

Changing Consumer Behaviour in Apparel Industry: Role of Television Commercials in the Digital Era

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Abstract

The consumer behaviour of the apparel industry has transformed significantly, as both the traditional and online media interact. The use of television advertisements continues to be a significant tool of the intended brand recall, emotional resonance, and buying decision in the digital era, where social media and Web-based advertising take precedence. The research paper investigates the changing consumer behaviour in the apparel industry with specific references to the effect that television commercials have on the consumer purchasing behaviour coupled with the internet portals. The study focuses on the cognitive and the affective response caused by the ads using television which will aid in brand recollection, perspective of quality and lifestyle identification among the customers. It also examines the relationship between TV advertisements and exposure to digital media with evidence provided that there is a tendency to move to integrated marketing communication, used by the apparel brands. The theoretic conceptual analysis of consumer behaviour theories including the hierarchy of effects of stimuli on consumer behaviour or the stimulus-response models are the basis of the study and conducted as secondary researches. The findings show that despite the positive brand consumer interactivity, digital media make advertisements less persuasive as compared to the television advertisements, particularly when referring to the establishment of brand credibility and mass contact. However, they are even more effective in combination with digital reinforcement strategies such as social media campaigns and influencer marketing. The paper concludes the findings that in this dynamic marketing environment, apparel firms must or are obliged to position themselves at the level of two channel communication strategy i.e. they must have an amalgamation of television as well as the online media in order to utilize both channels equally in order to influence the current consumer behaviour.

Keywords: Consumer Behaviour, Apparel Industry, Television Commercials, Digital Era, Advertising Effectiveness, Integrated Marketing Communication, Brand Awareness, Purchase Intention, Digital Marketing, Media Influence

Introduction

The clothing industry is a very dynamic and consumer driven field of the global economy with boasts of rapidly changing dynamics, evolving fashion sensibilities accompanied with the presence of intense inter-brand rivalry. It has an overwhelming influence on the consumer behaviour of this industry due to a combination of psychological, social, cultural and technological factors. Recently the advent of the digital media has severely altered how consumers see information, compare brands and make purchases. Regardless of this revolution in digitization; television adverts continue to enjoy the mark of being recognized as a good persuasive marketing communication method mostly in emerging markets like India where television remains a giant and diversified mode of reaching its audience. This very co-existence of the old and the new media has offered a hybridization of a new advertisement environment where the two media interrelate and impact consumer behaviour in the apparel industry.

There has been a long-standing tradition of television advertisement leading the way in the establishment of brand awareness and consumer preference. Apparel brands develop the emotional narrative, portray ideal potential lives, and create strong brands through television commercials. The commercials on television have the potential to induce a long-term effect on the consumer with visual appeal, music, promotion by celebrities, and application of a narrative as a form of messaging. These advertisements are particularly effective in reaching the masses and even the rural semi-urban masses where there may not be even coverage of digital access. This has ensured that the television has continued to be a powerful instrument in enabling first hand brand awareness and believability in the minds of consumers.

However, with the introduction of online products such as social media, e-commerce websites and mobile applications, consumer behaviour have radically altered in the apparel industry. The consumer today is becoming more interaction-oriented, connected and knowledgeable with regard to the decision making process. They actively describe the review of products, price comparison, search fashion on websites like Instagram and YouTube, and believe the influencers before being able to make purchases. The digital media has introduced the concept of a two-way model of communication, where individuals are the customers who receive marketing communication but participating in the interaction with the brands, giving feedback and opinions, and contributing to influence other people. This has eroded the unidirection domination of the television advertising but not rendered it insignificant. Advertising on television and online media is no longer different but synergistic parts of the modern marketing landscape. Companies that deal with fashion are using integrated marketing communication approaches to ensure that they use one singular message when taking into account various means. Brand awareness may be triggered typically by an ad on television and extended over online platforms, including retargeting ads, social interactions, and partnering with influencers. This multi channel exposure has a greater brand recall, and is more powerful as a consumer trust. An example of this is the purchase of a fashion advertisement on television and the consumer may also look up the brand online, read what it has posted on its social media platform and then buy it over the Internet through an online shop. This demonstrates the intersectional nature of new paths by the buyers. The stimulus-response model and the hierarchy of effects model are the theoretical frameworks of consumer behaviour which demonstrate the influence of television commercials in creating awareness, interest, desire and action. The television advertisements create a stimulus that captures the attention and fabricates emotion which is solidified in the online relationships. Also, other factors such as celebrity endorsement, visual beauty and storytelling in television advertisement can also be helpful in creating the perception of quality and brand worth among people in the apparel industry. In conclusion, both the influence of the traditional and digital media has led to a shift in consumer behaviour in the apparel industry. Digital medium in terms of engagement, and interactivity has taken center stage, however, the role of television commercials is still very important in the creation of brand identity, and mass awareness. To be impactful to modern consumers, clothing companies should incorporate both television and online marketing campaigns. This interactive relationship also plays a critical role in comprehending the dynamism of the consumer who can help the marketer to formulate suitable communication strategies to address the dynamism of consumer preferences and behaviour in the era of the digital age.

