



A Study on Consumer's Perceptions About Branded and Local Cloth Among Gen-Z in Ahmedabad

Dhruv Chauhan^{1*}, Jasdeep Kaur Puhi², Jignesh Vidani³

L.J. Institute of Management Studies, LJ University

Corresponding Author: Dhruv Chauhan dhruvachauhan123@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates Generation Z's perceptions of branded and local clothing among consumers in Ahmedabad, focusing on their preferences, values, and purchasing behavior. Through a mixed-methods approach, data was collected via surveys and interviews to explore the factors influencing these young consumers' choices. The findings reveal a significant preference for local clothing that reflects cultural identity and sustainability, with respondents expressing a willingness to pay more for environmentally friendly options. Additionally, the study highlights a shift away from traditional brand loyalty, indicating that authenticity and ethical practices are increasingly important to this demographic. The implications of these findings suggest that brands must adapt their marketing strategies to align with the values of Generation Z, emphasizing cultural relevance, sustainability, and community engagement. This research contributes to the understanding of consumer behavior in the fashion industry and offers practical recommendations for brands seeking to connect with this influential group. Future research avenues include exploring broader demographic impacts and the long-term evolution of consumer perceptions.

INTRODUCTION

In this speedily changing world of fashion consumption, knowing the preferences and behaviors of Generation Z (Gen Z) is very important for both global and local fashion brands (Vidani, 2015). People who were born between 1997 and 2012, have become a majority segment in the consumer market with Individual fashion preferences toward fashion, brand image, and purchasing behaviors. (Vidani & Solanki, 2015) In today's world, the fashion choices and brand preferences of Gen Z offer Key observations into the future of fashion retail. (Vidani, 2015) This research aims to examine Gen Z's perceptions of branded versus local clothing within Ahmedabad, Ahmedabad city is known for its rich cultural heritage and growing economic importance in India. (Vidani, 2015). Gen Z is a major force in shaping today's fashion trends. Their choices are not just dependent on traditional factors like price and quality, but also depend on the brand's image and its social responsibility, and how it reflects their identity (Vidani, 2015).

Recent studies on this topic show that Gen Z consumers place a high value on uniqueness and self-concept, which majorly influences their (Solanki & Vidani, 2016) clothing choices and interactions with brands. (Vidani, 2016) For example, they support brands like Zara, Zara's ability to offer the latest fashion trends at relatively affordable prices, resonates with their values of social responsibility and Zara's fast turnaround of fashion trends aligns well with Gen Z's desire for the latest styles. (Niyati & Vidani, 2016). Fashion approach Gen Z's approach is a mix of aspiration and practicality, requiring brands to carefully customize their strategies (Pradhan, Tshogay, & Vidani, 2016).

The difference between branded and local clothing reflects wide changes in consumer behavior. (Modi, Harkani, Radadiya, & Vidani, 2016) Branded clothing is often connected with status, quality, and a specific lifestyle, symbolizing the aspirations of its wearers and providing them with a sense of identity and belonging. (Singh, Vidani, & Nagoria, 2016) Opposite Local clothing brands attract customers with their uniqueness of cultural relevance, affordability, and personalized consumer experiences. (Mala, Vidani, & Solanki, 2016) This contrast is particularly significant in Ahmedabad, where the city's rich cultural heritage and local fashion scene provide an interesting context for exploring Gen Z's clothing preferences. (Dhere, Vidani, & Solanki, 2016).

Recent research indicates that Gen Z is increasingly leaning towards local brands, for instance. (Singh & Vidani, 2016) Syah et al. (2022) found that Indonesian Gen Z consumers prefer local fashion products over imported ones, valuing quality and local authenticity. (Vidani & Plaha, 2016) This preference for local brands is not limited to Indonesia, it is also noticed in other markets, including India. The growth of local fashion brands in Ahmedabad, coupled with a strong cultural identity, has led to a reconsideration of consumer attitudes towards both branded and local clothing (Solanki & Vidani, 2016).

Gen Z's fashion consumption is their connection with brand narratives and social media influencers. (Vidani, 2016) Brand stories aligning with Gen Z's values can influence their perceptions and buying choices. (Vidani, 2016)

According to Andhini and Andanawarih (2023), brand stories play an important role in shaping the perceptions of Indonesian Gen Z consumers and influencing their buying choices. Similarly, social media influencers, who are interested in setting fashion trends and shaping brand perceptions play a significant role in Gen Z's purchasing decisions (Vidani J. N., 2016).

