

A Study on Preference with Reference to Denim Jeans in Female Segment in Ahmedabad City

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ABSTRACT

Today fashion is imperfect without denim. Denim avails in all varieties, looks and washes to equal any attire. Well, it's hard to believe that denim firstly was used in clothing for the pants worn by miners on the west coast of US. Gradually, due to technological advancements, denim turned as a fashion symbol. Denim jeans became more popular amongst women as it was available in latest varieties. Women were becoming more fashion concerned than men and were inclined to buy jeans. So, a research was conducted considering 55 female respondents from Ahmedabad city with an objective to determine the factors affecting selection, usage pattern and wardrobe analysis of Denim Jeans. The research design used was exploratory research and sampling technique was non probability Convenience sampling technique. However, no research or study is above any limitations and so this research too had some limitations as the Sample size was very small for making trustworthy decision. Moreover, only the females of Ahmedabad city were surveyed, the results obtained from this research might not be applicable to other parts of the country.

Keywords

Female, preference, denim, brands, Ahmedabad city

INTRODUCTION

Global Apparel Industry Overview

Globally, the fashion apparel market developed with the multinational corporations extending their reach and penetrating the rising markets. The fashion apparel industry served several global economies in terms of trade, investment, and revenue earning and employment generation. Apparel industry was characterized as having short product life cycles, wide product assortments, unstable and unpredictable demand and long and rigid supply routes. However, the industry continued undergoing changeover since last 20 years. Some of its major contributors were:

- Significant consolidation in retail
- Increasing use of electronic commerce in retail and
- Wholesale trade

As mentioned earlier, the apparel industry played a key role in economic development in terms of revenue, foreign exchange and investments, and employment generation. The global apparel trade stood at \$550 billion in 2007 and was expected to grow to \$805 billion by 2015.

But surprisingly in 2008, the jeans market suffered global financial crisis and the supply shortages hiked cotton prices. This global economic downturn crashed the apparel industry; yet the denim jeans industry successfully surpassed. It (jeans) sustained a valuable position over other apparel varieties, due to its longer life span. Moreover, denim challenged the basic formation of the global economy; while other industries outsourced their work to the low-cost foreign labor; high manufacturing cost of the jeans in the US was a selling point for denim jeans industry.

However, the sluggish growth of the global fashion market radically changed its dynamics. Rising economies namely Brazil, Russia, India & China (BRIC), along with a few other Southeast Asian countries contributed as major growth thrust. Recently, the global apparel markets have observed a paradigm shift: it was stepping towards increased greater product differentiation; furnishing to varied, awakened, and demanding customers. Consequently, the retailers had pulled themselves towards the changing client demographics, socio and economic pressures and the environmental affects.

The apparel industry had experienced short-term emerging trends driven by superfluous factors like instant celebrity drive and musical holocaust. Enormous celebrity endorsements in style magazines (generally for US brands) froze the demand of denim jeans for few years. Nearly 4/5th of Americans, Canadians, and the French actually did not observe the brands endorsed by celebrities; and that a similar percentage of customers from these regions were disinterested in spotting what others wore on the streets. Conversely, the South African and Malaysian customers interestingly noticed the denim brands endorsed by celebrities and the brands popular on streets. Internationally, about 25% of denim customers chased the street fashions and celebrity endorsements. The dynamics of apparel market changed with the amalgamation of retailers, mushrooming of private brands, increased lifestyle brands and other outsourcing factors.

The global apparel and accessories retail industry was projected to grow during 2012-2017 and achieve a projected US\$1,369 billion in 2017 with a CAGR of 4% over the next five years. Global market for denim jeans was projected to cross the benchmark \$65 billion by the year 2015 due to the increasing number of customers buying denim jeans that offer better fitting, superior style, long-lasting quality, and are reasonably priced. Furthermore, lifestyle factors, fashion craze, celebrity endorsements, and employment terms were foreseen to add to the market growth. Also the Global Textile and Apparel Trade was predicted to grow to USD 1 trillion by 2020.

INDIAN APPAREL INDUSTRY: OVERVIEW

India's apparel market is on the track of change. Quick growth and increasing urbanization generated a new class of consumers having more money to spend, and a budding craze for fashion. India's fast growing retail clothing

market conferred remarkable growth opportunities for global and local players.

The domestic apparel industry comprised of five segments – menswear, womenswear, Kidswear. In 2011, the Indian apparel industry was reported worth Rs. 1,876 billion (Bn) and was expected to grow at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 8.7 per cent till 2016. Indian apparel industry was depicted to be highly erratic in nature. Due to the low entry barriers, numerous players have entered the industry. The Apparel manufacturing was considered as the least capital intensive sector of the textile industry; hence had low entry barriers. But, it was greatly labor intensive which demanded skilled, unskilled and semi-skilled laborers.

