

The effect of demographic and personality characteristics on fashion shopping proneness

A study of the Indian market

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Abstract

Purpose – The global fashion industry is growing at a rapid pace and developing nations such as India are emerging as major contributors to the same. In such case, most academics and marketers are interested in the variables that influence fashion shopping. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the influence of consumer demographic and personality characteristics on fashion shopping proneness (FSP) in India.

Design/methodology/approach – Data were collected from 561 respondents using mall intercept survey method. Hypothesized relationships were assessed using multiple regression and structural equation modelling.

Findings – Traditional view that younger and female consumers are more fashion prone than older and male consumers is validated. However, demographics accounted for only 9 per cent of the variance in FSP while personality characteristics accounted for 46 per cent. Being agreeable, extroverted, open minded, and stable are all positively associated with fashion shopping.

Research limitations/implications – The study finds both personality dimensions and consumer demographics to influence FSP. As a limitation, the authors do not probe deep into the why and how of the mentioned relationships between personality and fashion buying.

Practical implications – With respect to demographics, managers could target young females as the primary segment for fashion clothing but cannot ignore young males and older females. With respect to personality, managers can appeal to agreeable, extroverted, open-minded personalities by linking novelty, fun, relaxation, and recreation with fashion buying.

Originality/value – This is one of the first attempts that simultaneously investigates the effects of demographic and personality characteristics on fashion shopping behaviour in India.

Keywords India, Personality, Consumer demographics, Fashion shopping, Fashion shopping proneness

Paper type Research paper



Introduction

Fashion generally implies popular trend or current style. The term fashion goods encompass a wide range of products such as clothing, food, perfume, music, automobiles, and beauty products. Fashion has become an integral part of global business. The global fashion industry was valued at USD1.7 trillion and employed 75 million people in 2012 (Fashionunited.com, 2012) with apparel and textiles being the major contributor to the fashion retail industry.

In order to effectively market fashion apparel, it is important to address the basic question: who are the fashion shopping prone consumers? Insights into this question will help fashion goods marketers target the appropriate consumers and guide their marketing strategies towards those target segments.

Interestingly, the question of “who is the fashion shopper” has been a long studied in the literature, yet not fully answered. Researchers have investigated various consumer factors that influence fashion shopping such as demographics (e.g. Gao *et al.*, 2009b; Khare *et al.*, 2012); personality (Casidy, 2012); values (Sarabia-Sanchez *et al.*, 2012); psychographics such as fashion consciousness (e.g. Gould and Stern, 1989; Casidy, 2012) or self-concept (Peters *et al.*, 2011) and behavioural variables such as involvement (Khare and Rakesh, 2010). An important, yet less-researched concept is fashion shopping is fashion shopping proneness (FSP). FSP derives its origins from the concept of shopping proneness: a shopping orientation that makes consumers actively engage in the shopping activity leading to a positive psychological state of mind (Arora, 1985; Foxall, 1990). Thus, in the context of fashion shopping, FSP could be defined as a positive cognitive and affective state of mind that enables the consumer to be engaged in the act of fashion shopping and derive positive feelings leading to favourable shopping behaviour.

Our study investigates the relationship between select demographic/personality factors and FSP and extends the literature in the following ways. First, past demographic studies in fashion shopping have typically examined the main effects of age and gender and focused on the female consumer. Our study examines the main effects of age, gender, income, and their interaction effects and focus on both female and male consumers. Second, past studies have generally affirmed that personality plays a major influencing or moderating role in fashion shopping. However, they have not clearly linked what types of personalities are associated with fashion shopping. In this research, we employ the “Big Five” personality dimensions proposed in the pioneering work by Norman (1963) to explore what personality traits are associated with fashion shopping and recommend targeting and promotion strategies. Third, most studies on fashion buying have pertained to developed markets such as USA and Europe. Our study uses the large and growing Indian market as the context for adding to our understanding of the fashion goods consumer.

While the markets for fashion apparel in developed countries such as USA, France, and Germany are large but stagnant, developing nations like India are particularly emerging as large potential markets for fashion business due to increasingly favourable demand and supply conditions (Mann and Byun, 2011; Khare and Rakesh, 2010). On the demand side, a significantly large middle class has emerged in India, who aspires for fashion-related products (Kravets and Sandikci, 2014). On the supply side, international brands such as Levis, Wrangler, Nike, and Reebok, and Indian brands such as Raymonds and Zodiac, have all invested heavily in the Indian fashion goods market (Batra and Niehm, 2009). Due to economic liberalization permitting entry of multinational brands, the Indian fashion market has grown at a compounded annual growth rate of 15 per cent in 2010-2012 and reached a value of USD189 million.