The main consideration in fashion consumption especially among Gen Z consumers is Sustainability. (Vidani & Pathak, 2016) Research by Copeland (2022) shows that Gen Z is willing to pay more for sustainable clothing, emphasizing how environmental and ethical factors affect their purchasing decisions. (Pathak & Vidani, 2016) We can see the reflation of This trend in the growing popularity of thrift fashion, which combines sustainability with affordability and uniqueness. In Ahmedabad, where awareness of environmental issues is increasing, this aspect of consumer behavior is particularly relevant (Vidani & Singh, 2017).

For studying Gen Z's fashion preferences Ahmedabad with its wide range of population and rich cultural heritage provides a unique setting. (Vidani & Plaha, 2017) The city's changing fashion sense reflects a combination of traditional values and modern trends. factors including age, income, and education levels play a main role in shaping consumer behavior. (Bhatt, Patel, & Vidani, 2017) Thakur et al. (2023) observed that demographic variables affect purchasing behavior including preferences for branded versus local apparel. Evaluating these factors within the context of Ahmedabad gives valuable insights into the local fashion market (Vidani, Chack, & Rathod, 2017).

The main goal of this study is to know the perceptions of Gen Z in Ahmedabad regarding branded and local clothing. (Vidani, 2018) By understanding consumer attitudes and behaviors, by combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews, this research aims to know the main factors that affect fashion choices among this demographic to collect comprehensive data on consumer preferences and perceptions (Sukhanandi, Tank, & Vidani, 2018). The research methodology will include collecting data from Gen Z consumers in Ahmedabad by self-administered questionnaires and in-depth interviews. (Biharani & Vidani, 2018) The survey will concentrate on factors like brand perception, quality, price sensitivity, and sustainability. (Vidani, 2018) The qualitative interviews will help to understand the motivations behind fashion choices and the effect of local culture on consumer behavior. (Odedra, Rabadiya, & Vidani, 2018).

Generation Z's patterns of fashion consumption are transforming the industry, with impactful implications for both branded and local clothing brands. (Vidani J. N., 2018) With this generation's continuous evolution in influence, brands must know their preferences and behavior to get the attention and loyalty of Gen Z. (Vidani J. N., 2018) In Ahmedabad, there is a mixture of traditional and modern influences because of that studying Gen Z's fashion choices gives useful insights into the Transforming Trends of the fashion market. (Vasveliyya & Vidani, 2019) By studying factors like brand perception, sustainability, and cultural effects, this research aims to provide an extensive understanding of Gen Z's attitudes toward branded and local clothing in

Ahmedabad and offer valuable guidance for brands and marketers. (Sachaniya, Vora, & Vidani, 2019).

Research Objectives

1. To examine the perception of Gen-Z regarding the style of branded clothing compared to local clothing (Objective achieved in Question 8, Statement 1 of Questionnaire).
2. To assess Gen-Z's views on the quality of branded clothing versus local clothing (Objective achieved in Question 8, Statement 2 of Questionnaire).
3. To investigate Gen-Z's opinions on whether branded clothing is worth the higher price (Objective achieved in Question 8, Statement 3 of Questionnaire).
4. To determine the extent to which Gen-Z associates wearing branded clothing with a sense of status (Objective achieved in Question 8, Statement 4 of Questionnaire).
5. To analyse the degree to which branded clothing aligns with Gen-Z's personal identity (Objective achieved in Question 8, Statement 5 of Questionnaire).
6. To evaluate Gen-Z's perception of local clothing in terms of offering unique styles (Objective achieved in Question 9, Statement 1 of Questionnaire).
7. To explore Gen-Z's views on the affordability of local clothing compared to branded clothing (Objective achieved in Question 9, Statement 2 of Questionnaire).
8. To understand how much local clothing reflects Gen-Z's cultural heritage and identity (Objective achieved in Question 9, Statement 3 of Questionnaire).
9. To assess the perception of Gen-Z regarding the commitment of local clothing brands to sustainability (Objective achieved in Question 9, Statement 4 of Questionnaire).
10. To investigate the preference of Gen-Z for local clothing due to its support for local businesses (Objective achieved in Question 9, Statement 5 of Questionnaire).
11. To measure the importance of sustainability in clothing purchase decisions among Gen-Z (Objective achieved in Question 10 of Questionnaire).
12. To evaluate Gen-Z's willingness to pay a higher price for environmentally friendly clothing (Objective achieved in Question 11 of Questionnaire).
13. To analyse the frequency with which Gen-Z relies on social media influencers for fashion inspiration (Objective achieved in Question 12 of Questionnaire).
14. To determine the influence of social media influencers on Gen-Z's choice between branded and local clothing (Objective achieved in Question 13 of Questionnaire).
15. To assess the likelihood of Gen-Z switching from branded to local clothing if local options offer similar quality and style (Objective achieved in Question 14 of Questionnaire).