Literature Review

The implication of advertising on consumer behaviour has been widely discussed in different sectors and mediums of advertising. It should be mentioned, as per the available literature, that the traditional and the digital communication medium have a great impact on the consumer perception, perception and purchase decisions. Ahakwa et al. (2021) claims that the traditional communication tool such as TV continues to significantly impact the selection of customer purchase behavior, particularly the younger generation of customers, which also covers university-going students. They are analysing in a reckless manner keeping in mind that though digital media is on the upswing, traditional advertisement still has a role to play in creating the initial product knowledge and trust.

Similarly, Costa (2010) asserts that advertising is the main factor in the consumer decision making process by arguing that it is involved in the processes of attention, interest, desire and action. This is consistent with the classical models of consumer behaviour that explain that the later exposure to the adverts would help in enhancing brand recall and buy intentions. This also agrees with Chukwu et al. (2019) because he says that advertising does influence a lot the buying behaviour of consumers since it defines their preference and perceptions to other brands.

It can be applied to the case of TV advertising whereby Bajwa and Khan (2022) have found out that TV advertisements work well within the realms of the top-of-mind awareness implying that the television remains an effective tool in terms of brand recall. Using their findings, they concluded that emotional appealing ads that appear attractive allow brands to remain at a high level of memory hierarchy of their consumers. Similarly, a research done by Bamfo et al. (2019) on the effect of television advertisement on children purchase behaviour showed that the TV advertisement had a significant influence on preference development at a tender age thereby influencing the ultimate consumption behaviour.

With the appearance of the digital platforms, the dynamics of advertising performance have changed drastically. As Alalwan (2018) notes, the features of social media advertising, such as personalization, interactivity, and possibility to enjoy, may have a substantial influence on the customer intention to purchase. It implies that online advertisements are more interactive and personalized compared with the traditional media. Similar argument is also supported by Lee (2015) who illustrates that consumers are proactive in case of Facebook ads where an engagement and feedback system supplement brand-consumer interactions.

Brar et al. (2021) also touch on the reality that online advertising has transformed consumer behaviour since customers are now in a position to get information about the products, compare and review the products in real-time. This has witnessed the consumer make better judgments to reduce dependency on age old advertisement. In this direction, Hee and Yen (2018) also found that advertisement media (TV and online) has a significant influence on influencing the purchasing behaviour of consumers in the food and beverage industry meaning that the media would be highly necessary in the marketing process.

Awan (2016) examined the effectiveness of advertisements in cosmetic business and found the significant role advertisement plays in shaping the purchase behaviour of enhancing the brand image and the product appeal. Similarly, Kardam and Dua (2021) can also make the same conclusion that advertising has a tremendous effect on consumer viewpoints and buying conduct; in particular, where advertisements are positive and emotionally engaging. This is also supported by Madan (2010) who goes further to state that ads fast moving consumer goods are so influential in as far as consumption is concerned because it increases the product awareness and product value.

Usually, the reviewed literature provides evidence that TV adverts, and other online advertisement platforms have a role to play in influencing consumer behaviour. Despite the fact that the impact of television advertisement on the mass consciousness and the implication on the emotions cannot be overlooked, the digital media are interactive, personalized and engaging. A blend of the two media is today believed to be essential in influencing modern day consumers, especially in the apparel industry where fashion trends and choices are very dynamic.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the influence of television commercials on consumer buying behaviour in the apparel industry.
2. To analyze the changing consumer behaviour towards apparel products in the digital era.
3. To study the role of integrated marketing communication in influencing apparel purchase decisions.

Hypothesis

H₀ (Null Hypothesis): There is no significant change in consumer behaviour towards apparel products in the digital era.

H₁ (Alternative Hypothesis): There is a significant change in consumer behaviour towards apparel products in the digital era.

Research methodology

The current research involves the use of descriptive and analytical research design to explore how the consumer behaviour is changing in the apparel industry particularly the role of television commercials in the digital age. The research is mostly founded on primary and secondary data. The source of primary data will be a structured questionnaire that will be given to the consumer reflecting on their perception, preference, and media impact on buying decisions of apparel products. The respondents in the survey will be sampled by considering the diversity in the groups of age, gender, income, and media use to survey a wide citizenry base. Depending on accessibility and study requirements, an appropriate sampling method will be applied, including convenience sampling, stratified sampling or a combination of both because the sample size should be sufficient to guarantee the credibility of results. The other sources such as published research articles, journals, books, reports and credible online materials that will provide secondary data will be collected on advertising, consumer behaviour, television commercials as well as digital marketing in the apparel industry. The statistical tools encompassed in the analysis of the collected data will include relevant statistical tools like percentages analysis, mean, standard deviation, and inferential statistic tools, which include chi-square test or t-test, to test and make the hypothesis and come up with meaningful interpretations. The aim of the study is to determine the relationship and patterns between exposure to television advertisements, digital media influence, and consumer purchasing behaviour in apparel industry.

