

## Research Article

# Exploring Consumer Perceptions: A Comparative Analysis of Pantaloons and Zudio in Ahmedabad's Retail Landscape

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## I N F O

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## A B S T R A C T

This research presents an introductory overview of a comparative analysis focusing on consumer perception concerning Pantaloons and Zudio in Ahmedabad. The objective of the study is to gain insights into the perceptions of these two prominent brands. Pantaloons strategically caters to the preferences of youth and middle-to-premium customers, prioritizing quality as a defining factor. On the other hand, Zudio targets a broad spectrum of age groups by offering budget-friendly products. The chapter not only examines the brands' distinct positioning but also delves into the historical trajectory of the apparel industry. The exploration encompasses the industry's ancient origins, the transformative phase of mechanization during the industrial revolution, and its far-reaching global impact.

Moreover, the research sheds light on the profound consequences of industrialization on the apparel industry workforce. It probes into the emergence of labour movements and trade unions that championed the cause of improved working conditions and workers' rights in response to the challenges posed by industrialization. Lastly, the chapter culminates by exploring the paradigm of globalization within the context of the apparel industry, considering the evolution and establishment of a globalized apparel supply chain.

**Keywords:** Consumer Perception, Comparative Analysis, Pantaloons, Zudio, Ahmedabad, Brand Targeting, Apparel Industry, Industrial Revolution, Mechanization, Globalization, Labor Movements, Trade Unions, Working Conditions, Workers' Rights, Globalized Supply

## Introduction

The opening section of this chapter introduces a comprehensive examination of consumer perception, centered on the comparison between Pantaloons and Zudio in Ahmadabad (Vidani, 2015). The core objective of this study is to gain insights into the distinct perceptions held by consumers towards these renowned brands. Notably, Pantaloons targets a youthful and middle-to-premium customer base, emphasizing quality, while Zudio aims to attract individuals of all age groups with its budget-friendly product offerings (Vidani & Solanki, 2015). The rationale for selecting Pantaloons and Zudio for this study stems from consumer feedback suggesting that Zudio offers a diverse collection and readily available sizes (Vidani, 2015). The study endeavors to uncover the extent of consumer awareness regarding the differing qualities and target demographics of Pantaloons and Zudio (Vidani, 2015).

The introduction also provides historical context by tracing the evolution of the apparel industry from its ancient origins to the transformative impact of mechanization during the industrial revolution, subsequently extending its influence across global markets (Vidani, 2015). Within this context, the influence of industrialization on the apparel industry's workforce is deliberated, encompassing the emergence of labor movements and trade unions advocating for improved labor conditions and workers' rights (Solanki & Vidani, 2016). The introduction culminates by delving into the globalization of the apparel industry, examining the development of a globally interconnected apparel supply chain (Vidani, 2016).

Additional facets of this industry are also explored, highlighting its historical progression and significance. The evolution of the industry was relatively gradual until the advent of the industrial revolution, which brought about substantial technological changes like the cotton gin and pedal-powered sewing machines, altering the course of textile and apparel production (Bhatt, Patel, & Vidani, 2017). The chapter underscores that apparel businesses are actively seeking diverse avenues for expansion (Pradhan, Tshogay, & Vidani, 2016).

In a rapidly changing industry marked by short product life cycles, ever-shifting fashion trends, unpredictable market dynamics, and impulse-driven consumer behavior, manufacturers must accord paramount importance to these factors for their survival (Niyati & Vidani, 2016). India occupies a notable position as one of the leading garment-producing nations globally (Modi, Harkani, Radadiya, & Vidani, 2016). Indian textiles and apparel possess a longstanding legacy of exquisite craftsmanship across the entire value chain, showcasing fine workmanship in fibers, yarn, and fabric used in high-quality global apparel (Vidani, 2016).

Furthermore, Indian apparel has garnered recognition and success on international fashion platforms, with the country's cotton, silk, and denim gaining popularity across various markets (Sukhanandi, Tank, & Vidani, 2018). Pantaloons, as an example, boasts an array of contemporary fashion for men, women, children, accessories, footwear, and home decor, presenting a comprehensive lifestyle proposition (Singh, Vidani, & Nagoria, 2016).

