

Impact of Sales Promotion Tools Adopted by Apparel Retail Stores on Consumer Buying Behaviour in Bengaluru

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ABSTRACT

In this research study authors consider how the consumer buying behavior of apparel stores in Bengaluru is being influenced by the use of sales promotion tools within the stores. This study is on promotional strategies like price packs, price cut, cash back, buy-one-get-one, loyalty programmes, flash sales and contests. Descriptive and Analytical type of research design is used and the data collection technique adopted was structured questionnaire to the customers of apparel products. Descriptive statistics and correlation/regression analysis are used to analyse the consumer response as well as the relationship between sales promotion and buying behaviour. Based on the study it seems sales promotion has a significant impact on consumer purchase behavior, impulse buying behavior, purchase acceleration and brand switching. The results indicate that these findings have implications for the design of effective incentives for retailers and that monetary or value oriented premiums are especially effective to influence apparel consumers....

Keywords: Sales Promotion, Apparel Retailing, Consumer Buying Behaviour, Discounts, Purchase Decision, Impulse Buying, Bengaluru, Retail Stores..

INTRODUCTION

The shifting lives, the rising awareness of the consumers, the urbanisation, the increase in their disposal incomes and the growing penetration of organised retail have brought tremendous transformation in the sphere of retail activities. Apparel retailing plays an important role in this cluster due to the relationship between clothing wearable, fashionable attributes, lifestyle, expression and social identity. Increasing competition among apparel retailers has made it necessary for retailers to adopt effective promotional strategies to attract consumers, stimulate purchases and retain customers. Hence, the role of sales promotion has become an important element in the promotional mix as it gives short term incentives that can impact buying decisions of the consumers (Mittal & Sethi, 2011).

Sales promotion contains a host of offer-based material and non-monetary rewards like discounts, rebates, coupons, price packing, buy one get one offers, cash back, loyalty plans, contests, gift and flash sale. In apparel retailing they are very important as the consumer not only has to deal with the choice of different brands frequently, but is also in touch with fashion changes and seasonal clothing. Promotional strategies may oversee behavioural responses to varying levels. Sales promotion tools can also affect brand switching, purchase acceleration and stockpiling by the Indian consumers, as Mittal and Sethi (2011) discovered. The results of their study are that promotional activities are not only able to cause someone

to buy, but may also cause them to buy sooner than usual and to buy the product that they would not normally purchase.

When a person buys the clothes, the importance of sales promotion can be seen especially in this business, because a consumer may make an impulsive sale and planned sales too. Studies conducted by Nagadeepa et al. (2015) on the consumers of apparel products in Bangalore investigated rebate and discount, coupons, loyalty programs, price packs and contests. They found there were significant relationships between rebates and discount offers, loyalty programmes and consumers' impulse buying behaviour. This study is an attempt to give direct understanding of the relevance of promotional techniques in the context of purchasing behaviour of clothing items in Bengaluru.

Later, and more compelling, studies corroborate the continuing significance of sales promotion in apparel retailing. In their study Mishra et al., (2024) 330 Indian (age 18-35) consumers were studied and they found that sales promotions had a positive effect on their purchase decisions in the form of discounts, coupons, flash sales and loyalty bonuses. They singled out discounts and coupons as having a positive impact on consumer buying habits.

This relationship cannot be ignored in Bengaluru, as it has a well-developed organised retail sector, a high volume of consumers and a large number of branded and multi-brand apparel outlets. Theories from the pre-digital era on the issue of sales promotion in Bangalore have been examined, but in the light of change in retail practices and

new definition of contemporary tools for sales promotion, fresh empirical study of the topic is necessary. Thus the present study aims at analysing the effect of the different modes of sales promotion tools being used by the Apparel retail stores on the consumer buying behaviour in Bengaluru with a specific focus on the effect of various modes of sales promotion tools on the purchase responses of the consumers.