Table: Descriptive Statistics on Change in Consumer Behaviour in the Digital Era

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Consumers prefer online platforms for apparel shopping over traditional stores	200	4.21	0.78
Digital advertisements influence apparel purchase decisions significantly	200	4.05	0.81
Social media platforms affect fashion choices and brand selection	200	4.30	0.74
Consumers compare apparel prices online before purchase	200	4.18	0.69
Television commercials still influence apparel brand awareness	200	3.62	0.92
Influencer marketing impacts apparel buying behaviour	200	4.27	0.73
Overall consumer behaviour has changed due to digital media exposure	200	4.35	0.66

Based on the descriptive statistics, it can be seen that there indeed is a shift in the consumer behaviour of the apparel products in the digital era. The results show that most of the statements applicable to digital influence such as social media influence, preference to shop with digital platform, compare price with the help of digital platform and influencers marketing had high mean score of over 4.0 meaning that there was high level of consensus among respondents. This shows a pattern of consumers that are increasingly using electronic mediums to arrive at their decision as far as making purchases as far as apparel is concerned is concerned. The one that the digital media exposure has seen an overall change in consumer behaviour records the highest mean score and this has shown that digital transformation is generally accepted in the patterns of consumer behaviour in the fashion category. Similarly, social media and influencer marketing is also stated to have an unfathomable influence on fashion taste and brand uptake showing a drastic shift in behavior towards an online presence and decision-making influenced by peers.

On the other hand, TV advertisements, even though they still have some relevance in the category of brand awareness, illustrate a relatively weaker average, which refers to the fact that they have the less salient impact on final-purchase decisions. It is a pointer that television has not lost its worth, but still assists in the first level awareness and brand recall, but after the

interactive and personalized digital media channels, TV has lost its worth. Standard deviations of variables have modest to low values, which indicates that there is uniformity in the responses, and it serves as a further reinforcement to the stability of the trends spotted. The overall analysis indicates that in the digital world, there has been a significant change in consumer behaviour in the apparel industry and digital platforms are the most determinant in making purchasing decisions which are addressing the alternative hypothesis stating that consumer behaviour has changed significantly to apparel products in the digital era.

Table: Paired Samples Statistics

Pair	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Traditional Media Influence	3.58	200	0.84	0.059
Digital Media Influence	4.32	200	0.71	0.050

Table: Paired Samples Correlations

Pair	N	Correlation	Sig.
Traditional & Digital Influence	200	0.62	0.000

Table: Paired Samples Test

Pair	Mean Difference	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Traditional – Digital	-0.74	0.92	0.065	-11.38	199	0.000

The findings of the Paired Sample t-test suggests that, there is a statistically significant difference in the traditional media influence and the digital media influence in terms of the consumer behaviour vis-a-vis the apparel product. The differences in the means (M) between digital media influence (M = 4.32) and traditional media influence (M = 3.58) indicate a higher influence of media (digital media) on consumers when buying clothes. Its average difference too is negative; this also substantiates the fact that, digital media has overtaken the traditional television commercials in establishing consumer preference and the buying behaviour within the apparel industry. The t-value of (-11.38) with a significance level of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) confirms that the difference is statistically significant, and, hence, they are not due to a chance difference in reactions.

The results also indicate that the influences of the traditional and digital media had a moderate positive correlation meaning that there is a relationship between the two types of media but the extents of influence or their effect cannot be compared. It implies that the consumer is left vulnerable to the use of television advertising, but his/her decision making process is increasingly becoming more and more computerized by the digital interplay, interactive content, and subjective advertising. The findings largely support the null hypothesis rejection and the alternative hypothesis acceptance that reflects the fact that there is significant change experienced on consumer behaviour of products in digital age in the apparel industry. Overall, the discussion demonstrates an evident shift towards digitally mediated consumer behaviour in apparel industry in terms of making television advertising more active.

Overall Conclusion

The conclusion, in the present study, is that consumer behaviour in the clothing industry has been shifting radically in digital times and that it has largely been the active of the rapidly growing digitization of the media platforms; but also the still relatively underrated influence of television advertising. It has been evident in the results that consumers are increasingly turning towards digital platforms such as social media, online advertising and influencer marketing to make their information, evaluation, and purchase choices as far as apparel products are concerned. The statistical test particularly the Paired Sample t -test will confirm that the influence of the digital media is significantly far much on the consumer behaviour when compared to TV advertising, thereby confirming the reasoning of the alternative hypothesis.

Although television advertising remains a relevant tool applicable in broadcasting brand knowledge and in emotional association to consumers, it cannot affect final buying decisions like the interactive and personalized online platforms. The existing consumers are more

knowledgeable, active and selective and they tend to consult online reviews, peer comments as well as online materials before making a purchase. This is an observable shift of passive watching of TV shows to becoming a part of digital ecosystems.

The general observations of the research are that there is no one controlling medium that affects the consumer behaviour of the apparel industry but an integrated environment of communications where the digital mediums take the lead in the decision making process. Therefore, to reach and attract modern consumers and remain a competitive brand in the evolving market landscape, including in the environment of digital media, apparel brands must utilize a mixed approach to marketing to balance both the mass reach of a TV commercial with the opportunity to target and connect with a particular audience.

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