INFLUENCE OF SOCIOLOGICAL FACTORS ON TEXTILE BUYING BEHAVIOUR

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Abstract
Modern shoppers purchase clothing to boost their self-esteem and also to show off their social status. Clothing identifies the consumers in conformity with their social status and majority of respondents opined in favour of it. Income has a direct bearing on the possession of variety of clothing items. However, the responses when examined through the chi-square test, it is inferred that possession of a variety of clothing items though enhanced the social status however, is not significantly influenced by the level of income of the family. The expenditure on clothing varies in accordance with the social status.

Key Words: Self-esteem, Social Status, Consumers, Clothing.

1. Introduction
Every consumer is a social animal, whose likes, tastes, buying habits are basically driven by the social factors. The culture, social class, family to which the individual buyer belong considerably influence the behavioral pattern while buying clothing. Possession of a wide variety of clothing items is also an important sociological factor which indirectly measures the social status. Since all these factors have significant impact on the textile buying behaviour, their influence on the sample are examined here under. The purpose of this study is to peep deep into the sociological factors influencing the textile buying behaviour.

2. Objectives of the Study
- To identify the consumers in conformity with their social status.
- To study the effect of income on the possession of a variety of clothing items.
- To study the influence of social status on clothing expenditure.

3. Research Methodology
3.1 Sample Size: A finite subset of population is called a sample and the process of selection of samples is called sampling. This refers to the number of items to be selected from the population to constitute a sample. Primary data is collected through questionnaires distributed to 250 urban household respondents from Berhampur and Rourkela city of Odisha. The entire questionnaire received was screened for errors, incomplete and missing responses.

3.2 Sampling Method: Purposive sampling method is used for collecting information with the help of questionnaires.

4. Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Consumer Profile

Item	Categories	No of Respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	185	74.0
	Female	65	26.0
	Total	250	100.00
Age	Young (bellow 30 years)	71	28.4
	Middle Age (30-40 years)	95	38.0
	Old (above 40 Years)	84	33.6
	Total	250	100.00
Annual Income	Low income (l_3)	76	30.4
	Middle income (l_2)	132	52.8
	High income (l_1)	42	16.8
	Total	250	100.00

Source: Primary data

Clothing as a Symbol of Social Status

Individuals belonging to different social strata usually long for recognition and acceptance in their peer groups and try to maintain a separate identity in the society. In pursuance of the same, individuals prefer to wear clothes that will distinguish them apart in the society. Thus, clothing indirectly identifies the consumers in conformity with their social status. In common parlance, high price is considered as the hallmark of better quality. Against such a theoretical contention, the respondents were asked to opine whether the choice of clothing items is in conformity with their social status.

It is observed from the responses tabulated in Table 2 that about 80 per cent of the sample opined that they indeed were clothes at par with their social status. Thus, the sample expression broadly conforms the generally held view that people in general opt for textile items at par with their social status. Amongst the three income categories, a maximum of I_1 income group (83.33 per cent) affirmed that their clothing pattern broadly conforms to the social ladder to which they belong. 79.55 per cent and 77.63 per cent of the respondents belonging to the I_2 and I_3 income categories respectively indicated that their clothing pattern indeed reflects the social strata to which they belong.

Table 2: Clothing as a Symbol of Social Status

Response	I_3	I_2	I_1	Total
Yes	59 (77.63)	105 (79.55)	35 (83.33)	199 (79.60)
No	17 (22.37)	27 (20.45)	07 (16.67)	51 (20.40)
Total	**76**	**132**	**42**	**250**

X^2 d.f.2.0.05 =0.234 NS
Figures in Parentheses indicate *percentages.*

Clothing Varieties Vis-à-vis Social Status

Possession of a wide variety of clothing items has become an essential indicator of social status in the modern day world. Notwithstanding the inevitable existence of income differences, everybody aspires for acquiring as many varieties as one can. But fortunate are those who can afford an array of textile items. Admittedly, income has a direct bearing on the possession of a variety of clothing items. As it can be found from the Table 3, possession of a variety of clothing items is the general desire of about 61 per cent of respondents. It is intended to examine the relationship if any between the social status of the respondents and their possession of a variety of clothing items. Among the three income categories, I_1 income group is observed to be more possessive of a variety of textile items with 67 per cent affirming such a view to be followed by I_2 income group with 62 per cent and I_3 income group with 57 per cent, respectively in that order. However, the responses when examined through the chi-square test, it is inferred that possession of a variety of clothing items though enhanced the social status however, is not significantly influenced by the level of income of the family.

Table 3: Clothing Variety as an Indicator of Social Status

Response	I_3	I_2	I_1	Total
Yes	43 (56.58)	82 (62.12)	28 (66.67)	153 (61.20)
No	33 (43.42)	50 (37.88)	14 (33.33)	97 (38.80)
Total	**76**	**132**	**42**	**250**

X^2 d.f.2.0.05 =0.931NS
Figures in Parentheses indicate *percentages.*

Influence of Social Status on Clothing Expenditure

Every individual in a given society have a standard of living which influences our expenditure for clothing as well as for other items. It has been tried to find out the influence of social and official status on the spending pattern of the households on textile items. The responses of the households covered in this study are shown in Table 4 which indicates a linear relationship between expenditure on clothing items and official and social status of the sample. From the table it is crystal clear that all the three classes of people expressed that they increase expenditure on textile items at par with movement in their status in the society. It can be said the persons of higher status crave more for recognition and have a direct bearing on such aspirations. The same is reflected in the present survey. The higher income group respondents are found to be very much confirming such a pattern to the extent of 81 per cent. The middle and lower income groups who also hold the same opinion comprise about 73 and 67 per cents of their respective totals.

Table 4: Influence of Social Status on Clothing Expenditure

Response	I_3	I_2	I_1	Total
Yes	51 (67.10)	96 (72.72)	34 (80.95)	181 (72.40)
No	25 (32.90)	36 (27.28)	08 (19.05)	69 (27.60)
Total	**76**	**132**	**42**	**250**

X^2 *d.f.2.0.05 =2.92NS*
Figures in Parentheses indicate *percentages.*

Thus, it can be inferred that individuals in a society choose their clothing and other textile items in conformity with their social strata so as to receive recognition and acceptance in the society. Besides, it is quite common to find people craving to possess a wide variety of clothing irrespective of their income level which is amply proven by the majority of the responses.

Conclusion
From the study it can be concluded that four fifth of the sample opined that they indeed wear clothes at par with their current social status. Income based variable analysis reveals that a maximum of high income group affirmed that their clothing pattern broadly conforms to their social status. In the modern day world people generally crave for acquiring as many varieties but fortunate are those who can afford the same. Level of income is directly associated with the intention of people to own varied clothing items. It is reflected in the present survey that social status certainly and markedly influences and increases the clothing expenditure.

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