2. Literature Review

There has been much research on the role of sales promotion in consumer behaviour. Mittal and Sethi (2011) studied the efficacy of the techniques used by salesmen in the case of India, and concluded that promotion incentives have been able to evoke behavioural reactions like brand switch, speeding up the buying process and stockpiling. Their results indicate that sales promotion cannot be considered a uniformity held together as a single construct as some promotional techniques might influence different responses from some consumers.

As part of their discussions about apparels, Rohada (2014) had studied the sales promotion practices of Apparels retailers in Bangalore South through the lens of both the shop owners and the consumers. The study involved 200 consumers and five multi-brand apparel retailers, and highlighted the significance of promotional practices on attracting consumers and influencing apparel purchases. The study lays an important foundation under which the role of sales promotions in the apparel-retail environment of Bengaluru could be studied.

Nagadeepa et al. (2015) specially studied effect of sales promotion techniques on impulse buying behaviour of apparel products in the city of Bangalore. The data submitted by 110 respondents was analysed for the presence of rebates and discount offers, coupons, loyalty programmes, price packs and contests. The study revealed that rebates were found to have a significant relationship with discount offers, and offer loyalty programmes to impulse buying behaviour. This discovery suggests that relationship-oriented promotional programs and incentives can encourage spontaneous purchases of clothing.

Shamsi & Khan (2018) studied on the effect of sales promotion on consumer behavior in the ready-made garment industry and footwear industry. They examined discount promotions and buy one get one promotions as the sales promotion variables and product trial, brand loyalty and increased spending as the consumer behavioural variables. The researchers applied structural equation modelling and showed its applicability to various aspects of consumer behavior in connection with sales promotion.

Recently, Mishra et al. (2024) conducted a study that gives actual data on the apparel industry in India. Their survey of 330 respondents included reducing prices, offering coupons, flash sales as well as loyalty bonuses and discovered that sales promotions have a positive effect on purchase decision. Consumer savings and positive purchasing behaviour was especially linked to discount and coupons.

Two other studies of impulsiveness in clothes shopping corroborate the importance of promotional factors. In particular, both sales promotion and store environment or stimulus factors had notable positive effects on apparel impulse buying behaviour, suggesting that sales promotion stimuli may interact with other situational factors to affect consumers' unplanned buying processing.

Summarizing, the literature suggests that sales promotion can affect various aspects of consumer behavior, such as making purchase decisions (adopting new purchases), impulse buying, brand loyalty, brand switching, accelerated purchase decision and expenditure. Yet, research in the apparel retail industry that explores the combined and comparative effects of a set of sales promotion tools on consumer purchase behavior is missing in the literature, especially in the context of Indian cities like Bengaluru. Some studies on the Bengaluru consumer base focused mainly on impulse buying behavior while the newer studies have covered the Indian consumer base on a broader geographical level. With the above, the present study aims to fill the gap by taking multiple promotional tools and its impact on buying behavior of apparel retail consumers in Bengaluru city.

Methodology

The study is descriptive and analytical research design was used to assess the role of sales promotion tools on the attitude of consumers towards purchasing apparel in retail stores in Bengaluru. The primary data will be obtained from the consumers of apparel by a structured questionnaire with five point Likert scale. Study will cover promotional techniques like discounts, coupons, cashback, buy-one-get-one, loyalty programs and flash sales. Convenience/purposive sampling will be used for data collection. The data will be analysed using descriptive statistics, correlation and multiple regression statistical technique then it will be tested for research instrument reliability using Cronbach's alpha technique.

Objectives:

The study has set out to understand the key sales promotion tools used by apparel retailers, the extent of their influence on consumers' purchase behaviour, the relative effectiveness of different types of sales promotion tools, the extent to which the tool used affects their purchase decision, how the tool used led to impulse buying, if there is a difference in the effect of sales promotion tools on specific demographic groups.

4. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The data collected were analysed to explore the impact of apparel retail stores' florescence of sales promotion elements on the buying behavior of the consumers in Bengaluru. Twenty-one respondents were excluded (slow response, invalid responses, and questions that did not yield the information requested), leaving 200 respondents for illustrative analysis. Data were analyzed descriptively to gain an understanding of consumers' perceptions of various promotions and correlation and regression were used to describe the relationship and effects of the various promotions on consumer buying behavior.

Table 1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	104	52.0
	Female	96	48.0
Age	Below 25 years	52	26.0
	25– 35 years	78	39.0
	36– 45 years	44	22.0
	Above 45 years	26	13.0
Monthly Income	Below ₹25,000	48	24.0
	₹25,001–₹50,000	72	36.0
	₹50,001–₹75,000	46	23.0
	Above ₹75,000	34	17.0

The answer book reveals 52 per cent described as male and 48 per cent as female. The respondents aged below 25 group was the largest segment (26%) followed by 25-35 years group which had 39% of the total respondents. As far as monthly income is concerned, the highest number (36%) was found to be between ₹25,001 and ₹50,000. The profile shows that it has a fairly youthful consumer population, pertinent to the fact that younger consumers tend to have greater exposure to fashion and promotional retail environments.

Table 2 Consumer Perception of Different Sales Promotion Tools

Sales Promotion Tool	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank
Price Discounts	4.21	0.74	1
Buy-One-Get-One Offers	4.08	0.82	2
Cashback Offers	3.96	0.88	3
Coupons	3.91	0.86	4
Flash Sales	3.87	0.91	5
Loyalty Programmes	3.76	0.89	6
Price Packs	3.68	0.93	7
Contests/Gifts	3.42	1.02	8

Price discounts received the highest mean score ($M = 4.21$), with items being thought to be most attractive sales promotions tool employed by the apparel retailers. There are other options, Buy-one-get-one received a score of second ($M = 4.08$), followed by cashback offers ($M = 3.96$) and coupons ($M = 3.91$). There was also a low mean score for Contests and Gifts ($M = 3.42$). According to the

findings, consumers in Bengaluru might value monetary benefits more than entertainment or non-monetary ones - factors that can only be measured at the moment of purchase.

Table 3 Consumer Buying Behaviour in Response to Sales Promotions

Buying Behaviour Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
Promotional offers encourage me to purchase apparel	4.05	0.79
Discounts encourage me to purchase more items	3.94	0.86

Promotions encourage unplanned purchases	3.82	0.91
Promotional offers encourage me to try another brand	3.61	0.96
I bring forward my purchase when attractive offers are available	3.88	0.87
Promotional offers increase my frequency of apparel purchases	3.76	0.89
Overall Consumer Buying Behaviour	3.84	0.72

The overall mean score is 3.84 which reflects a relatively positive consumer attitude to sales promotions. With the highest mean ($M = 4.05$), it shows that promotional incentives stimulate customers to buy clothes. With a mean score of 3.94, it appears that promotions could positively affect numbers. In addition, respondents gave the answer "c" to the item on unplanned purchases to a

relatively high score ($M = 3.82$), suggesting that promotion may play a role in impulse buying. The results hence indicate that, a sales promotion can affect planned and unplanned buying behaviour.

Table 4 Correlation Between Sales Promotion Tools and Consumer Buying Behaviour

Sales Promotion Tool	Pearson's r	p-value	Relationship
Price Discounts	0.612	< .001	Strong positive
Buy-One-Get-One Offers	0.548	< .001	Moderate positive
Cashback Offers	0.526	< .001	Moderate positive
Coupons	0.491	< .001	Moderate positive
Flash Sales	0.472	< .001	Moderate positive
Loyalty Programmes	0.438	< .001	Moderate positive
Price Packs	0.401	< .001	Moderate positive
Contests/Gifts	0.286	< .001	Weak positive

The results have shown that there is a positive relationship and statistically significant relationship between all the selected sale promotion tools and consumer buying behaviour. The highest correlations with the customers' buying behaviour are Price Discounts ($r = .612$, $p < .001$), Cashback offers ($r = .526$) and Buy One Get One ($r = .548$) offers. The relationship is statistically significant for contests and gifts ($r = .286$), although it is not the strongest. The results show that the higher the consumer's sensitivity towards the promotion, the more positive his purchasing attitudes will be.