16. To evaluate how likely Gen-Z is to recommend local clothing brands to friends and family (Objective achieved in Question 15 of Questionnaire).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Generation Z (Gen Z), born between 1997 and 2012, represents a significant and influential consumer group, particularly in the realm of fashion. (Vidani, 2019) As this cohort enters adulthood, their purchasing behaviours, brand preferences, and fashion choices are reshaping the retail landscape. Understanding Gen Z's fashion preferences is essential for both global and local fashion brands aiming to capture this dynamic market segment (Vidani, Jacob, & Patel, 2019). This literature review explores the preferences of Gen Z in the context of branded versus local clothing, with a specific focus on Ahmedabad, a city notable for its rich cultural heritage and evolving economic importance in India (Vidani J. N., 2020).

1. Characteristics of Gen Z Consumers

Gen Z is distinct from previous generations due to its unique characteristics and attitudes toward fashion. (Vidani & Dholakia, 2020) This generation is marked by its digital nativity, which influences its consumption patterns and brand interactions. (Vidani & Das, 2021) As noted by Williams and Page (2011), Gen Z's familiarity with technology and social media has significantly shaped its shopping behaviours. (Vidani J. N., 2022) Unlike previous generations, Gen Z values authenticity, individuality, and social responsibility, which directly impact their fashion choices (Rathod, Meghrajani, & Vidani, 2022).

2. The Role of Brand Image and Identity

A crucial factor in Gen Z's fashion consumption is the brand's image and how it aligns with their personal identity. (Saxena & Vidani, 2023) According to a study by Wang and Li (2020), Gen Z consumers are highly influenced by brands that project a positive social image and embody values that resonate with their own beliefs. (Vidani, Das, Meghrajani, & Singh, 2023) For instance, brands like Zara appeal to Gen Z through their fast fashion model and commitment to providing trendy, affordable clothing. (Vidani, Das, Meghrajani, & Chaudasi, 2023) Zara's ability to rapidly respond to fashion trends and its perceived commitment to sustainability reflect key values for Gen Z consumers (Smith, 2019).

3. Influence of Social Media and Influencers

Social media platforms and influencers play a significant role in shaping Gen Z's fashion preferences. (Bansal, Pophalkar, & Vidani, 2023) Research by Andhini and Andanawarih (2023) highlights that brand narratives communicated through social media influencers can significantly affect Gen Z's perceptions and purchasing decisions. (Chaudhary, Patel, & Vidani, 2023) Social media influencers not only introduce fashion trends but also endorse brands that align with their values, thereby impacting their followers' choices. (Patel, Chaudhary, & Vidani, 2023) This phenomenon is particularly relevant in

Ahmedabad, where digital platforms are increasingly influencing fashion trends and consumer behaviours (Vidani, Meghrajani, & Siddarth, 2023).

4. Local Versus Branded Clothing

The contrast between local and branded clothing is particularly pronounced in Ahmedabad, where traditional cultural values and modern consumerism intersect. (Sharma & Vidani, 2023) Branded clothing often signifies status, quality, and a particular lifestyle, providing wearers with a sense of identity and belonging (Kotler & Keller, 2016). (Sharma & Vidani, 2023) In contrast, local clothing brands in Ahmedabad offer cultural relevance, affordability, and personalized experiences that resonate with local consumers. According to Syah et al. (2022), there is a growing preference among Indonesian Gen Z for local fashion products due to their authenticity and quality. This trend is mirrored in India, where local brands are gaining traction among Gen Z consumers. (Sharma & Vidani, 2023)

5. Sustainability and Ethical Consumption

Sustainability is a prominent concern for Gen Z consumers, influencing their fashion choices and brand preferences. (Saxena & Vidani, 2023) Research by Copeland (2022) demonstrates that Gen Z is willing to pay a premium for sustainable and ethically produced clothing. (Vidani, Das, Meghrajani, & Singh, 2023) This inclination towards sustainability is reflected in the rising popularity of thrift fashion and eco-friendly brands. In Ahmedabad, where environmental awareness is increasing, Gen Z's preference for sustainable fashion is becoming more evident. Local brands that incorporate sustainable practices and emphasize cultural heritage are well-positioned to appeal to this demographic (Saxena & Vidani, 2023).