In summary, the primary objective of our research is to investigate the effect of demographic and personality characteristics on FSP and suggest novel insights to fashion retailers and academicians. We use the Indian market as the context for our study. In this way, we believe our research makes a dual contribution: adding to our general understanding of the fashion shopper by investigating variables not considered in prior research; and gaining insights into the fashion shopper in India, that is a growing market for fashion goods. Additionally, we augment our study by investigating the effect of FSP on purchase behaviour and fashion shopping frequency.

Literature review and hypotheses

Theoretical background

We draw knowledge from three major theories to establish the study objectives before we develop our study hypotheses. The first theory that we draw support from is the “theory of reasoned action” or TRA (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975) and its extension, the “theory of planned behaviour” or TPB (Ajzen, 1985). According to TRA and TPB, the actual behaviour of a fashion shopper would be determined by his/her behavioural intention (i.e. the cognitive representation of the consumer’s motivation to enact a specific behaviour, such as browsing or purchase). The behavioural intention in turn would be explained by three factors, namely, attitude (i.e. the shopper’s evaluation, either positive or negative of performing the act); subjective norms (i.e. the shopper’s perceived peer pressure or social influence in undertaking the act); and perceived behavioural control (i.e. the shopper’s perception of the level of difficulty in performing the act). The TPB has been used in multiple contexts in retailing research to explain phenomena such as luxury fashion (Gao *et al.*, 2009a) and fashion counterfeits (Kim and Karpova, 2010). The shoppers’ demographics and personality would be related to his/her attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control (Michaelidou and Hassan, 2014). However, the TPB has been criticized on the grounds that the knowledge of a customer’s attitude towards a brand may not always be a good predictor of his/her actual behaviour (Solomon *et al.*, 2002; Newman and Foxall, 2003). Thus, it may not always explain all consumer phenomena in retailing.

Thereby, we draw inferences from two more theories in retailing, namely, shopping patronage theory and shopping preference theory. Both the shopping patronage (Sheth, 1983) and shopping preference theories (Peck and Childers, 2003, 2006) have their base in psychology literature. Both these theories suggest that consumer’s preference and buying behaviour at a store may be influenced by non-functional elements (Hirschman and Stern, 1999; Peck and Childers, 2003) such as enjoyment and sensory gratification. In addition, demographic factors such as gender may affect shopping orientations, time spent in store, browsing behaviour (Cho and Workman, 2011; Workman and Cho, 2012). Shopping preference theory also suggests that psychographic characteristics, such as personality and self-concept, could help marketers understand consumers’ motives, feelings, and beliefs (Evans *et al.*, 1996). Interestingly enough, researchers such as Lin (2002) found consumers within the same demographic group to exhibit different psychographic profiles in terms of buying behaviour and brand choice. Likewise, Simmers *et al.* (2014) found cross-country differences among fashion consumers having similar psychographic profiles.

To summarize, the discussion implies that studying demographic or personality variables in isolation may not be sufficient in understanding fashion consumers. However, it could be inferred that both would affect FSP and subsequent buying behaviour. The joint investigation would thus enhance the understanding of fashion consumer’s behaviour. The next sub-sections lead to the development of the study hypotheses.

Consumer demographics and fashion shopping

Consumer demographics such as gender, income, and age have been found to influence consumer behaviour, in general, and fashion shopping in particular (Gao *et al.*, 2009b; Khare *et al.*, 2012; Hogg *et al.*, 1998).

Age. Malls and fashion stores are the “hangouts” for teens and youth. Younger generation see fashion shopping as a pleasure and fun-seeking activity (“cool”) and believe fashion stores are stylish, authentic, desirable, unique, and innovative

(Gao *et al.*, 2009b; Runyan *et al.*, 2013). Therefore, we expect younger consumers to be more fashion prone than older consumers. However, some researchers have found age effect to be not very strong in the case of females. Both young and elderly women are prone to fashion shopping but with different motivations and approaches. Younger women are found to indulge in fashion shopping with friends to enhance their social identity and self-image (Hogg *et al.*, 1998; Banister and Hogg, 2004), while elderly women are found to shop with their family members to improve their social status (Greco, 1986; Borland and Akram, 2007; Kozar and Damhorst, 2008; Thomas and Peters, 2009). Interestingly, there is no study, to the authors' knowledge, that explore the effect of age of male consumers on fashion shopping. We explicitly consider FSP of male and female consumers and explore the interaction effect of age and gender on FSP.