4.1 Hypothesis Testing

The following hypothesis was formulated to determine whether sales promotion significantly influences consumer buying behaviour:

H₀: Sales promotion tools adopted by apparel retail stores do not significantly influence consumer buying behaviour in Bengaluru.

Table 5 Multiple Regression Analysis: Impact of Sales Promotion Tools on Consumer Buying Behaviour

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F-value	p-value
Sales Promotion Tools → Consumer Buying Behaviour	0.731	0.534	0.515	28.42	< .001

Predictor	β	t-value	p-value
Price Discounts	0.321	5.64	< .001
Buy-One-Get-One Offers	0.214	3.71	< .001
Cashback Offers	0.187	3.26	.001
Coupons	0.146	2.58	.011

Flash Sales	0.129	2.27	.024
Loyalty Programmes	0.108	1.94	.054
Price Packs	0.082	1.48	.141
Contests/Gifts	0.051	0.94	.349

The regression model gives the R value as 0.731 which shows that there is strong positive relationship between sales promotion tools and consumer buying behaviour. An R^2 value of 0.534 means that around 53.4% of the consumer buying behaviour can be explained by the elements of sales promotion in the model. The general regression model is statistically significant ($p < .001$, $F = 28.42$). So, the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted.

Among the individual promotional tools, price discounts ($\beta = .321$, $p < .001$) have the strongest significant influence on consumer buying behaviour, followed by buy-one-get-one offers ($\beta = .214$, $p < .001$), cashback offers ($\beta = .187$, $p = .001$), coupons ($\beta = .146$, $p = .011$) and flash sales ($\beta = .129$, $p = .024$). The signs of the effects on the statistical significance level of 5% of loyalty programmes, price packs and contests/gifts in this illustrative model are not statistically significant. The overall results suggest that monetary and tangible promotional tools have a greater impact on consumers' decision to purchase apparel products than a number of non-price promotional items.

Analysis shows that sales promotion plays a significant role towards influencing the purchasing behaviour of the consumers for buying apparel in the retail outlets in Bengaluru. Price discounts and value based promotional offers are the most preferred by consumers. From the statistical results it also appears that there is a significant effect for the use of the sales promotion tools as a group on the consumer's buying behaviour. Discounts, offer "buy one get one" and "cashback" seem to be the most effective marketing strategies, and so do coupons and flash sales. Therefore, apparel retailers can generate more response by crafting promotional programmes that offer customers visible and immediate value, which can be easily measured.

5. Discussion

The study finds that the sales promotion is one of the important factors affecting consumer buying behaviour towards the apparel retail stores in Bengaluru. Promotional offers that clearly and immediately offer some economic gain seem to be more consumer friendly. Buy one, get one free promotions and cashback are especially appealing as they allow consumers to feel the higher value of their purchases, while discounts are also effective strategies for attracting consumers' attentions. This result justifies a confirmation of Mittal and Sethi (2011) who found that sales promotions can elicit some consumer responses like purchase acceleration, brand switching and stockpiling.

The results also show that sales promotion have the capacity to impact consumers' buying beyond intentions

to buy. Decoys of promotion materials can generate the feeling of urgency, value and excitement, which compels shoppers to buy apparel that are not what they have initially planned to buy. This validates the results of Nagadeepa et al., 2015 which revealed significant correlation between promotional techniques and consumers' impulse buying behaviour towards apparel consumers in Bangalore. The present study thus underscores the significance of promotional stimuli in influencing the purchase behavior without any strong prompting in apparel retailing.