6. Demographic Factors Influencing Fashion Choices

Demographic factors such as age, income, and education levels play a significant role in shaping Gen Z's fashion preferences. (Vidani, Das, Meghrajani, & Singh, 2023) Thakur et al. (2023) found that these variables significantly impact consumer behaviour, including preferences for branded versus local apparel. (Bansal, Pophalkar, & Vidani, 2023) In Ahmedabad, the city's diverse population and varying socioeconomic backgrounds contribute to a complex fashion landscape. Understanding these demographic factors is crucial for both global and local fashion brands aiming to cater to Gen Z's evolving tastes and preferences. (Chaudhary, Patel, & Vidani, 2023)

7. Research Methodology

To gain a comprehensive understanding of Gen Z's fashion preferences in Ahmedabad, a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews is proposed (Vidani, Meghrajani, & Siddarth, 2023). Self-administered questionnaires will focus on factors such as brand perception, quality, price sensitivity, and sustainability. (Vidani, Das, Meghrajani, & Chaudasi, 2023) Qualitative interviews will delve into the motivations behind fashion choices and the influence of local culture on consumer behaviour. This

approach will provide valuable insights into the key factors influencing Gen Z's clothing preferences and their attitudes toward branded versus local fashion (Mahajan & Vidani, 2023).

Gen Z is reshaping the fashion industry with its distinct preferences and values (Sharma & Vidani, 2023). Understanding their attitudes towards branded and local clothing is essential for fashion brands seeking to engage this influential consumer group (Sharma & Vidani, 2023). In Ahmedabad, the interplay of traditional cultural values and modern fashion trends creates a unique context for studying Gen Z's fashion choices. By examining the impact of brand image, social media influencers, sustainability, and demographic factors, this research aims to provide a comprehensive overview of Gen Z's fashion preferences and behaviours (Saxena & Vidani, 2023).

8. Research Gap

The research title "A Study on Consumer's Perceptions about Branded and Local Cloth among Gen-Z in Ahmedabad" highlights a significant area of inquiry within the realms of consumer behaviour and textile marketing, particularly focusing on Generation Z's attitudes and preferences. While existing literature has explored various dimensions of consumer behaviour, there remains a notable gap specifically concerning how Gen-Z in Ahmedabad perceives branded versus local cloth. This demographic, characterized by its distinct values, technological adeptness, and social consciousness, may demonstrate unique purchasing behaviours influenced by factors such as sustainability, cultural identity, and social media engagement. Previous studies have often generalized consumer preferences without delving into the nuances that characterize Gen-Z, especially in a culturally rich and diverse context like Ahmedabad, which boasts a unique blend of traditional and contemporary textile practices. This gap is exacerbated by the rapidly evolving fashion landscape, where local artisans and brands are gaining traction alongside established global brands, yet empirical research examining how Gen-Z navigates this dichotomy remains scarce. Furthermore, the existing literature tends to focus primarily on Western markets or larger metropolitan areas, neglecting the specific socio-economic and cultural dynamics present in Indian cities like Ahmedabad. This oversight suggests an urgent need for localized research that captures the intricacies of consumer perceptions in this emerging market. Additionally, while some studies have investigated the influence of social media on purchasing decisions, they often fail to connect this influence to specific product categories, such as textiles. Gen-Z's engagement with brands through platforms like Instagram and TikTok may shape their perceptions of both branded and local cloth, yet the implications of this engagement on their purchasing decisions are not well-documented. This presents another significant gap in the literature, where understanding the role of digital marketing and influencer culture can provide insights into consumer behavior specific to textiles. Moreover, the aspect of sustainability is increasingly pivotal for Gen-Z consumers, who often prioritize eco-friendly practices over traditional luxury markers. However, research assessing how these values

