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Impact Of Online Advertising On Female Consumers, With Reference To The Clothing Industry: A Study Conducted In Bangalore

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ABSTRACT

In today's world, consumers are highly influenced by online advertising rather than television or newspaper advertisement. Due to this shift, marketers have increased their use of digital marketing channels. This study aims to explore the impact of online advertising on female consumers' with regards to purchasing apparel (clothing). The study examines the diverse forms of online advertising and evaluates the factors which influence the behavior patterns of the consumers. The methodology used for the study is a quantitative method of a survey, as well as an analysis of the secondary source of information. The sample size used for this study is 100 female respondents. The study concluded from further detailed analysis that the majority of female consumers in Bangalore believe online advertisements, to a certain extent, influence their purchasing decisions. Furthermore, the advertisements aid in identifying new brands catering to the consumers' fashion needs. However, the majority also believed that online clothing advertisements could at times be misleading.

Keywords: Advertising, Online Advertising, Consumer Behavior, Brand Loyalty, Digital Marketing

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

In today's day and age it is irrefutable that advertising is a form of marketing that has captured the attention of predominant consumers throughout the world. Seeing that a high level of competition and enhanced or rather ever evolving technology subsists in the present day, rising outlooks of consumers are seen in today's competitive world. With regards to the merchandise (clothing) industry, since global developments and lifestyle changes are being made, the retail sector business models and strategies have changed. With the affluence of electronic devices like smartphones and tablets, digital marketing has reached a new platform for consumers. Technological changes are continuously taking place.

TYPES OF ONLINE ADVERTISEMENTS

There are several ways to advertise online. The choices are endless as the world is constantly developing and coming up with progressions in every aspect. In order to make it easier to understand, online advertisements can be divided into seven different categories. These categories are: Display ADs, Social Media ADs, Search Engine Marketing, Native Advertising, Retarget and Remarketing, Video ADs and lastly, Email Marketing (Elite Online Solution, 2018).

Display Ads are those advertisements which are graphic in nature or in other words include factors such as visual or audio-visual aids. These types of advertisements can be found on any sites including social media platforms or even video ads. When it comes to social media ads, social media ads are those advertisements which are displayed on social media platforms. These platforms include sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram etc. These types of advertisements are known to be effective as they reach a wide audience. This is because in the current day and age, almost everyone is active on one social media platform or the other.

When it comes to search engine marketing, the concept is a little different than the usual types of ads. Search engine marketing is a technique in which a website gains prominence or a wider range of audience. This technique can be processed via paid or unpaid methods. These two methods are known as Search Engine Optimization and the second method is Paid Search Advertising.

Native advertising is a type of advertisement in which the advertisement matches to that of the theme or form of the website/platform the advertisement is displayed on. Furthermore, as mentioned in the type itself, native advertisements have a story to tell. They can be in the form of

advertorials videos, Twitter ads or even newsfeed ads.

Retargeting or remarketing are another type of online advertising. In this form of advertisement, to put it in simple words, you are reconnecting with an audience who has previously visited the webpage. For instance, a consumer visits a cosmetics site. While they are doing something else online, such as browsing further or reading another article, several more advertisements of the cosmetics site will pop up on other webpages as well. This way, it constantly reminds the consumer of the product being advertised.

The next form of online advertisement, as mentioned previously, are video advertisements. Video advertisements include audio visual aspects in the ad. These type of advertisements allows the consumer to build an emotional connect with what is being displayed. Video advertisements may be used for a variety of purposes. They can be to promote a product or service, or even to inform and educate the audience regarding a major issue. The most well-known platform for video advertisements is YouTube.

Last but certainly not the least, is email marketing. Email marketing is a form of advertising wherein the consumer accepts receiving promotional messages of that specific brand. This allows the consumer to be up to date regarding the brand and its services, as well as keeps the brand in the eye of the consumer.

ADVANTAGES OF ONLINE ADVERTISING

With that said, online advertising has been considered a new form of marketing and has provided novel prospects for companies to do businesses. There are various factors which can be advantageous or rather considered as pros when opting for online advertising. Millions of people around the world have easy access to the internet. This is an advantage to the online advertising sector as it allows companies of a product or service to obtain a higher reach towards their target audience or consumers.