Gender. One of the major demographic variables that accounts for differences in overall shopping behaviour is gender (Lutz, 1996; Putrevu, 2001). Female consumers explain fashion shopping as fun, flirty, exciting, sexy, joyful, playful, and enjoyable, and like to take part in co-creation (Miller and Mills, 2012), while male consumers are found less involved in fashion shopping (O'Cass, 2004; Hansen and Jensen, 2009). Women often like to be projected as "fashion leaders" and tend to purchase more fashion brands than do males (Gutman and Mills, 1982; Michon *et al.*, 2007; Pentecost and Andrews, 2010). Research shows significant differences in intentions to spend in fashion shopping where women are found to be more self and vanity conscious and thereby spending more than men (Pentecost and Andrews, 2010; Workman and Studak, 2007). However, in specific cases women and men were found to elicit similar responses to fashion shopping behaviour (Workman and Cho, 2013)

Income. A few researchers (such as Rocha *et al.*, 2005; Paridon *et al.*, 2006) have discussed the role of income in generating the need for fashion shopping, but even they have not directly empirically linked income to the extent of fashion shopping. It is logical that rich people are more likely to engage in fashion shopping simply because they have more disposable income and can afford fashion goods. Richer people may also perceive a greater need to maintain their self-image through shopping for fashion goods. However, it is also possible that fashion shopping and consumption is performed by consumers particularly from lower class to move up to a more sophisticated, status conscious, and confident group upper class groups (Maden *et al.*, 2015).

Interestingly, there have been some studies that investigated the joint effect of demographic factors on behavioural variables such as purchase intentions and found specific gender and age group clusters (such as young women) to have higher purchase intentions than other groups (Wang, 2014). Thus, we can infer that consumer demographics would influence FSP. Based on the above discussion on demographics, we posit:

H1a. Consumer age will have a negative effect on FSP.

H1b. Consumer gender will have a significant effect on FSP.

H1c. Consumer income will have a positive effect on FSP.

In addition to testing the above main effect hypotheses, we explore the interaction effects of age and gender and income and gender on FSP. Prior research has not included these interaction effects on psychographic variables (Kim *et al.*, 2002).

Consumer personality and fashion shopping

Personality is reflected in the way a person thinks, feels, and behaves. More broadly, personality could be viewed as the way human beings respond to the environment that surrounds them (Kassarjian, 1971). While there are many ways to define and study personality traits, we draw upon the pioneering work of Norman (1963), who popularized the “Big Five” dimensions of personality: agreeable (friendly and caring); extroverted (outgoing, socially active); industrious (hardworking, diligent); open minded (innovative and open to new ideas); and stable (mature, relaxed, and confident).

The relation between personality and consumer behaviour has been investigated from multiple perspectives (e.g. Guido *et al.*, 2011; Kermani, 2011). Fashion apparel is characterized by high symbolism, consciousness, and product involvement. Consumer personality has been found to be a central persuasion route (Piacentini and Mailer, 2004) or to moderator between emotions and impulsivity (Ramanathan and Williams, 2007) in fashion shopping. While the literature suggests that personality factors may play a big role in fashion shopping, the authors are generally silent on the specific personality types that would be prone to fashion shopping. We can only make inferences on what personality types might enjoy fashion shopping from the nature of the shopper’s activity.

Fashion shopping has transcended from being a just search and purchase activity to a pleasurable experience (Patel and Sharma, 2009; Miller and Mills, 2012). It is considered as a mode of relaxation, recreation, and entertainment (Dholakia, 1999; Goldsmith *et al.*, 1999). According to Bloch *et al.* (1994), mall/fashion shopping is triggered by high levels of purchase enjoyment, experiential consumption, and desire to explore novelty, pleasurable absorption, and enjoyment of socializing in the shopping process. The shopping motive is similar to recreational or hedonic consumption and differs across individuals based on their self-concept (O’Cass, 2004) or value systems (Sarabia-Sanchez *et al.*, 2012). Because fashion shopping experience has been found in the literature to be linked to fun, pleasure and socializing (associated with agreeable and extroverted personalities), and novelty (associated with open-minded personality), we propose the following hypotheses:

H2a. Consumer agreeableness will have a positive effect on FSP.

H2b. Consumer extroversion will have a positive effect on FSP.

H2c. Consumer open mindedness will have a positive effect on FSP.

FSP and purchase behaviour

The traditional model of consumer behaviour has affirmed that consumers’ attitude is a strong precursor to actual behaviour. Accordingly, we expect FSP (representing consumers’ attitude towards fashion shopping) to be positively related to fashion goods purchase behaviour. For example, O’Cass (2004) found fashion involvement to be a significant predictor of impulse/novelty buying in fashion goods. Other researchers (e.g. Park *et al.*, 2006) have also found positive emotions to be predictor of novelty buying in the context of fashion shopping. Thus, to complete the picture, we investigate whether FSP does indeed lead to fashion clothing purchase and fashion shopping frequency and test the following hypotheses:

H3a. FSP is positively related to fashion clothing purchase.

H3b. FSP is positively related to fashion shopping frequency.