Denim has been widely acknowledged in India since many years. Indian denim market was measured at USD 1.2 Bn in 2011 and was projected to rise at a CAGR of 15-18%; having potentiality of doubling its size by 2015. Moreover, it was likely to boost up to USD 124 Bn by 2020. The Indian denim market was subjugated by the non-branded players who grabbed major shares of the denim market.

Table 1

Women's apparel and brands across will dominate by 2020						
Category	2011, USD Bn			2020(P), USD Bn		
	% share in Total Apparel Market	Branded	Unbranded	% share in Total Apparel Market	Branded	Unbranded
Men	40%	5	11	39%	18	30
Women	35%	4	10	42%	20	31
Kids	25%		9	19%	5	20
Total	100%	10	30	100%	43	81

Source: <http://www.citiindia.com/pdf/Harminder%20Sahni.pdf>

Traditionally, India was one of those countries where sales of menswear exceeded women's. But gradually the scenario changed as the market study demonstrated that the sales of women's clothing were rising rapidly than menswear. Historically, women's clothing had been restricted to home wear and items for special events. With about 20 percent of India's urban women in the employment, they were keener to dress uniquely when they moved out from the home—for shopping, or visit a school or at office.

Unmesh Sharma, a consumer analyst at Macquarie Securities, believed that while men had adopted jeans wear in India much earlier, for women the shift had just begun.

"Earlier women wearing jeans in a tier-II city was not social accepted, which is not the case now. Also, in the primary market in the metros, the disposable income of the women has increased manifolds,"

(Denim-wear biggies all set to woo Indian women - John Sarkar & Aman Dhall, TNN, Nov 18, 2007, 02.20pm IST) Women's denim jeans were slowly gaining weight compared to Men's denim due to the fact that women's jeans (counter to men's jeans) could put up almost all kinds of denim novelty in the existing or new variety. Women were becoming more fashion concerned than men and were inclined to buy jeans. This was the reason that the US utilized more of women's jeans than men's.

Table: 2

Table: 2 Import of women/girls denim jeans into USA from India			
Year	Quantity(million pcs)	Value(Million USD)	Av .Price (CIF Value) per jeans
2000	0.67	6.14	9.13
2001	0.70	6.86	9.86
2002	1.18	11.28	9.59
2003	0.88	7.87	8.98
2004	1.06	8.77	8.30
2005	1.98	16.31	8.24
2006	2.59	22.46	8.67
2007	2.93	26.12	8.92
2008	4.55	35.37	7.78
2009(Jan-Sept)	2.95	21.90	7.42
Total	19.48	163.08	8.37

Source: <http://www.denimsandjeans.com/latest-denim-reports/exports-of-womensgirls-jeans-from-india-to-usa-20002009/>

RESEARCH PLAN

Objectives of Study

The objective of this study was to determine the factors affecting selection, usage pattern and wardrobe analysis of Denim Jeans amongst female segment in Ahmedabad city. The following were the sub – objectives of the project:

- To understand the meaning of jeans to the target audience.
- Factors affecting selection of jeans by female segment in Ahmedabad city.
- Analysis of brands and patterns of jeans in the wardrobe of the target audience.
- Analysis of usage pattern of jeans by the female segment.
- Reasons for preference/non- preference of brands.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Type

Exploratory research design was used as it relies on secondary research such as reviewing available literature and/or data, and qualitative as well as quantitative research approaches such as informal discussions and questionnaire containing qualitative based techniques such as Free association with consumers. Exploratory research is being used as problem has not been clearly defined.

Sampling Unit

For this research, the sampling unit was Female respondents.

Sampling Size

Sample size for the research study is 30 female respondents of Ahmedabad city.

Sampling Procedure

For doing research study, Convenience sampling technique was used as it is a type of non probability sampling which involves the sample being drawn from that part of the population which is close to hand. That is, a sample population selected because it is readily available and convenient.

Data Analysis

1. Reasons for selecting jeans as outfit

Table: 1 Reasons for selecting jeans as outfit		
Reasons	No. of Respondents	In % Form
Freedom from duppata	7	23%
No Ironing	4	13%
Fashion/trend	4	13%
Frequency of washing is less	4	13%
Cost effective	9	30%

Comfortable	2	7%
Color of jeans	2	7%
Perfect fitting	3	10%
Durability	5	17%

Interpretation: Most women preferred jeans to other attire because of its economical cost (30%), followed by the benefits like freedom from duppata and feel of comfort.