One thing to keep in mind, is that the internet never stops. It is something which is constantly active around the world regardless the place or time. When half the world is asleep in the East, the West is wide awake and active online and vice versa. This results in having the advantage to convey messages regarding the company's product or service. Another major advantage of online advertising to keep in mind, is that the expenses put into an online advertisement are at a much lower rate in comparison to the costs put into obtaining traditional form of media for an advertisement (Dudnikovaa, Chistyakovab, Yakimenkoc, n.d.).

Furthermore, online advertisements have an easy result measurement, and that gives a great advantage to the companies to observe whether the advertisements of their products or service are having an impact on the consumers. By adopting a certain tool which measures the result of the online advertisement, it aids the company with the dos and don'ts to keep in mind for their future advertising campaigns. Digital advertisements are the newest forms of advertisements which can result in not only promoting the products or services, but also in improving the brand's identity throughout. All this depends on how well planned the online advertisement is (Deshwal, 2016). These are a few basic, evident advantages of online advertising.

DISADVANTAGES OF ONLINE ADVERTISING

Even though online advertisements has its advantages, there are quite a few disadvantages as well. Firstly, online advertisements hold the risk of anyone and everyone possibly copying your ideas, whether it's in the form of an image, text or even a logo. This scenario is possible despite people being aware of the legal consequences. Furthermore, overuse of online advertising may just lead to consumers ignoring the advertisements. In the present day, millions have access to the internet and the internet comes with online advertisements.

However, online users will eventually hit the saturation point and start to find the advertisements annoying (Anand, n.d.). Another factor to keep in mind is the fact that there may be a tendency to experience technical difficulty which will result in the audience not being able to view the advertisement on the web page. What's more is that when a company chooses to display an advertisement online, it is very difficult to decide which platforms or which websites specifically to advertise on. It is important to select there correct platform because by doing so, it will entice as much consumers as possible.

Online advertising and its impact is a riveting subject to explore as it allows us to recognize the different behavioral responses and reactions of individuals. It also aids in understanding the consumers' decisions after they view an online advertisement. In other words, the study allows us to analyze the factors which lead to the decision of the consumers. For instance, what influences a female consumer to purchase or not to purchase a particular merchandise product? As mentioned, online advertisements have its pros and cons.

PRINCIPLES OF PERSUASION

According to Robert Beno Cialdini, a Professor of marketing and psychology, in his book titled 'The Psychology of Persuasion' (2007), he mentioned

six principles required to successfully persuade someone for something. Firstly, people are obliged to give back to others the form of a behavior, gift, or service that they have received first. In other words, the action of reciprocity is something which is vital in persuasion. Next, people want more of those things they can have less of. In simple words, when the availability of a certain resource becomes scarce, people tend to want it even more. In order to successfully make use of this principle, it's not enough simply to tell people about the benefits they'll gain if they choose your products or service. Furthermore, it is vital to point out what makes your proposition distinctive from other and what the individual may miss out on if they do not consider your offer.

The next element is authority. This is the idea that people follow the lead of credible, knowledgeable experts. Authority comes with credibility of power of position. Simply put, individuals are more likely to get convinced if they see that the person who is attempting to persuade them is a credible resource.

Next, people like to be consistent with the things they have previously said or done. Consistency is activated by looking for, and asking for, small initial commitments that can be made. The next element is liking. Individuals have a preference to say yes to those that they like. When using this principle, it is important to seek for areas of similarity that you share with others. The last point is consensus. This means people will look to the actions and behaviors of others to determine their own. This means that if an individual is told that people similar to him or her are committed to a specific element, then he or she is most likely to commit herself or himself to it too. These are the six principles of persuasion identified by the well-known psychologist.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

The term **"advertising"** can be defined as a method of indirectly communicating with a mass audience in order to put across a message, in regards to the promotion of a product or service. (American Marketing Association).