Methodology

We test hypotheses *H1-H3* based on a survey of 561 consumers in the Indian marketplace. Fashion researchers have applied various methodologies to answer research questions pertaining to fashion consumption. These range from interpretive techniques such as depth interviews (e.g. Birtwistle and Moore, 2001; Kravets and Sandikci, 2014) and focus group discussions (e.g. Dawson and Kim, 2010). A majority of the studies have applied quantitative techniques such as simple descriptive statistics (Otieno *et al.*, 2005); cluster analysis (e.g. Sarabia-Sanchez *et al.*, 2012; Casidy, 2012); ANOVA and/or MANOVA (Casidy, 2012; Workman and Cho, 2012); conjoint analysis (e.g. Birtwistle *et al.*, 1998); factor analysis and structural equation modelling (e.g. Kim *et al.*, 2002; Michon *et al.*, 2007; Khare and Rakesh, 2010; Joung, 2014). Some have even used mixed methods (e.g. Hogg *et al.*, 1998; Morgan and Birtwistle, 2009). Since our objective was to study a set of hypothesized relationships, and we had established scales for the latent constructs being studied, we adopt the survey method and factor analysis to collect data and obtain construct measures and combine it with regression and structural equation modelling for testing hypotheses. We first describe the survey design and then the sampling and data collection procedure.

Survey design

Demographic variables investigated are those commonly used in similar studies: age (16-25; 26-35; 36-45; over 46 years old), gender (male, female), and income (under 50,000 Indian Rupees (INR); 50,000-100,000 INR; over 100,000 INR). Personality variables were adapted from Guido *et al.* (2011) and consists of five personality traits or factors each measured with five personality items: agreeable (measured as cordial, generous, loyal, sincere, unselfish); extroverted (happy, determined, dynamic, energetic, active); industrious (efficient, scrupulous, precise, conscientious, diligent); open minded (sharp, creative, innovative, modern, informed); and stable (optimistic, self-confident, solid, relaxed, quiet). A five-point Likert scale (ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree) was used for measuring these personality items.

We measure FSP, or the propensity to engage in fashion shopping, based on the positive emotion or joy derived from fashion shopping. Following Beatty and Ferrell (1998), we use five items reflecting positive emotion (I am excited, satisfied, enthusiastic, proud, inspired to do fashion shopping) to capture the mental state of FSP. Each of these items was measured using a five-point Likert scale – ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

Lastly, fashion clothing purchase was measured based on respondents' level of agreement to three statements with respect to their propensity to buy clothing with new style; with new feature; and that just came out. Fashion shopping frequency was measured using an ordered categorical scale (never, occasionally, bi-monthly, at least once a month, weekly).

Sampling and data collection

A mall intercept survey approach was employed for data collection, since this would allow real respondents (as opposed to student subjects) to participate and would also be reasonably representative of the shopper population (Bush and Hair, 1985). Three shopping malls were selected randomly from a list of 12 in a major central Indian metro city. The respondent selection was based on mixed sampling method, to ensure a

reasonably big sample size and representation from both genders and different age groups. A surveyor placed at the mall entrance intercepted every fifth individual entering the mall, and if the respondent agreed to be a part of the survey, he or she was given the freedom to choose the time of taking the survey (before or after shopping). However, the surveyors were also trained to use quotas to ensure balance of gender and other demographic variables. The survey was conducted over a period of 15 days and resulted in 561 completed questionnaires.

Data analysis and results

First, we performed an exploratory factor analysis to test the unidimensionality of the five FSP items that yielded a single factor solution (Table I). as predicted in previous research (Beatty and Ferrell, 1998). To obtain a measure of the FSP construct, we averaged the scores on the five corresponding FSP indicators.

Second, we performed an exploratory analysis of the 25 personality variables that resulted in a five factor solution (Table II). The 25 personality items loaded on corresponding factors exactly as posited in Guido *et al.* (2011). To obtain a measure for each of the five personality constructs we used averaged the scores similar to that for FSP.

Third, we investigated the influence of demographic and personality factors on FSP using multiple regression analysis. First, we regressed FSP on the demographic variables only (Table III, Column 5). These demographic variables (age, gender, income) explained 9.5 per cent of the variance in FSP. Age and gender had significant influence on FSP but not income. In particular, younger consumers were more prone to fashion shopping than older consumer and females were more fashion shopping prone than males. We then regressed the personality factors alone on FSP (Table III, Column 6). These personality factors (agreeable, extroverted, industrious, open minded, stable) explained 46.2 per cent of the variance in FSP and all these factors are statistically significant. Then, we regressed both demographic and personality factors on FSP (Table III, Column 7). Together, the demographic and personality variables explained 48.6 per cent of the variance in FSP. Thus the common variance in FSP explained by both demographic and personality factors is 7.1 per cent.