2. Factors affecting the selection of jeans

Table: 2 factors affecting the selection of jeans

Variables Name	%
Color & Style	17%
Fabric & Price	20%
Fittings/Size	17%
Brand	26%
Durability	20%

Interpretation: The result of survey demonstrated that female focused more on the brand name (26%), trailed by durability and price which contributed 20% equally.

3. Which are the different types of jeans that you have in terms of brand, patterns and number of each?

Table:3 Identifying Pattern, Brand Name & number of jeans In wardrobe of Respondents

Pattern	Brand Name	Number
Straight Cut- 19	Diesel	2
	Lee	8
	Levis	9
	Local Brands	17
	Pepe	14
	Flying Machine	3
	Wrangler	3
Skinny- 7	Globus	1
	Diesel	2
	Local Brands	8
	Levis	6
	Pepe	1
	Lee	1
Narrow Cut-6	Local Brands	33
	Spykar	1
	Lee	1

Interpretation: From varied jeans patterns, Straight cut was the beloved pattern in case of most respondents. In general, the respondents had more of local brands in their

wardrobe. Levis occupied the second position after local brands. Other brands only captured a small pie of the wardrobe.

4. What type/brand of jeans do you plan to buy next? When?

Table: 4 Type/Brand of jeans plan to buy next

Pattern Type	Brand Name	No. of Respondents	No. of Respondents (In %)
Straight Cut	Levis	13	43%
	Lee	1	3%
	Local Brands	6	7%
	Spykar	1	3%
	Pepe	3	10%
Skinny Jeans	Local Brands	4	13%
	Spykar	2	7%

Interpretation: 80% of respondents planned to buy straight cut jeans in next 2 to 3 months. The following brand names such as Levis, Lee, Local Brands, Spykar and Pepe are in the consideration set.

5. How frequently do you wear jeans in a week?

Table: 5 Frequency of wearing jeans

Duration	No. of Respondents	Respondents (in %)
Once in a week	2	7%
2 to 3 times in a week	1	3%
4 to 5 times in a week	18	60%
6 to 7 times in a week	8	27%
Any other (2twice in 15 days)	1	3%

Interpretation: As in my response I have respondents belonging to age group bracket of 21 years to 28 years I found that 60% of the respondents wear jeans 4-5 times a week and 27% of the respondents wear jeans on daily basis. Rest of the respondents wears it occasionally.

6. Please rate the following brands of denim jeans is, where 1 = least preferable and 5 – most preferable
7.

Table:6 Identifying Preference of Denim Brands

Brand name	1 – Least Preferable	2	3	4	5- Most Preferable
Lee	1 (3%)	6 (20%)	9 (30%)	4 (13%)	10 (33%)
Levis	-	3	1(3%)	9 (30%)	18 (60%)
Wrangler	8 (27%)	6 (20%)	9 (30%)	5 (17%)	7 (23%)
Killer	10 (33%)	10 (33%)	5 (17%)	4 (13%)	-
Ruff & Tuff	16 (53%)	11 (37%)	3 (10%)	1(3%)	-
Tommy Hilfiger	8 (27%)	10 (33%)	5 (17%)	4 (13%)	2 (7%)
Pepe	1(3%)	1(3%)	5 (17%)	15 (50%)	8 (27%)
Spykar	2 (7%)	2 (7%)	5 (17%)	15 (50%)	6 (20%)
Diesel	14 (47%)	3(10%)	9 (30%)	1(3%)	3 (10%)
Local Brands	2 (7%)	1(3%)	4 (13%)	9 (30%)	15 (7%)

Interpretation: In the survey it was found that 60% of the respondents’ most preferable brand is Levis while Ruff &Tuff and Diesel are least preferable brands of jeans. Next to Levis preferable brand is Lee. Killer is also fall into the category of least preferable brand.

7. From the above mention brands, give the name of your favorite brands of denim jeans and with specific reason.

Table: 7 List of Favorite denim brands of respondents

Brand Name	No. of Respondents	Respondents (In %)
Lee	3	10%
Levis	13	43%
Local Brands	10	33%
Diesel	1	3%
Pepe	2	7%
Tommy Hilfiger	1	3%

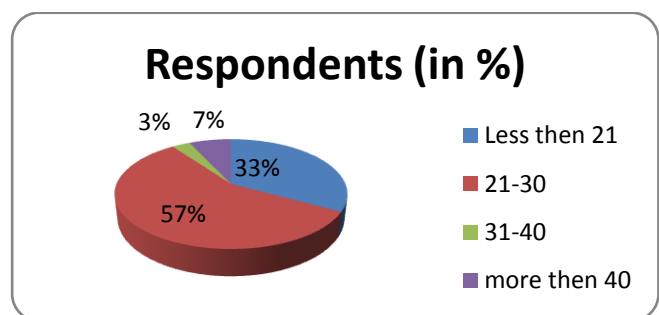
Interpretation: It is interesting to note apart from Levis which has been favored by 13(43%) local brands have a good preference with respect to our respondents where income range is from (15000 to above 30000)