## Research Objectives

### Primary Objective

"A comparative analysis of consumer perception with reference to Pantaloons and Zudio in Ahmadabad" (Objective achieved in Question 8 of Questionnaire)

### Secondary Objective

- To study the awareness about various apparels brands among consumers (Objective achieved in Question 6 of Questionnaire)
- To identify the source of brand awareness among customers (Objective achieved in Question 7 of Questionnaire)
- To study the overall opinion about the brand among customers (Objective achieved in Question 9 of Questionnaire)
- To study the level of satisfaction towards the brand among customers (Objective achieved in Question 10 of Questionnaire)

## Literature Review

1. Hye-Shin Kim, M. Damhorst, Kyu-Hye Lee (2002) The study examines about how consumer involvement with apparel influences perceptions of an apparel product presented in a print advertisement (Mala, Vidani, & Solanki, 2016). Consumer involvement with apparel was examined in relation to three advertisement response concepts: 1) attitude toward the advertisement, 2) product attribute beliefs, 3) product attitude (Dhere, Vidani, & Solanki, 2016). Also, as part of the study, three dimensions of apparel involvement were tested (fashion, comfort, and individuality) (Singh & Vidani, 2016). Finally, an advertising processing model that integrates apparel involvement with the three advertisement response concepts was tested. A convenience sample of students attending a (midwestern university in the USA) participated in data collection (Vidani & Plaha, 2017). Respondents were presented with a full-page advertisement for a fictitious brand of apparel and answered items on the questionnaire (Vidani, 2020). Findings confirmed that dimensions of apparel involvement shaped consumer attitudes. A combination of apparel involvement dimensions (fashion, individuality, and comfort) influenced consumer beliefs about product

attributes in the advertisement (Vidani, 2018). In terms of gender differences, the comfort variable showed to be a stronger component of apparel involvement for men and women tended to be more involved in fashion (Vidani & Dholakia, 2020). Findings also supported relationships among advertisement response variables previously tested by scholars (Vidani, Meghrajani, & Siddarth, 2023). Product attribute beliefs and attitude were significant in product attitude formation (Rathod, Meghrajani, & Vidani, 2022).