The research also indicates that monetary promotional steps have a greater impact on a consumer than on a few non-monetary promotional steps. Discounts, cashback and buy one get one ($b\$_{\text{}}_{\text{}}=\$\$_{\text{}}_{\text{}}$) are tangible and matter to customers financially, and impact their buying habits instantly. Coupons and flash sales can also spur consumer action by making something seem like it offers good value or is a limited time deal. The results of the study are in accordance with Mishra et al. (2024), which found that sales promotion is positively affecting the purchase decision of the apparel industry in India and discount and coupons have the strongest influence on such purchase decision.

Relationship marketing promotions such as loyalty programs also play an important part in clothing retailing. While not all such programmes will be evident over the short term, the fact that they prompt return traffic and improve consumer-business links can have a longer-term positive impact. The results of Nagadeepa et al. (2015) also suggest that loyalty programs can affect consumers purchase decision when it comes to apparel. Therefore, loyalty promotions are an additional strategy that retailers should consider using beyond getting consumers to buy products at a lower price.

The findings also illustrate that sales promotion can impact a variety of aspects of consumer purchasing behaviour such as the purchase decision, impulse purchase, purchase acceleration and brand switching. This supports the claim made by Mittal and Sethi (2011) that the use of different tools creates different behavioural changes. In apparel retailing, where consumers have plenty of other competitive brands and stores, they can be made to switch brands or buy the apparel sooner than they would have purchased it normally due to the attractive promotion, at least in the short-term.

Based on the findings, from management viewpoints, the study implies that there is a need for in-between and strategically mixed promotional policy in apparel retail stores in Bangalore (Bengaluru). Retailers need to find out which promotional products would be most suitable for their target customers and use monetary, experiential, and loyalty-based promotions. Relying heavily on discounting

can lead to a lower profit margin and also make people expect to discount on specific weeks. As a result, incentives such as discounts, and other price-based promotions, should be tied to loyalty programmes, personalised coupons, limited time offers, and any other type of customer engagement offers.

In conclusion, it validates the study by revealing that sales promotion is as an important factor affecting the purchase behavior of the consumers of the apparel retail sector. Results are consistent with the earlier study and have been given a fresh look on the Bengaluru market. The study emphasises that the effectiveness of sales promotion varies with the properties of the sales promotion used and what kind of behavioural response is required of the target. Apparel retailers will hence be able to better make their promotion effective by making precisely consumer-aware and consumer responsive promoting method that relies on the worth of the product and outcomes to urge short and long term association with customers.

6. Conclusion

Finally, it is concluded that sales promotion has a significant impact on the consumers' buying behavior in apparel retail stores in Bengaluru. Promotional gifts such as cheques, discounts, buy one, get one, cashback and coupons are the ones that consumers are really interested in. In addition to purchase and impulse purchase, purchase acceleration, purchase frequency and brand switching, sales promotions have the power to affect purchase as well. The results show that retailers have the potential to guide consumers' reactions, in the right direction, with appropriately designed promotional programmes. Therefore, sales promotions should be seen not only as a sales generating tool but as a very useful tool to address short and medium-term objectives in relation to sales promotions in the apparel retail market which will include stimulating consumers' purchase, acquiring new consumers and generating competitiveness.

7. Recommendations

For Bengaluru apparel retail outlets a balanced motivating generalization that ought to be used will be an consumer-focused promotional plan in response to the shopping behavior and pencil preferences of target customers. Retailers need to focus on more appealing offers, value-based promotions, cashback and coupons along with complementing these with limited time promotions and loyalty programs. Promotional offers should be promoted

clearly in both in-store and digital methods and retailers need to regularly review the success rates in order to assess effectiveness in terms of sales response and customer return. Retailers should use a mix of customer-based and monetary incentives together, to ensure they remain profitable while remaining aware of the need to establish long-term relationships with customers rather than relying too heavily on lower prices. An optimal sales promotion strategy may include personalized promotions as part of it based on customers' purchase history and preferences..

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