"Online advertising" can be defined as a form of communication in order to promote a product or service, in addition to the fact that the way in which the advertisements are presented, is via new technical developments. In other words, online advertising makes use of the internet in order to put across messages for the company's product or service, which can be accessed via websites, smart phones e-mail etc. (Deshwal, 2016).

The term **"consumer behavior"** put in simple terms, is understanding and observing the behavior of consumers, based on certain factors such as the

consumer's experience with that specific product or service (Hawkin, Best & Coney, 2001).

"Brand loyalty" is a term which can be understood as the level of loyalty or rather dedication a consumer has towards purchasing a product or service from a particular brand at a consistent basis, rather than purchasing products that are that specific brand's competition. The decision of brand loyalty is based on every individual's personal choice, priorities and decision making skills (Jacoby & Chestnut, 1978,).

"Digital marketing" refers to a type of marketing technique wherein there is a direct form of sellers connecting with buyers or consumers, on an online platform, via the use of technology. Different forms include websites, emails, mobile communication etc. so on and so forth (Kotler and Armstrong, 2009).

SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

➢ Online advertising have a massive influence on the decision making process of individuals. This has been an area of limited study, thus this paper can add to the existing literature

➢ The paper explores the online advertising techniques used by apparel brands to obtain a high level of attentiveness from the consumer

➢ Online advertising can be considered as a powerful tool to educate the consumers on the various choices of products in the marketplace

OBJECTIVES

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

➢ To analyze the buying behavior, whether there is a rise or traditional

➢ To understand the motives for purchase of product

➢ To evaluate the factors which influence the behavior patterns of the consumer

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

➢ To critically analyze how the female consumers' thought process in Bangalore, is being impacted

➢ To examine whether there is a rise in purchase of apparel via online, of female consumers in Bangalore

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research Question 1: "What impact do online advertisements have on female consumers?

Research Question 2: "Does online advertising influence the opinion of women on their purchase decisions?"

SAMPLE FOR STUDY

In this study, the researcher focuses on the youth in Bangalore and the sample would be 100 respondents falling in the age category 18 to 30 years.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

For this particular study, the researcher implements the non-probability sampling technique. Non-probability sampling is an expedient and appropriate method of selecting a sample. In order to suit the requirements of this study, the researcher has opted for the purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling is a form of non-probability sampling in which researchers depend on their own opinion or judgment when selecting individuals of the population to take part in his or her study. (Foley, 2018). The sample for the research will be a population of female individuals falling between the ages 18 to 30. Thus, the researcher elected purposive sampling for the study, in order to choose the samples as per the criterion.

SAMPLE SIZE

Too small a sample causes unreliable results. However, an excessively huge sample requires a decent amount of time and resources. (Zamboni, 2018). In this study, the sample size consists of 100 female respondents based in Bangalore.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The researcher has employed the quantitative method of study for this particular research wherein data is gathered through close-ended questions with pre-determined levels.The questionnaire does not include open ended questions as the researcher was brought to attention that the respondents preferred closed ended questions that were on point which was easier to answer and did not take much of their time to fill up. The researcher's objectives were all covered through those questions and further explanation from the respondents would complicate the main purpose of the study. Thus, the questions are on point, only discussing the crux of the whole matter that is being studied upon.

QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

Online survey was used as the main research technique. According to "Introduction to Using Online Surveys" (Ritter & Sue, 2007), online surveys can be considered as a success in a condition where a list of possible respondents is known to have access to the internet. Furthermore, it can particularly b e beneficial when the target respondents are geographically dispersed or in other words, scattered. Here, since the study is about blogging which is an activity carried out by internet users, online survey is best suited for collecting responses. A structured questionnaire

was used that contained closed ended questions. The online questionnaire was designed with the help of Google Forms, the link to which was sent to the respondents via e-mail, blogging platforms and social networking sites.

TOOLS FOR DATA COLLECTION

The primary data for the completion of this study was collected by females of age category 18-30 years. The questionnaire data collection method was used for the same. For this study, a questionnaire was prepared using Google Forms, comprising of twenty questions.

The secondary data collected by the researcher includes published research papers that validated the area of research and books were used as reference to understand certain topics and the link was provided on social media Apps such as WhatsApp and Instagram. The method used was homogeneous sampling. It is a purposive sampling technique that aims to attain a sample whose units share the same or very similar features or traits.

DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

This section will analyse the data concluded via questionnaire. For each question, a table and pie chart is displayed, along with a detailed analysis. The main objective of the study was to find out he different factors which lead female consumers to be influenced by an online advertisement. All the

information that is gathered for the study to answer the research questions and to meet the objectives of the study, are thoroughly analysed and interpreted. This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of data gathered from the students of Bangalore between the ages of 18-30, via questionnaires.

Responses from the survey are emphasized using various forms of graphical representations and simple percentage analysis is done to evaluate and further describe the data. The data collected from the survey will be analysed and interpreted in this chapter. This chapter is also divided into sub-headings to throw more light on questions directed to the respondents.
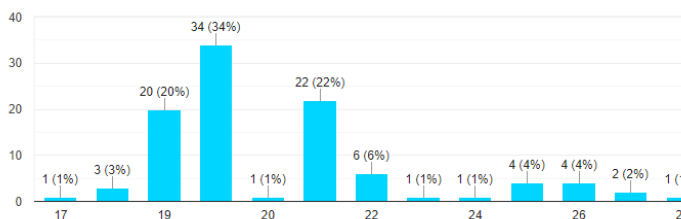
AGE

Participants were asked what age group they fall under. Results are illustrated in table **4.1.1 and figure 4.1.1.**

Table 4.1.1

Category	Frequency	Percentage
17	1	1%
18	3	3%
19	20	20%
20	35	35%
21	22	22%
22	6	6%
23	1	1%
24	1	1%
25	4	4%
26	4	4%
27	2	2%
28	1	1%

Figure 4.1.1

Table 4.1.1 and figure 4.1.1 illustrate that 35% of female consumers fall under the age of 20. 22% of the individuals are 21 years of age. 20% of respondents are 19 years of age. 6% of the individuals are 22 years old. Furthermore, 4% of the respondents are 25 years of age and an additional 4% are 26 years. 3% of the respondents are 18 years of age. 2% of the respondents are 27 years old. Lastly, ages 17, 23, 24 and 28 are 1%.

According to Table **4.1.1 and Figure 4.1.1**, it can be inferred that the majority of females fall under the age category 20.
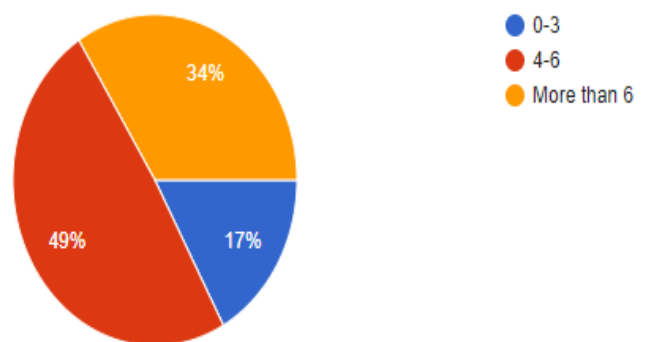
Frequency of how many hours are spent online in a day

Respondents were asked how long they spend online, approximately on an hourly basis. Results are illustrated in **Table 4.1.2** and **Figure 4.1.2.**

Table 4.1.2

Category	Frequency	Percentage
0-3	17	17%
4-6	49	49%
More than 6	34	34%

Figure 4.1.2

Table 4.1.2 and Figure 4.1.2 illustrate that 49% of the female consumers spend 4-6 hours online, in a day. 34% of the females spend more than 6 hours online in a day. Lastly, 17% of females spend 0-3 hours online, per day. From the above data, it can

be inferred that the majority of females spend 4-6 hours online in a day, while the minority spends 0-3 hours online per day.
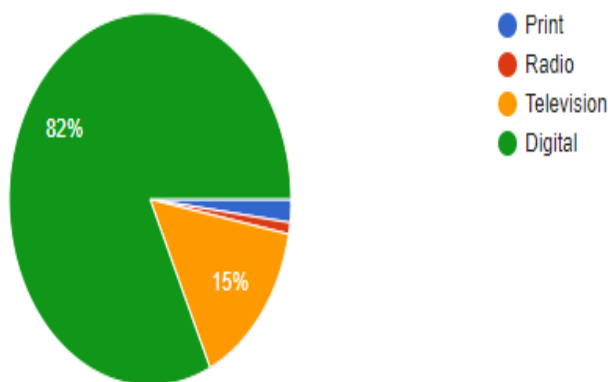
Frequency of preferred media