2. Kathryn Bishop Gagliano, J. Hathcote (1994) Examines the differences between consumers' expectations and perceptions of service quality they received when shopping apparel specialty stores. Also considers consumer demographic characteristics. (SERVQUAL) scale and methodology developed by Parasuraman et al., (1991) (Vidani & Plaha, 2016). Calculate gap scores by subtracting the expectation scores from the perception score. Using a factor analysis procedure, four determinants of service quality emerged: (1) Personal Attention; (2) Reliability; (3) Tangibles; and (4) Convenience. Findings indicate that greatest disparity between expectations and perceptions for the Personal Attention factor. Consumer demographic characteristics of race, marital status, and income provided significant differences between expectations and perceptions for Reliability and Convenience (Vidani & Das, 2021). It also considers the importance of service as a patronage criterion for apparel specialty store consumers (Solanki & Vidani, 2016). Indicates that service ranked third in importance behind merchandise assortment and price (Vidani, 2022).
3. K. Dickerson (1982) In current days controversy over limitation of imported apparel products into the U.S., consumers have had little opportunity to be heard (Vidani, 2016). This study sought to determine consumers' views of imported versus U.S.-produced apparel, to determine the product qualities which influence the consumer to buy one over the other and to examine consumer views toward imported apparel in relation to various purchasing practices and demographic variables (Vidani, Chack, & Rathod, 2017). A structured telephone interview schedule was used by trained callers in a survey of (408) consumers chosen randomly from telephone directories in 10 selected areas of the Eastern U.S. consumers did not appear indifferent or apathetic to the issue of whether the apparel they buy has been produced in the U.S. or another country (Vidani, 2018). A majority of the consumers took notice of whether clothing was imported and preferred to have domestically produced apparel, primarily because they perceived garments produced in other countries as being of poorer quality (Odedra, Rabadiya, & Vidani, 2018). A brief of the relationships between consumers' views toward imported apparel and some of the demographic variables and purchasing practices of the respondents indicated that in many ways concern over imported apparel appears to be a middleclass phenomenon (Biharani & Vidani, 2018).
4. Lihong Chen, Habiba Halepoto, Chunhong Liu, Naveeta Kumari, Xinfeng Yan, Qinying Du, H. Memon (2021) Brand image has been a crucial clue to making subjective judgment for consumers to determine the brand, which is critical to making a purchase decision (Vasveliya & Vidani, 2019). The influence mechanism from apparel brand images on consumers' purchase intention was explored for theoretical and positive analysis based on the self-congruity theory (Vidani, 2018). This research first constructed a hypothetical model of apparel brand images influencing consumers' purchase intention with self-congruity and perceived quality as mediators, in which a questionnaire was designed and conducted to test the theoretical model (Sachaniya, Vora, & Vidani, 2019). The research shows that apparel brand image and perceived quality can significantly influence consumers' purchase intention (Vidani, 2019). The consumer purchase intention is directly related to clothing brand image provided self-consistency and perceived quality play an intermediary with the regulatory effect of self-motivation and brand familiarity (Vidani, Jacob, & Patel, 2019). A positive attitude toward apparel brand image will stimulate consumers to build cognitive clues and associations between the consumers and the brand and strengthen cognitive consistency with the apparel brand's spirit (Vidani, 2016). This research results are beneficial to textile fashion and clothing enterprises to improve brand building and marketing (Vidani & Singh, 2017).
5. Narissara Parkvithee, M. Miranda (2012) Purpose – The study, conducted in Thailand, aim to examine the effect of interaction of country-of-origin (COO), brand equity and product purchase involvement on consumers' evaluation and purchase preference of Thai brands of fashion apparel made in three nominated Asian countries of varying levels of manufacturing competence. 1)Design2) methodology3) approach – Data from a field survey were analyzed through a 2x2x3 factorial design and the influence of a particular factor over the others in specific scenarios was observed. Findings are This study suggests that if low purchase involvement apparel with high brand equity is sourced from a country-of-origin of low perceived competence, the superior reputation of the brand encourages consumer partiality to the apparel's quality and purchase inclination (Vidani & Pathak, 2016). However,

in this study has evidenced that a brand of modest equity sourced from the under-developed economy is capable of getting greater consumer support for its higher end fashion products than for its standard apparel (Pathak & Vidani, 2016).

**Research Methodology for the Study**

**Research Design**

- This study uses descriptive research design to collect data

**Sampling**

- A non-probability convenient sampling technique is used to ensure representation from different socio-economic backgrounds
- The target population consists of consumers of Pantaloons and Zudio living in Ahmedabad
- Sample size = 150

**Data Collection**

- Primary data is collected through structured questionnaires distributed to the selected participants.
- The questionnaire consists of demographic questions and other related questions

**Data Analysis**

- Descriptive statistics (e.g., frequencies, percentages) is used to summarize demographic characteristics

**Tools Used**

- Excel
- SPSS

**Hypothesis**

The problem

Co-relation between gender and Pantaloons is often perceived as a premium brand with a wide range of fashionable apparel and a focus on providing a superior shopping experience

H1: Co-relation between gender and Pantaloons is often perceived as a premium brand with a wide range of fashionable apparel and a focus on providing a superior shopping experience

Reporting correlation: correlation between gender and Pantaloons is often perceived as a premium brand with a wide range of fashionable apparel and a focus on providing a superior shopping experience found positive correlation Low ( $r = .235, p < .001$ ) hence H1 was supported.