We also included all possible two-way interactions among demographic variables in the regression model. The R^2 with interaction effects increased from 0.486 to 0.505, but the significance of the main effects remained unchanged. The only significant interaction was between age and income. The mean FSPs corresponding to the two-way interactions are presented in Figures 1-3. From Figure 2, it appears the effect of income on FSP depends on age, with the effect slightly decreasing for younger consumers and slightly increasing for older consumers.

Demographic and personality factors were found to share common variance, suggesting that demographics may be related to some personality traits. For example,

Table I.
Exploratory factor
analysis results
fashion shopping
proneness (FSP)

No.	Item	Factor loading
FSP1	I am excited while I do fashion shopping	0.684
FSP2	I am satisfied with my fashion shopping	0.576
FSP3	I am enthusiastic to do fashion shopping	0.613
FSP4	I feel proud to do fashion shopping	0.706
FSP5	I am inspired to do fashion shopping	0.644

No.	Item	Factor name	Factor loadings	Correlation with FSP ^a
A1	Cordial	Agreeable	0.659	0.314
A2	Generous		0.660	0.501
A3	Loyal		0.818	0.330
A4	Sincere		0.710	0.359
A5	Unselfish		0.659	0.448
E1	Happy	Extroverted	0.628	0.288
E2	Determined		0.783	0.347
E3	Dynamic		0.807	0.356
E4	Energetic		0.750	0.423
E5	Active		0.697	0.352
I1	Efficient	Industrious	0.704	-0.491
I2	Scrupulous		0.859	-0.419
I3	Precise		0.753	-0.402
I4	Conscientious		0.694	-0.297
I5	Diligent		0.829	-0.470
O1	Sharp	Open minded	0.716	0.398
O1	Creative		0.828	0.431
O3	Innovative		0.850	0.450
O4	Modern		0.806	0.412
O5	Informed		0.791	0.482
S1	Optimistic	Stable	0.814	0.386
S2	Confident		0.567	0.330
S3	Solid		0.698	0.373
S4	Relaxed		0.603	0.189
S5	Quiet		0.622	0.526

Note: ^aAll correlations are significant at $p < 0.01$

Table II.
Exploratory factor analysis results
personality factors

females may be more friendly/agreeable than males while older people may be more stable than younger people. To explore whether the demographic variables are also predictors of personality traits, we regressed each personality factor on the three demographic variables. The results are presented in Table IV. R^2 values are generally low (0.018-0.075) and only age is a significant determinant of personality with young ones reporting themselves to be more agreeable, extroverted, open minded and stable, but less industrious.

Finally, we estimated a confirmatory factor analysis (measurement) model, linking the indicators to its respective constructs, jointly with a structural model that depicts the posited paths relating demographic variables with FSP (to test $H1$); personality factors with FSP (to test $H2$); and from FSP to fashion clothing purchase and fashion shopping frequency (to test $H3$). Gefen *et al.* (2000) noted that both regression and structural equation model (SEM) could be used in the same study depending on the objectives. Since linear regression does not allow us to check various aspects such as construct validity, interaction effect on item loadings, interaction effect on non-common variance (Gefen *et al.*, 2000), we decided to use SEM as a confirmatory approach to support/reject our hypotheses.

Table V presents the results from the measurement model. All the standardized factor loadings were significant at $p < 0.01$. All the latent variables (five personality dimensions, FSP and fashion clothing purchase) had average variance extracted (AVE), composite reliability (Joreskog's ρ), and internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's α) values above the recommended cut-offs (Chin, 1998; Hair *et al.*, 2008). We also performed a discriminant validity test as per Fornell and Larcker (1981) and found the

Covariate	Covariate level	Sample size (in the covariate level)	Mean FSP (in the covariate level)	Independent variable/s (dependent variable FSP for all models)		
				Demographics only	Personality only	Demographics and personality
Intercept	na	na	na	3.475***	2.544***	2.484***
Age (years)	16-25	138	3.77	0.382***		0.182***
	26-35	119	3.60	0.196***		0.060
	36-45	187	3.45	0.068		0.025
	> 46	117	3.40	Base		Base
	Gender	Male	299	3.50	-0.121***	
Income (K INR)	Female	262	3.61	Base		Base
	0-50	104	3.54	-0.022		-0.001
	50-100	134	3.54	-0.055		-0.015
	> 100	323	3.56	Base		Base
Agreeable	na				0.097***	0.093***
Extrovert					0.113***	0.115***
Industrious					-0.236***	-0.209***
Open minded					0.102***	0.098***
Stable					0.126***	0.124***
R^2				0.095***	0.462***	0.486***
Adjusted R^2				0.085	0.457	0.476

Table III. Regression of demographic and personality factors on fashion shopping proneness
Note: *** $p < 0.01$