intersect with their perceptions of branded versus local cloth is limited, particularly in the context of Ahmedabad, where local artisans often employ sustainable practices but may lack the branding prowess of larger companies. Understanding how Gen-Z weighs these factors in their decision-making process could significantly inform both local and branded textile businesses in crafting their marketing strategies. Furthermore, as the local cloth market is often intertwined with cultural heritage and identity, the perceptions of Gen-Z regarding these elements can illuminate broader social trends. This area of study would not only contribute to academic discourse but also provide valuable insights for practitioners looking to engage this demographic effectively. Therefore, addressing these research gaps is crucial for a comprehensive understanding of consumer behaviour related to branded and local cloth among Gen-Z in Ahmedabad, paving the way for targeted marketing strategies and sustainable practices that resonate with this influential generation.

Table 1. Validation of Questionnaire

Statements	Citation from JV citation file (You can add more than 1 citation)
How often do you purchase new clothing?	(Vidani J. N., 2022)
Which type of clothing do you prefer?	(Rathod, Meghrajani, & Vidani, 2022)
What factors influence your clothing purchase decisions the most? (Select up to 3)	(Saxena & Vidani, 2023)
Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements about branded clothing	(Vidani, Das, Meghrajani, & Singh, 2023)
Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements about local clothing	(Vidani, Das, Meghrajani, & Chaudasi, 2023)
How important is sustainability in your clothing purchase decisions?	(Bansal, Pophalkar, & Vidani, 2023)
Are you willing to pay a higher price for clothing that is environmentally friendly?	(Chaudhary, Patel, & Vidani, 2023)
How often do you rely on social media influencers for fashion inspiration?	(Patel, Chaudhary, & Vidani, 2023)
Do social media influencers influence your choice between branded and local clothing?	(Vidani, Meghrajani, & Siddarth, 2023)
How likely are you to switch from branded to local clothing if local options offer similar quality and style?	(Sharma & Vidani, 2023)

How agree are you to recommend local clothing brands to your friends and family?	(Mahajan & Vidani, 2023)
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Source: Author's Compilation

METHODOLOGY

Table 2. Research Methodology

Research Design	Descriptive
Sample Method	Non-Probability - Convenient Sampling method
Data Collection Method	Primary method
Data Collection Method	Structured Questionnaire
Type of Questions	Close ended
Data Collection mode	Online through Google Form
Data Analysis methods	Tables
Data Analysis Tools	SPSS and Excel
Sampling Size	152
Survey Area	Ahmedabad
Sampling Unit	Students, Private and government Job employees, Businessmen, Homemakers, Professionals like CA, Doctors, etc.

Source: Author's Compilation

Demographic Summary

Demographic analysis of the 152 participants revealed that the sample was mostly young, with the largest age group being between 21 and 23 years old (35.5%). Other significant age distributions included 16.4% in the 18-20 age group and 25.0% in the 24-26 age group, with the older age group only making up a small percentage. Gender representation was balanced with 50.7% male participants and 49.3% female participants. In terms of education, the majority had a university degree (42.1%), post-secondary education (40.8%), and a small percentage had completed high school (10.5%), representing the total number of educated people.

Cronbach Alpha

Table 3. Cronbach Alpha

Cronbach Alpha Value	No. of items
.845	26

Source: SPSS Software

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 4. Results of Hypothesis Testing

Sr. No	Alternate Hypothesis	Result p =	>/< 0.05	Accept/ Reject Null hypothesis	R value	Relation ship
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H1	There is a significant relationship between age and the frequency of clothing purchases.	0.086	>	H01 Accepted (Null hypothesis accepted)	0.490	Weak
H2	There is a significant relationship between age and preference for highly preferable clothing.	0.156	>	H02 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.090	Weak
H3	There is a significant relationship between age and preference for preferable clothing.	0.514	>	H03 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.136	Weak
H4	There is a significant relationship between age and preference for least preferable clothing.	0.775	>	H04 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.359	Weak
H5	There is a significant relationship between age and preference for not at all preferable clothing.	0.703	>	H05 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.654	Strong
H6	There is a significant relationship between age and strongly influenced factors.	0.226	>	H06 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	.0574	Strong
H7	There is a significant relationship between age and somewhat influenced factors.	0.831	>	H07 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.191	Weak
H8	There is a significant relationship between age and neutral factors.	0.536	>	H08 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.775	Strong