**Table 1. Correlations**

		Gender	Pantaloons is often perceived as a premium brand with a wide range of fashionable apparel and a focus on providing a superior shopping experience
Gender	Pearson Correlation	1	-.235**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.004
	N	150	150
Pantaloons is often perceived as a premium brand with a wide range of fashionable apparel and a focus on providing a superior shopping experience	Pearson Correlation	-.235**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	
	N	150	150

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Table 2. Correlations**

		Gender	it is evident that both Pantaloons and Zudio have their unique strengths and appeal to different segments of consumers."
Gender	Pearson Correlation	1	-.175*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.032
	N	150	150

it is evident that both Pantaloons and Zudio have their unique strengths and appeal to different segments of consumers."	Pearson Correlation	-.175*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.032	
	N	150	150
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).			

#### The problem

Co-relation between gender and it is evident that both Pantaloons and Zudio have their unique strengths and appeal to different segments of consumers

H2: it is evident that both Pantaloons and Zudio have their unique strengths and appeal to different segments of consumers.

Reporting correlation: correlation between gender and it is evident that both Pantaloons and Zudio have their unique strengths and appeal to different segments of consumers was found negative correlation (r -.175, p<.005) hence H2 was supported.

#### The problem

Co-relation between gender and Zudio is seen as a value-driven brand offering affordable and trendy clothing options

H3 Zudio is seen as a value-driven brand offering affordable and trendy clothing options.

Reporting correlation: correlation between gender Zudio is seen as a value-driven brand offering affordable and trendy clothing options. was found moderately negative (r -.175, p<.005) hence H3 was supported.

#### The problem

Co-relation between gender and Zudio is seen as a value-driven brand offering affordable and trendy clothing options.

H3 Zudio is seen as a value-driven brand offering affordable and trendy clothing options.

Reporting correlation: correlation between gender Zudio is seen as a value-driven brand offering affordable and trendy clothing options. was found moderately negative (r -.175, p<.005) hence H3 was supported.

Co-relation between gender and "A comparative analysis of consumer perception with reference to Pantaloons and Zudio in Ahmadabad"

H4 Zudio is often perceived as a budget-friendly brand with a focus on offering trendy, budget-friendly fashion for the value-conscious consumer.

Reporting correlation: correlation between gender and Zudio is often perceived as a budget-friendly brand with a focus on offering trendy, budget-friendly fashion for the value-conscious consumer was found negative (r -.244, p<.005) hence H3 was supported

**Table 3. Correlations**

		Gender	Zudio is seen as a value-driven brand offering affordable and trendy clothing options.
Gender	Pearson Correlation	1	-.175*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.032
	N	150	150
Zudio is seen as a value-driven brand offering affordable and trendy clothing options.	Pearson Correlation	-.175*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.032	
	N	150	150
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).			

**Table 4. Correlations**

		Gender	Zudio is often perceived as a budget-friendly brand with a focus on offering trendy, budget-friendly fashion for the value-conscious consumer.
Gender	Pearson Correlation	1	-.244**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003
	N	150	150

Zudio is often perceived as a budget-friendly brand with a focus on offering trendy, budget-friendly fashion for the value-conscious consumer.	Pearson Correlation	-.244**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	
	N	150	150

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Table 5. Correlations**

Gender			Zudio is often perceived as a budget-friendly brand with a focus on offering trendy, budget-friendly fashion for the value-conscious consumer.	it is evident that both Pantaloons and Zudio have their unique strengths and appeal to different segments of consumers."	Pantaloons is often perceived as a premium brand with a wide range of fashionable apparel and a focus on providing a superior shopping experience	Zudio is seen as a value-driven brand offering affordable and trendy clothing options.	Pantaloons is generally associated with quality, variety, and a diverse product range catering to different styles and preferences
Gender	Pearson Correlation	1	-.244**	-.175*	-.235**	-.175*	-.235**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003	.032	.004	.032	.004
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Zudio is often perceived as a budget-friendly brand with a focus on offering trendy, budget-friendly fashion for the value-conscious consumer.	Pearson Correlation	-.244**	1	.487**	.628**	.487**	.628**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
it is evident that both Pantaloons and Zudio have their unique strengths and appeal to different segments of consumers."	Pearson Correlation	-.175*	.487**	1	.476**	1.000**	.476**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.032	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150

Pantaloons is often perceived as a premium brand with a wide range of fashionable apparel and a focus on providing a superior shopping experience	Pearson Correlation	-.235**	.628**	.476**	1	.476**	1.000**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Zudio is seen as a value-driven brand offering affordable and trendy clothing options.	Pearson Correlation	-.175*	.487**	1.000**	.476**	1	.476**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.032	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
Pantaloons is generally associated with quality, variety, and a diverse product range catering to different styles and preferences.	Pearson Correlation	-.235**	.628**	.476**	1.000**	.476**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	150	150	150	150	150	150
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).							
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).							

