05. Hence, we can conclude that there is not enough evidence to support relationship between brand preferences and income. So, we accept H0 at the 5% level of significance.

H1$_0$g: There is no relationship between family members and brand preferences. (i.e. private and national brand)

The Chi-square analysis of the hypothesis shows (Chi Square $\chi2$ =3.657, df = 3, p>0.05). As p=0.3.01 which is greater than 0.05. Hence, we can conclude that there is not enough evidence to support relationship between brand preferences and family members. So, we accept H0 at the 5% level of significance.

Brand Preferences of Consumer and Psychographics

H2$_0$: There is no relationship between consumers' psychographics and brand preferences (i.e. private and national brand).

There were six psychographic factors which were

extracted after rotation factor analysis. These six sub-dimensions of the psychographic behaviour of consumer are Conformist (Pre-Conceived mind set), Variety seeking, Time and financial constraints, Quality conscious, Price conscious, Familiarity/Loyalty of brand. In each factor, number of items was added and the total was divided by number of items in order to get mean scores of their brand preference influence in the mind of consumer. Preference wise factors have been computed in the following manner. F1 is Conformist, F2 is Variety seeking, F3 is Time and financial constraints,F4 is Quality conscious, F5 is Price conscious , F6 is Familiarity/Loyalty of brand

The SPSS computes the above parameters as below.

COMPUTE F1 =(Q10.2+Q10.6+Q10.14+Q10.18)/4

COMPUTE F2 = (Q10.1+Q10.9+Q10.17)/3

COMPUTE F3 = (Q10.12+Q10.19+Q10.20)/3

COMPUTE F4 = (Q10.5+Q10.7+Q10.11)/3

COMPUTE F5 = (Q10.8+Q10.10+Q10.16)/3

COMPUTE F6 = (Q10.3+Q10.4+Q10.15)/3

In order to treat the all factors of psychographics, mean scores have been calculated and are arranged in descending order as shown in table below:

Mean values ≥ 3.5 were seen as positive, ≤ 2.5 negative and between these two values as neutral / indecisive.

TABLE 7: Arrangements of Psychographic Variables (Factors) in Descending Order.			
Sr. No.	Psychographic Sub Dimensions	MEAN SCORES	S.D.
1	Quality conscious F4	3.881	0.923
2	Price Conscious F5	3.568	1.175
3	Time and financial constraints F3	3.130	1.214
4	Familiarity/Loyalty of brand F6	2.841	1.437
5	Variety seeking F2	2.782	0.903
6	Conformist F1	2.540	1.073

The majority of respondents tended to be positive (mean = 3.88) towards factor 4 related to "quality conscious". The fact that the majority of respondents in the present study were male (55.9%) and that more than 67% of respondents had a graduate or post graduate education might explain respondents' positive response towards quality consciousness. This shows that more educated male consumers are associated with quality consciousness.

Most respondents tended to agree (mean = 3.56) with variables from factor 5 related to "price conscious". Price consciousness is expected to have a positive influence on brand preference. Price consciousness might imply that the respondents purchase private brands which are on promotion to save money due to reasonable price.

Respondents in this study tended to be indecisive (mean = 3.13) towards factor 3, related to "time and financial constraints". The respondents being indecisive towards time constraints might explain their tendency to be national brand prone. Financial constraints are not necessarily associated with private brand proneness. Individual respondent's characteristics would, however, give a better indication of the above, since some respondents were more negative, while others were more positive which yielded an undecided mean.

Respondents in this study also tended to be indecisive (mean = 2.84) towards factor 6 related to "Familiarity/Loyalty of brand". The undecided mean of respondents in this study implies that the majority of respondents were not loyal to a particular brand.

Most respondents tended to be more indecisive than positive (mean = 2.78) towards factor 2 related to "variety seeking". Respondents being more undecided towards variety seeking related attributes.