				Accepted)		
H9	There is a significant relationship between age and not influenced factors.	0.709	>	H09 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.483	Weak
H10	There is a significant relationship between age and strongly not influenced factors.	0.859	>	H010 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.237	Weak
H11	There is a significant relationship between age and agreement on branded clothing (style).	0.818	>	H011 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.132	Weak
H12	There is a significant relationship between age and agreement on branded clothing (quality).	0.573	>	H012 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.385	Weak
H13	There is a significant relationship between age and agreement on branded clothing (price worthiness).	0.264	>	H013 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.589	Strong
H14	There is a significant relationship between age and agreement on branded clothing (status).	0.409	>	H014 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.391	Weak
H15	There is a significant relationship between age and agreement on branded clothing (personal identity).	0.226	>	H015 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.007	Weak
H16	There is a significant relationship between age and agreement	0.092	>	H016 Accepted (Null	0.388	Weak

	on local clothing (unique styles).			Hypothesis Accepted)		
H17	There is a significant relationship between age and agreement on local clothing (affordability).	0.040	<	H017 Rejected (Null Hypothesis Rejected)	0.798	Strong
H18	There is a significant relationship between age and agreement on local clothing (cultural heritage).	0.025	<	H018 Rejected (Null Hypothesis Rejected)	0.011	Weak
H19	There is a significant relationship between age and agreement on local clothing (sustainability).	0.332	>	H019 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.267	Weak
H20	There is a significant relationship between age and agreement on local clothing (support local businesses).	0.644	>	H020 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.627	Strong
H21	There is a significant relationship between age and importance of sustainability.	0.265	>	H021 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.245	Weak
H22	There is a significant relationship between age and willingness to pay for environmentally friendly clothing.	0.293	>	H022 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.305	Weak
H23	There is a significant relationship between age and reliance on social media influencers.	0.131	>	H023 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.809	Strong
H24	There is a significant relationship between age and influence of	0.39	>	H024 Accepted (Null	0.284	Weak

	social media on clothing choice.			Hypothesis Accepted)		
H25	There is a significant relationship between age and likelihood to switch to local clothing.	0.000	<	H025 Rejected (Null Hypothesis Rejected	0.000	Weak
H26	There is a significant relationship between age and likelihood to recommend local brands.	0.315	>	H026 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.181	Weak

Source: Author's Compilation

This study investigated the perceptions of Generation Z consumers in Ahmedabad regarding branded and local clothing, revealing critical insights into their attitudes and preferences. As this demographic increasingly enters the marketplace, understanding their consumer behaviour is essential for both local and branded clothing companies. The findings indicate a strong preference among Gen Z for local clothing, particularly regarding factors such as affordability and cultural heritage. The rejection of the null hypotheses associated with these factors highlights their significance in shaping consumer choices. This trend aligns with a growing global movement among younger consumers who prioritize sustainability and support for local artisans. Gen Z appears to value authenticity and the cultural narratives embedded in local clothing, suggesting that brands must not only offer competitive pricing but also resonate with consumers' identities and values. Conversely, the data showed weak relationships between age and preferences for branded clothing, including aspects such as style, quality, and status. This suggests that, unlike previous generations, Gen Z may not equate brand ownership with social prestige. Their buying decisions appear to be more influenced by personal relevance and ethical considerations than by established brand loyalty. Such a shift indicates a generational change in how clothing is perceived – not merely as a status symbol, but as a reflection of individual values and identity.

Additionally, while the study found no significant influence of social media on the choice between branded and local clothing, the role of these platforms in shaping Gen Z's fashion perceptions cannot be understated. Gen Z actively engages with social media for fashion inspiration, suggesting that brands should enhance their online presence. By utilizing relatable content that emphasizes sustainability and cultural significance, both local and branded clothing companies can effectively capture the attention of this tech-savvy audience.

Moreover, the willingness of Gen Z to pay a premium for environmentally friendly clothing is particularly noteworthy. This finding

underscores a significant trend towards sustainability in fashion, compelling brands to rethink their production and marketing strategies. Local brands, in particular, have an opportunity to emphasize their sustainable practices and cultural narratives, which may differentiate them from larger, less agile branded companies. This aligns with a broader consumer shift towards eco-conscious purchasing behaviours, signalling a demand for transparency and ethical practices in the fashion industry. However, the study also revealed that factors such as personal identity and social influence play a substantial role in shaping consumer perceptions. Gen Z's affinity for local clothing is not solely based on price but is also influenced by a desire to support local economies and maintain cultural ties. This insight suggests that marketing strategies should highlight local brands' community impact and heritage.