Respondents were asked what type of media grabs their attention. Results are illustrated in **Table 4.1.3** and **Figure 4.1.3.**

Table 4.1.3

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Print	2	2%
Radio	1	1%
Television	15	15%
Digital	82	82%

Figure 4.1.3

The results show that 82% of respondents prefer digital media. 15% prefer television. 2% of the females favour print media, while 1% prefers radio. From the above data, it can be inferred that the majority of females in Bangalore believe that digital media grabs their attention while the minority selected radio.
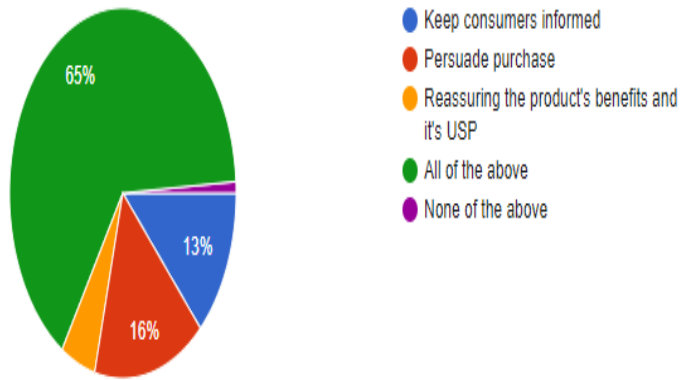
Frequency of the main objective of an online advertisement of a product

Respondents were asked what they believe is the main aim of an online advertisement is. Results are illustrated in **Table 4.1.4 and Figure 4.1.4**.

Table 4.1.4

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Keep consumers informed	13	13%
Persuade purchase	16	16%
Reassuring the product's benefits & USP	5	5%
All of the above	65	65%
None of the above	1	1%

Figure 4.1.4

Legend:
- Keep consumers informed
- Persuade purchase
- Reassuring the product's benefits and it's USP
- All of the above
- None of the above

Table 4.1.5

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	84	84%
No	16	16%

Figure 4.1.5

Legend:
- Yes
- No

The results show that 65% of the participants believe the main objective of an online advertisement of a product is all the options provided above. 16% believe the objective is to persuade purchase. 13% are certain it is to keep the consumers informed. 5% believe it is to reassure the product's benefits and it's USP. Lastly, 1% believes that none of the options above have the right objective of an online advertisement of a product.
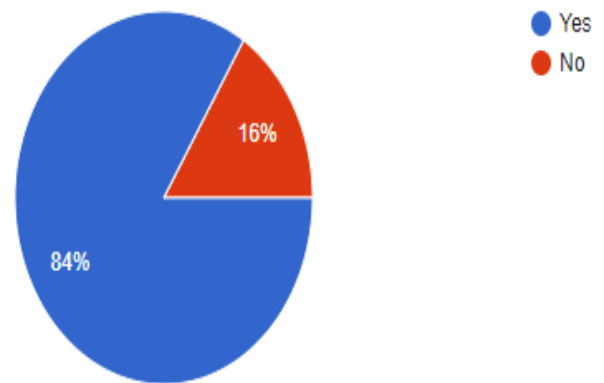
Frequency of online advertisements influencing shopping preference

Respondents were asked whether online advertising influences their shopping preference. Results are illustrated in **Table 4.1.5 and Figure 4.1.5**.