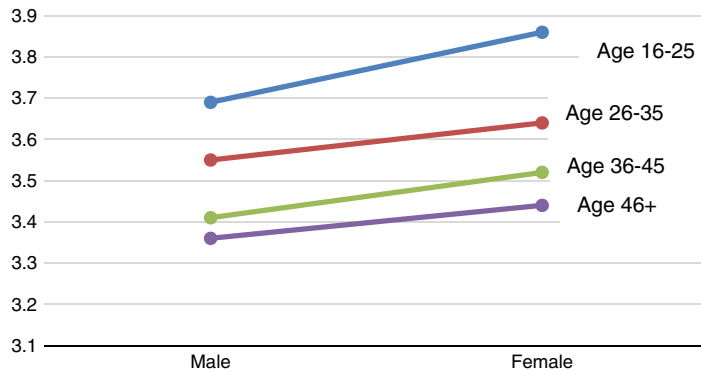


Figure 1. Mean FSP by age and gender

AVEs to be greater than the square of the inter-construct correlations, thereby confirming discriminant validity (Table VI).

For the SEM, we used a normal maximum likelihood (ML) estimation, followed by a Bayesian SEM since the latter is more appropriate for categorical variables – demographic and shopping frequency data (Byrne, 2009; Arbuckle, 2011). The model fit measures for the ML estimation as per Kline (2011) indicated a good fit ($\chi^2/df = 2.615$; GFI = 0.937; AGFI = 0.907; CFI = 0.942; RMR = 0.044; RMSEA = 0.058). Table VII presents the results of the Bayesian structural equation estimates. Figure 4 represents the structural model

Figure 2.
Mean FSP by age
and income

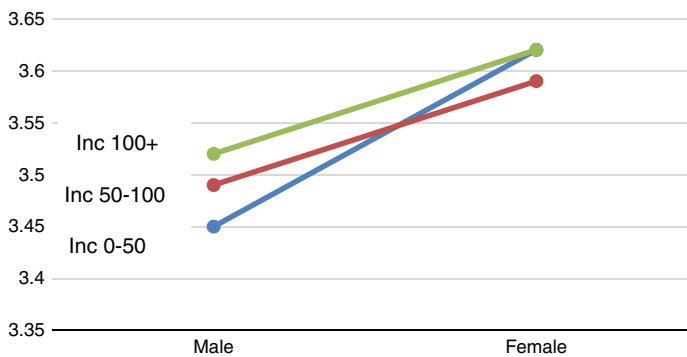
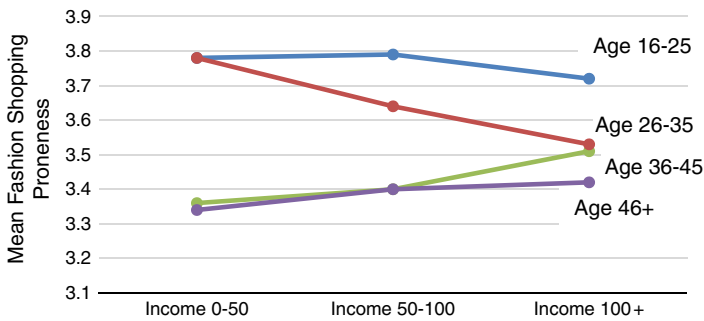


Figure 3.
Mean FSP by gender
and income

Covariate	Covariate level	Agreeable	Extroverted	Industrious	Open minded	Stable
Intercept	na	3.698***	4.003***	2.816***	3.100***	3.808***
Age (years)	16-25	0.268***	0.150*	-0.387***	0.431***	0.280***
	26-35	0.094	0.034	-0.336***	0.240**	0.241***
	36-45	0.062	-0.029	-0.133*	0.125	-0.003
	> 46	Base	Base	Base	Base	Base
	Male	-0.063	-0.024	0.126**	0.031	0.008
Income ('K INR)	Female	Base	Base	Base	Base	Base
	0-50	0.104	-0.138*	-0.021	-0.061	-0.108
	50-100	-0.122	-0.003	-0.063	0.0139	-0.345***
	> 100	Base	Base	Base	Base	Base
R^2		0.027**	0.018	0.075***	0.035***	0.073***
Adjusted R^2		0.017	0.007	0.065	0.024	0.063

Notes: * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$

Table IV.
Regression of
demographics on
personality factors

estimates in pictorial form for ease of visualization and interpretation. All the results observed in the multiple regression model (Table III) are confirmed in the results from the structural equation model. In particular, age and gender have a significant direct effect on FSP (validating *H1a* and *H1b*); all personality traits have a significant influence on FSP (consistent with *H2a-H2c*). In addition, FSP is positively related to fashion clothing purchase and fashion shopping frequency (validating *H3a* and *H3b*).