Respondents tended to be indecisive (mean = 2.54) towards factor 1 related to "conformity (pre-conceived mindset)". Respondents' indecisive

response to the questions related to conformity implies that respondents had other reasons to prefer a particular brand (i.e. private and national brand).

In the present study, respondents were only positive towards two of the six psychographic factors, namely factor 4, "quality conscious" and factor 5, related to "price conscious". This indicates that these were the only psychographic factors describing respondents' psychographic profile, since they tended to be positive towards all the other psychographic factors of respondent.

Quality consciousness and price seems to be the key drivers and concerns for the consumers during their preference for apparels. Time and financial constraints, loyalty of brand, variety seeking, and conformist behavior of consumers are also relatively important.

HYPOTHESES TESTING RESULTS

Accept Null Hypothesis (H10) as anticipated; these demographic factors are not having any association with brand preferences (i.e. private and national brand).Null hypothesis: gender(H1oa), marital status(H1ob), age (H1oc), education (H1od),

occupation (H1oe), monthly household income (H1of), and family size (H1og) were accepted.

Reject Null Hypothesis (H20), as alternative hypothesis H2 was supported by quality and price conscious of psychographic factors. This indicates that these were the only psychographic factors describing respondents' psychographic profile, since they tended to be indecisive towards all the other psychographic factors of respondent.

CONCLUSION

Demographic characteristics of respondents have no statistically significant influence on choice of a brand irrespective of the type of brand. As Null hypothesis: gender (H1oa), marital status (H1ob), age (H1oc), education (H1od), occupation (H1oe), monthly household income (H1of), and family size (H1og) were accepted. With regard to impact of psychographic characteristics, the results indicate that quality and price conscious are the two important psychographic factors which affect the choice of brand needs, hence proper attention from marketers. Other psychographics behviour are indecisive towards brand preferences.
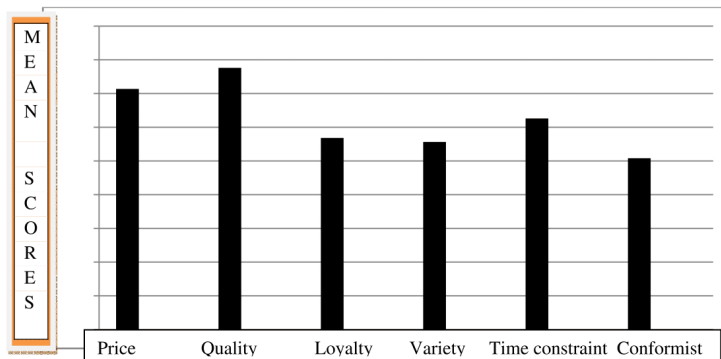

Figure-1: Means Scores

The findings of the researchers such as Eckman et al. (1990); Forsythe et al. (1999) also found that price is the most frequent attribute used by consumers in evaluating the value of apparel. Although Hoch & Banerji (1993) found that price was given more importance than quality but this study shows that quality is the prime concern among all the consumers and even low financially weak consumers also desire to get the best quality in terms of the price. The concern for quality remains there with all consumers but a lower price demands though not a higher quality but at least a compatible quality. This forces the consumers with low financial profile to make a choice between or among many private brands when offering an identical product. For quality, the result corroborate with the findings of Lang and Crown (1993) which pointed out that quality is among most important consideration when buying decisions for clothing items are made. Similarly, Glynn & Chen (2009) argue that quality, price consciousness, price -quality association & brand loyalty are the major determinants to influence consumer choice.

Consumer psychographics have been found to exercise a reasonable influence upon consumer attitude towards brand preference. The consumer psyche is more tilted towards better quality while making a brand choice as the mean score of 3.881 indicates. The second attribute i.e., price with mean score of 3.568 has more or less an impact on consumer psychographics while purchasing a particular brand. The other factors like time and financial constraint, variety seeking, brand loyalty and a preconceived mind set (conformist) have a mild influence upon brand preference.

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