The results show that 84% of female consumers in Bangalore believe online advertisements influences their shopping preference. On the other hand, 16% of females said that online advertisements do not influence their shopping preference. From the above data, it can be inferred that the majority of female consumers in Bangalore are influenced by online advertisements when it comes to their shopping preference.
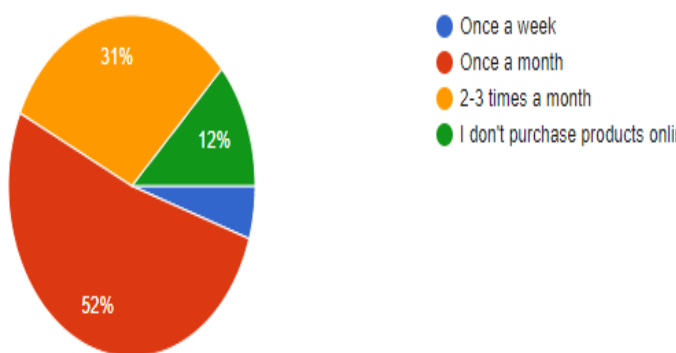
Frequency of shopping online on an average basis

Respondents were asked how often they shop online on an average basis. Results are illustrated in **Table 4.1.6 and Figure 4.1.6.**

Table 4.1.6

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Once a week	5	5%
Once a month	52	52%
2-3 times a month	31	31%
I don't purchase products online	12	12%

Figure 4.1.6

The results show that 52% of women in Bangalore shop online once a month. 31% shop 2-

3 times a month. 12% do not purchase products online. Lastly, 5% shop once a week. From the above data, it can be inferred that the majority of female consumers in Bangalore shop online once a month while the minority shops online once a week.
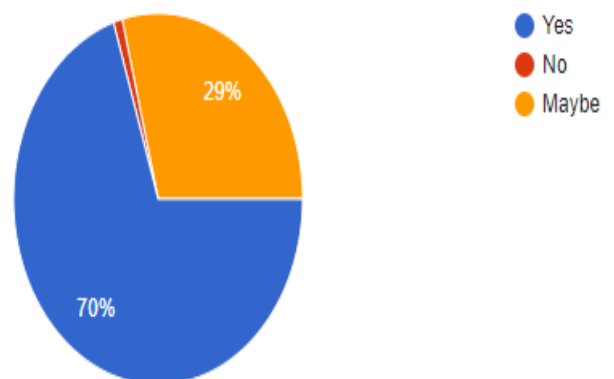
Frequency of online advertisements value

Respondents were asked if they believe online advertisements hold value. Results are illustrated in **Table 4.1.7 and Figure 4.1.7**.

Table 4.1.7

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	70	70%
No	1	1%
Maybe	29	29%

Figure 4.1.7

The results show that 70% of the female consumers believe that online advertisement hold

value. 29% believe online advertisements might hold value, while 1% believes it does not hold any value. From the above data, it can be inferred that the majority of female consumers in Bangalore believe that online advertisements hold value and the minority believes it does not.
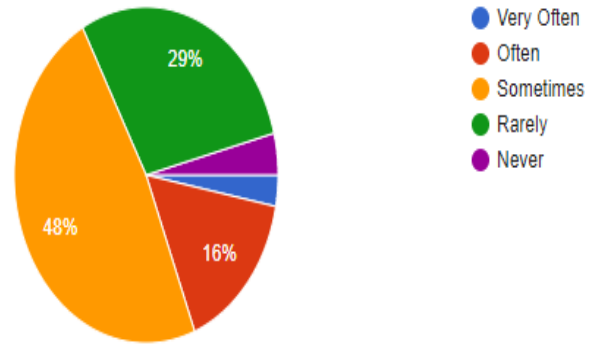
Frequency of purchase decision after seeing an online advertisement

Respondents were asked how often they make purchasing decisions post viewing an online advertisement. Results are illustrated in **Table 4.1.9 and Figure 4.1.9.**

Table 4.1.9

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Very Often	3	3%
Often	16	16%
Sometimes	48	48%
Rarely	29	29%
Never	4	4%

Figure 4.1.9

The results show that 48% of women sometimes make a purchasing decision after seeing an online advertisement. 29% of women rarely make a purchase decision after viewing an online advertisement. 16% often make a purchase decision after seeing an online advertisement. 4% never make a purchase decision after viewing an online advertisement. Lastly, 3% very often make a purchase decision after viewing an online advertisement. From the above data, it can be inferred that the majority of women in Bangalore sometimes make a purchase decision after viewing an online advertisements, while the minority very often makes a purchase decision after viewing an online advertisement.