Item	Construct	Std. factor loading	SE	p-value	AVE Joreskog's ρ Cronbach's α
A1	Agreeable	0.782	0.072	0.000	0.576
A2		0.692	0.069	0.000	0.872
A3		0.750	0.077	0.000	0.834
A4		0.798	0.090	0.000	
A5		0.769	0.094	0.000	
E1	Extroverted	0.692	0.112	0.000	0.543
E2		0.734	0.110	0.000	0.855
E3		0.817	0.121	0.000	0.839
E4		0.741	0.104	0.000	
E5		0.693	0.094	0.000	
I1	Industrious	0.746	0.055	0.000	0.596
I2		0.856	0.057	0.000	0.880
I3		0.711	0.061	0.000	0.856
I4		0.680	0.071	0.000	
I5		0.849	0.055	0.000	
O1	Open minded	0.810	0.048	0.000	0.694
O1		0.784	0.045	0.000	0.919
O3		0.891	0.046	0.000	0.918
O4		0.865	0.044	0.000	
O5		0.811	0.045	0.000	
S1	Stable	0.735	0.062	0.000	0.523
S2		0.744	0.054	0.000	0.845
S3		0.745	0.071	0.000	0.777
S4		0.691	0.052	0.000	
S5		0.698	0.061	0.000	
FSP	FSP	0.798	0.094	0.000	0.572
FSP2		0.774	0.091	0.000	0.870
FSP3		0.761	0.085	0.000	0.841
FSP4		0.709	0.106	0.000	
FSP5		0.738	0.118	0.000	
FCP1(I like to buy clothes with new style)	Fashion clothing purchase	0.723	0.072	0.000	0.589
FCP2 (I like to buy clothes with new feature)		0.708	0.066	0.000	0.810
FCP3 (I like to buy clothes that just came out)		0.862	0.073	0.000	0.804

Table V.
Results of full model confirmatory factor analysis

Notes: FSP, fashion shopping proneness; FCP, fashion clothing purchase

Discussion of results

We first discuss the effect of demographics on FSP and then the effect of personality factors on FSP, finally the relationship between FSP and fashion shopping behaviour.

Consumer demographics and fashion shopping

Age. Consistent with *H1a*, younger consumers are more prone to fashion shopping than older consumers. Figure 1 further shows that the mean FSP is relatively high particularly for the very young (16-25 years), with age effect tapering off once consumers reach middle age (36 years and above).

Not only does age have a direct effect on FSP, but it also affects FSP through personality characteristics. In fact, younger consumers perceive themselves to be more

Table VI. Discriminant validity test

Construct	Agreeable	Extroverted	Industrious	Open minded	Stable	FSP	FCP
Agreeable	<i>0.576</i>						
Extroverted	0.270	<i>0.543</i>					
Industrious	0.141	0.141	<i>0.596</i>				
Open minded	0.362	0.246	0.129	<i>0.694</i>			
Stable	0.441	0.213	0.210	0.299	<i>0.523</i>		
FSP	0.466	0.382	0.457	0.441	0.470	<i>0.572</i>	
FCP	0.024	0.028	0.045	0.003	0.018	0.092	<i>0.589</i>

Notes: FSP, fashion shopping proneness; FCP, fashion clothing purchase. Diagonal, average variance extracted per factor; off-diagonal, squared inter factor correlations

Path from	Path to	Bayesian estimate	Std. estimate	SE	95% CI	p-value	
Age	Agreeable	-0.077	-0.129	0.028	-2.8 -0.131	0.005	
	Extroverted	-0.052	-0.1	0.024	-2.2 -0.098	0.028	
	Industrious	0.136	0.269	0.023	5.9 0.092	0.000	
	Open minded	-0.13	-0.183	0.031	-4.2 -0.192	0.000	
	Stable	-0.125	-0.187	0.03	-4.2 -0.184	0.000	
Gender – male	Agreeable	-0.024	-0.019	0.055	0.5 -0.081	ns	
	Extroverted	-0.026	-0.024	0.05	0.7 -0.065	ns	
	Industrious	0.133	0.12	0.046	-2.9 -0.226	0.005	
	Open minded	0.037	0.025	0.068	0.17 -0.097	ns	
Income	Stable	0.005	0.01	0.063	0.1 -0.115	ns	
	Agreeable	0.026	-0.034	0.026	1.0 -0.095	ns	
	Extroverted	0.054	0.075	0.022	2.5 -0.011	ns	
	Industrious	0.023	0.033	0.02	1.2 -0.036	ns	
Age	Open minded	0.018	0.019	0.029	0.6 -0.065	ns	
	Stable	0.12	0.135	0.028	4.3 0.038	0.004	
	FSP	-0.038	-0.125	0.019	-2.0 -0.077	0.013	
	FSP	-0.124	-0.171	0.034	3.6 0.057	0.000	
Gender – male	FSP	-0.001	0.005	0.014	-0.1 -0.029	ns	
Income	FSP	0.133	0.233	0.032	4.2 0.057	0.000	
	Agreeable	FSP	0.165	0.247	0.036	4.6 0.089	0.000
	Extroverted	FSP	-0.307	-0.412	0.044	-7.0 -0.394	0.000
	Industrious	FSP	0.124	0.256	0.025	5.0 0.065	0.000
	Open minded	FSP	0.192	0.371	0.033	5.8 0.12	0.000
	Stable	FSP	0.432	0.19	0.126	3.4 0.251	0.000
	FSP	FCP	0.728	0.265	0.152	4.8 0.518	0.000
	FSP	FSF					