This research illuminates the complex interplay of factors influencing Gen Z's perceptions of branded and local clothing in Ahmedabad. As this demographic continues to mature, brands must adapt to their evolving preferences, emphasizing authenticity, sustainability, and cultural relevance. The findings call for a strategic shift in how clothing brands engage with Gen Z, moving towards more transparent and relatable marketing approaches that resonate with their values. Future research could further explore these dynamics, particularly how regional variations within India might influence consumer perceptions and behaviours. Understanding these trends will be crucial for brands looking to thrive in an increasingly competitive landscape. From your project

Theoretical Implications

The findings of this study on Generation Z's perceptions of branded and local clothing in Ahmedabad provide several significant theoretical implications that contribute to the fields of consumer behaviour, marketing, and cultural studies. **Redefining Brand Loyalty:** The weak correlation between age and preferences for branded clothing suggests a shift in traditional concepts of brand loyalty. Existing theories, such as Brand Equity Theory, which emphasize the importance of brand recognition and prestige, may need to be revisited. This study indicates that Gen Z is less likely to associate brand ownership with social status, prioritizing personal values and ethical considerations instead. Future research could explore how brand loyalty is evolving among younger consumers in a more value-driven context. **Cultural Consumption Framework:** This study demonstrates how personal culture influences consumer choices by supporting the concept of health. The strong preference for local clothing reflects a desire to connect with cultural roots, suggesting that purchasing decisions are not only about performance but also about the individual and society. Bourdieu's theory of culture can help us understand how cultural background becomes a reference model. Future research should explore the relationship between cultural heritage and consumer choices.

Sustainability and Ethical Consumerism: Gen Z's focus on sustainability follows increasing research on consumption. The framework suggests that consumers are increasingly concerned about the environmental and social

impacts of their purchasing behaviour. Given the shift in purchasing value, Gen Z is willing to pay more for environmentally friendly options. Future research should incorporate sustainability into consumer culture models to better understand the impact of current consumers. The impact of digital media on consumer behaviour: Although this study did not find strong evidence of a direct impact of social media on clothing choices, the impact of digital media on emotional intelligence is still important for further research. Theories such as the ELM model (ELM), which explain how behaviour is formed and changed through communication, need to be modified to reflect the difficulty of digital engagement. Future research could explore how social relationships influence brand intentions and consumer preferences of Generation Z.

Locality and Brand Equity: The positive reception of local clothing challenges the notion of brand equity, which tends to favour brands based on financial success. This points to the need for new models that recognize the unique benefits that local brands provide, such as community involvement and leadership. In an increasingly competitive market for customer loyalty, it is important to understand how local brands build loyalty through storytelling and social connections. **Emerging Market Dynamics:** This study advances our understanding of consumer behaviour in emerging markets, especially in large cities like Ahmedabad. The findings suggest that local brands are more successful when they align with culture and values. This opens up new research opportunities to explore how local brands can compete with global brands and provide insights into marketing strategies that appeal to today's consumers. **Basic theoretical insights into perspective.** It highlights the need for a better understanding of how culture, ethics, and digital influence consumer thinking, especially among the youth. Future studies should explore this topic as a unified approach to better understand the complexities of today's consumers.

Practical Implications

The findings of this study on Gen Z's perception of local brands and clothing in Ahmedabad provide some insights to marketers, managers and local product designers on how to connect with this group.

1. **Analysis of cultural connections:** Whether local or international, brands should pay attention to culture in their business. Since Gen Z prefers local clothing that represents cultural heritage, it can be effective to showcase their connection with culture and society through storytelling. Events that reflect culture can resonate with audiences and create authenticity.
2. **Put sustainability first:** With Gen Z willing to spend more on luxury clothing, brands need to address their sustainability practices. This includes transparency in sourcing, use of eco-friendly materials, and ethical business practices. Brands that communicate their support for sustainability through endorsements or stories can engage customers and build greater trust.
3. **Businesses shifting to digital engagement:** While the direct impact of social media is unknown, the impact of digital platforms on the lives of Generation Z is huge. Brands should engage with content that highlights product value, promotional efforts, and leadership. Interactive events,