Frequency of factors which influence purchasing decision

Respondents were asked which of the following factors influences their purchasing decision at the first look. Results are illustrated in **Table 4.1.12 and Figure 4.1.12**.

Table 4.1.12

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Brand Familiarity	40	40%
Desire to imitate the actors in the advertisement	1	1%
Emotional state of mind	8	8%
Convenience	28	28%
Customer Reviews	23	23%

Figure 4.1.12
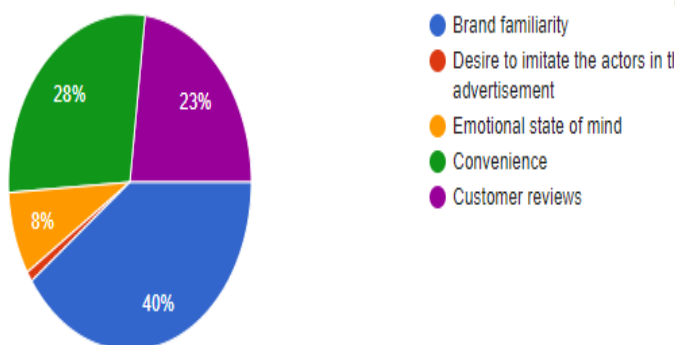
The results show that 40% of women's purchasing decision at the first look is based on brand familiarity. 28% said it is based on convenience. 23% believe their purchasing decision is based on customer reviews. 8% believe it is based on their emotional state of mind. Lastly, 1% believed that their purchasing decision at the first look was based on the desire to imitate the actors in the advertisement. From the data above, it can be inferred that the majority of women in Bangalore make a purchasing decision at the first look bases on the brand familiarity, while the minority makes the decision based on the desire to imitate the actors in the advertisement.

DISCUSSION

The data gathered via questionnaire has abetted the researcher to examine whether online advertising plays a role in the consumers' decision making skills to purchase.

Based on the gathered data, it's safe to say that in today's world, female consumers that are aged 18-30 are highly influence by the advertisements they come across online. Now this does not conclude that it results in them purchasing the product or service. However, it does influence or rather manipulate them to take into consideration whether they should purchase.

It can be inferred that the majority of female consumers in Bangalore spend four to six hours online, in a day. This allows us to understand that considering the fact that female consumers spend a sufficient amount of time online in a day, they

must come across several online advertisements in that time period of four to six hours.

Furthermore, it evidently shown based on the findings, that female consumers in Bangalore prefer digital media over any other form of media such as print, television etc. This allows us to believe that the majority of the female population in Bangalore who are aged 18-30, have online access and prefer it. This preference leads to us once again believing that the respondents have a high probability of viewing online advertisements.

Another major finding is that a high number of female consumers are active on social networking sites. Social networking sites are a huge platform for displaying advertisements. While browsing and chatting online, or doing whatever the consumer is doing, side by side the consumer will come across several advertisement on their social networking site which will result in attracting the user's attention.

CONCLUSION

Online advertising have a massive influence on the decision making process of individuals. This has been an area of limited study, thus this paper can add to the existing literature. It can be considered as a powerful tool to educate the consumers on the various choices of products in the marketplace. The paper explored the online advertising techniques used by apparel brands to obtain a high level of attentiveness from the consumer. The study critically analysed how female consumers' thought process in Bangalore, is being impacted. Another objective was to examine whether there was a rise in purchase of apparel via online, of female consumers in Bangalore.

Pertinent to the findings of the research, it is evident that there is a rise of product purchase, when the product is advertised through an online platform. The majority of respondents said that they tend to purchase a product based on their personal convenience. Additional factors which influence the behaviour patterns of the consumer are characteristics such as brand familiarity, words of persuasion and reviews or positive responses by consumers who have already purchased the particular product. To conclude, online advertisements play a large role in shaping or creating an opinion in the minds of women, when it comes to making purchasing decisions.

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