Demographic Profile

Age (in Years):

Table: 8 Age

Age	No. of Respondents	Respondents (In %)
Less then 21	10	33%
21-30	17	57%
31-40	1	3%
More than 40	2	7%



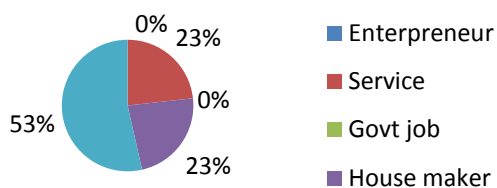
Interpretation: As only female segment was surveyed, 57% respondents belonged to age group 21-30 years, 33% respondents were in the age group less than 21 years age,7% respondents were above 40 years and only 3% respondents ranged from 31 - 40 years.

• **Occupation**

Table: 9 Occupation of Respondents in %

Occupation	No. of Respondents	Respondents (In %)
Entrepreneur	-	0
Service	7	23%
Govt Job	-	0
House maker	7	23%
Student	16	53%

Respondent in %



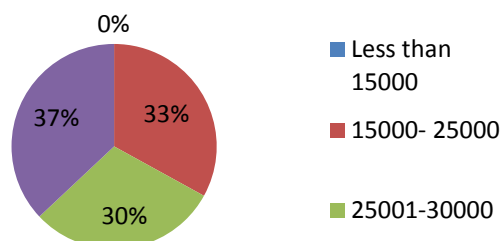
Interpretation: In the study, it was discovered that 53% of the respondents were students, 23% house makers and 23% were serving in the private organizations.

• **Income**

Table: 10 Income Status of Respondents

Income group	No. of Respondents	Respondents (in %)
Less than 15000	-	-
15000- 25000	10	33%
25001-30000	9	30%
More than 30000	11	37%

Respondents in %



Interpretation: The chart shows that 37% of the respondents had their monthly income more than 30000 Rs, 33% of the population earned between Rs 15000-25000 and 30% had Rs 25001-30000 as their monthly income.

• **Marital Status:**

Table: 11 Marital Status of Respondents

Marital Status	No. of Respondents	Respondents (in %)
Married	9	30%
Unmarried	21	70%

Respondents in %



Interpretation: Out of the total 30 respondents, 30% female were married and rests (70%) were unmarried.

Findings:

The overall demographics of the respondents are as follows: The groups of female respondents were from age group of 16 to more than 40 yrs and were majorly students, service, and house makers. Out of the 30 respondents, 30% of the female were married and remaining 70% were unmarried. The average income of the group fell under the category of between Rs.15000 to more than Rs.40000.

From the study, it was concluded that most female favored denim jeans because of its economic cost and other motives like freedom from duppata and comfort factor. Survey showed that for female, both fitting and brand name were of equal importance followed by durability and price feature.

Out of the different types of the jeans pattern, Straight cut pattern was highly preferred. Overall if we see then the respondents had more number of local brands in their wardrobe. After local brands, Levis stood second in occupying the space and other brands just gained a minor part in the wardrobe collectively. 80% of respondents planned to buy straight cut jeans in next 2 to 3 months. Other brands like Levis, Lee, Local Brands, Spykar and Pepe were in consideration set. It was found that 60% of the respondents' most preferable brand was Levis while Ruff & Tuff, Killer and Diesel were least preferable. Next to Levis, their preferable brand was Lee.

60% of the respondents between age group of 21 to 28 years wore jeans 4-5 times a week and 27% of the respondents wore jeans on daily basis. Rest of the respondents wore it occasionally.

It was remarkable to note that, apart from the brand Levis which had been favored by 43%, the local brands also had a big space with respect to our respondents where income range was from Rs 15000 to above Rs 30000.

CONCLUSION

In the research, we found that deeper meaning associated with jeans in the mind of the respondents were freedom, free from the handling Duppata and dress, a feeling of companion, jeans was assumed as a part of happy and sad time, comfortable at workplace, perfect style for today's generation, original color of jeans BLUE Color. Moreover, due advancing Indian culture, the married women too were motivated to wear jeans. In the research, it was found that married females (house makers) favored more skinny jeans pattern as it gave the feeling of "Chudidar Salwar". 13% female respondents wore jeans average 3 to 4 times in a week. So it can be concluded that slowly jeans were becoming a part of married female lifestyle and that jeans was not just so called a "pant" but it was a part of their "life".

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