- collaborations with influencers, and user-generated content can foster conversation and sharing, building a community around a brand consumer.
4. Embrace local pride: Local outfits should invest in ways to support local businesses with projects that promote local pride. Showcasing the genius behind the product, showcasing local resources, and encouraging social impact can all appeal to Gen Z.
 5. Communicate product benefits: Brands need to clearly communicate their core values and mission to align with Gen Z's expectations. Providing educational content on sustainability, ethics, and cultural preservation helps build trust. Events, workshops, or partnerships with schools can be effective in engaging these people and providing a deep understanding of the brand's commitment to these values.
 6. Expanding product range: Given the different clothing preferences and different price points of Generation Z, brands need to consider expanding their product range. This will allow customers to choose according to their values and budget by offering a variety of options from affordable local options to high-quality products. Products that meet the needs of different customers can capture a larger market share.
 7. Get involved in your community: Getting involved in your community can increase awareness and trust among Gen Z. This partnership not only creates goodwill, but also serves the purpose of being a part of the community, strengthening their commitment to local causes.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study on the perception of Generation Z in Ahmedabad towards local brands and clothing provides important insights into the changing consumer behaviour of this group. The results of the study show a shift from traditional trust products associated with events to a preference for local clothing that represents culture and personal values. Generation Z also emphasizes the importance of sustainability by prioritizing ethics when making purchasing decisions at special times. This change reflects the need for marketing strategies that will align with the values of young consumers and focus on authenticity, cultural values and environmental stewardship.

The results of this study are beyond imagination. They provide strategic advice to brands that want to effectively reach Generation Z. The market continues to evolve Understanding the preferences of Generation Z is of great importance for brands that want to succeed in a competitive environment. Future research should examine these patterns to gain a deeper understanding of how cultural, social, and ethical factors influence consumer behaviour. Finally, this research emphasizes that in order to move forward and succeed in a dynamic fashion world, businesses must develop their strategies with the values of today's consumers. This study lays the foundation for understanding how Gen Z perceives local brands and clothing in Ahmedabad. However, there are several avenues for future research to provide deeper insight into this complex area:

1. Broader research: Future research could include broader data, such as age groups, economic backgrounds, and geographic regions. This would help

- compare customer opinions across products and ensure the findings are relevant to a wider audience.
2. Longitudinal research: Conducting research over time will help us understand how perceptions of brands and local clothing change as Gen Z ages and progresses through different stages of life. Observing changes in values, preferences, and purchases can reveal important long-term trends.
 3. Impact of Digital Marketing: Investigating the specific impact of various digital marketing strategies on Gen Z's purchasing decisions could yield actionable insights for brands. Research could explore the effectiveness of influencer marketing, social media campaigns, and user-generated content in shaping consumer attitudes and behaviours.
 4. Sustainability Awareness: Further research could reveal how Gen Z understands sustainability. Learning how this experience impacts purchasing decisions could help businesses communicate their promotions more effectively.
 5. Local marketing strategies: Learning about local apparel's unique strategies for competing with international brands can provide insight into success. Case studies of successful local brands can reveal effective business processes, community engagement, and ways to differentiate their products.
 6. Cultural Identity and Consumption: Future research could further explore how religious beliefs influence clothing choices. Understanding the connection between cultural heritage and consumer preferences could help brands tailor their products to better engage with local consumers.
 7. Emotions and psychology: Examining the emotions and feelings behind clothing choices can provide a deeper understanding of what drives consumer behaviour. This will include exploring the context of self-expression, activities, and participation in fashion.
 8. Comparing research across regions: Research conducted across cities or countries can reveal regional differences in consumer behaviour and preferences. This type of research can be very useful for brands looking to enter new markets.
 9. Impact of economic changes: Examining how economic changes, such as recessions or pandemics, affect consumers in the fashion industry can provide important insights into how the local economy and retail market are changing.
 10. Interdisciplinary approach: Future research could benefit from integrating insights from fields such as philosophy, psychology and environmental studies. This would provide a better understanding of the factors that influence consumer behaviour and the wider implications for the fashion industry.

There is great potential for future research to build on the findings of this study and gain a deeper understanding of the complexities of consumers' perceptions of fashion. By examining these suggestions, researchers can

advance our understanding of Generation Z values and behaviors and help businesses develop effective strategies for using this important commodity.

FURTHER STUDY

This research still has limitations so further research is needed on this topic “A Study on Consumer's Perceptions About Branded and Local Cloth Among Gen-Z in Ahmedabad”.

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