## Findings

The provided data offers valuable insights into the respondents' characteristics, perceptions, and preferences related to apparel brands. The following discussion highlights key findings from the data analysis:

### Demographic Distribution

The respondents in the study consist of 61.3% males and 38.7% females, reflecting a relatively balanced gender distribution. In terms of age distribution, the highest participation comes from the 24-29 age group, constituting 30% of the respondents, while the 42-46 age group comprises the lowest percentage at 2.0%. In terms of occupation, 36% of respondents are engaged in private jobs, while only 4.0% are retirees. The majority of respondents (32.7%) fall within the monthly income range of 21,000 to 30,000. Family composition reveals that 56% of respondents belong to nuclear families.

## Familiarity with Apparel Brands

The familiarity of respondents with various apparel brands shows notable variations. Max Fashion has the lowest familiarity rate, with 9.3% of respondents indicating "Not at all familiar," followed by Shoppers Stop (16.0%), Westside (11.3%), Pantaloons (7%), Zudio (22%), and Trend (6%).

### Sources of Awareness

Regarding sources of awareness about apparel brands, 36% of respondents reported that they do not receive awareness from family and friends. Around 53% of respondents sometimes gain awareness through mobile advertisements.

### Perceptions of Brands

Pantaloons' brand image is characterized by positive associations. A substantial 42.7% of respondents hold an "Extremely favorable" perception of Pantaloons.

Respondents perceive Pantaloons as synonymous with quality, variety, and a diverse product range catering to different styles and preferences. This perception is evident in the agreement of 40% of respondents who strongly associate Pantaloons with quality and variety.

Similarly, Zudio's brand perception aligns with its budget-friendly positioning. The brand is seen as offering trendy, budget-friendly fashion for value-conscious consumers. Around 38% of respondents strongly agree with this perception.

### Recommendation Intent

When it comes to recommending brands, a significant majority (57.3%) of respondents are inclined to recommend Pantaloons. However, for Zudio, a noteworthy 59% of respondents are not willing to recommend the brand, indicating a potential gap in brand loyalty or perceived value.

The data presents a comprehensive overview of consumer perceptions and preferences regarding Pantaloons and Zudio. These insights into familiarity, sources of awareness, brand associations, and recommendation intent provide valuable information for further analysis and decision-making in the apparel industry.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, this report sheds light on the diverse landscape of apparel brands, each catering to specific target audiences with unique strategies. Notably, Zudio, being a newcomer in the industry, faces the imperative task of establishing a strong consumer base over time. To achieve this, a focus on building robust consumer service systems is essential, allowing consumers to engage seamlessly and receive prompt assistance with their queries and concerns.

On the other hand, Pantaloons, a more established player, should concentrate on enhancing its inventory management and innovative problem-solving approaches. The report underscores the significance of staying competitive by continuously improving the consumer experience through innovative solutions that address consumer needs and preferences effectively.

While Zudio and Pantaloons pursue distinct strategies to navigate their respective positions within the apparel industry, it is evident that both brands operate within the same industry landscape. The competitive dynamics, evolving consumer demands, and market trends necessitate individualized plans that align with their unique strengths and challenges.

In essence, the report highlights the need for continuous adaptation and evolution within the dynamic apparel industry. Regardless of their differences, both Zudio and Pantaloons are united by their commitment to delivering value to consumers, ensuring that their products and

services remain relevant and compelling in an ever-changing market. The insights presented in this report provide a foundation for strategic decision-making, enabling these brands

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