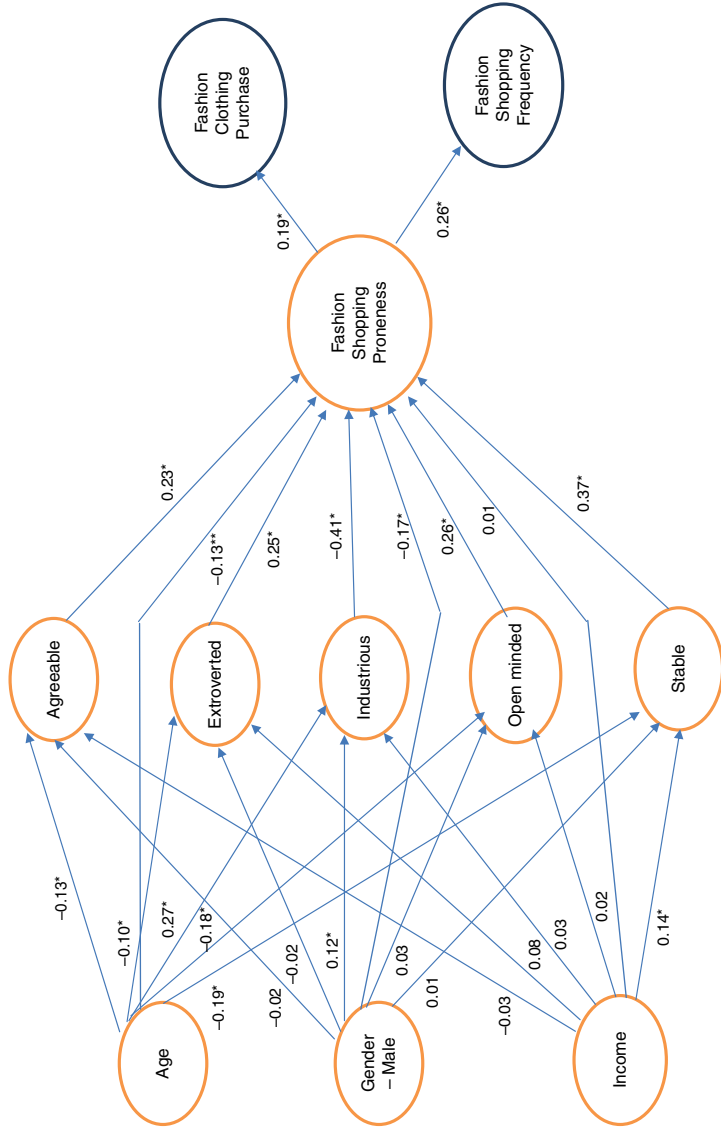
Table VII.

Results of full model path coefficients

agreeable, extroverted, open minded, and stable. All these personality characteristics are conducive to fashion shopping.

The above results on age offer several implications. First, the traditional view that the youth segment is the more fashion-prone segment is upheld in the Indian market context as well. Therefore, marketers of fashion goods in India, as well as other countries, can focus on the youth as a primary target market.

Second, these younger consumers perceive themselves to be more agreeable, extroverted, open minded – personality characteristics that are conducive to fashion



Notes: *p < 0.05; **p < 0.01

Figure 4.
Structural model
standardized path
coefficients

shopping and more significant drivers of FSP than age itself. So, when promoting fashion goods to the youth segment, it is prudent for managers to evoke these personality traits and link them to fashion shopping. For example, advertising for fashion goods could show young people checking out new movies or restaurants or be in an amiable social setting.

Gender. Not surprisingly, females are more likely to enjoy fashion shopping than are males, supporting *H1b*. However, while the gender effect is statistically significant at $p < 0.01$, again, the magnitude of the effect is moderate. Mean FSP for males is 3.5/5, which is only slightly (0.1) less than mean FSP of 3.6/5 for females. In fact, as seen in Figure 1, the mean FSP of 3.69 for males 16-25 years is higher than mean FSP of females for all other age groups. Hence, other things equal, females should be an important consumer base for fashion shopping. However, males, especially young males, cannot be dismissed as being disinterested in fashion shopping. Advertisers and retailers could also target them.

Furthermore, while the traditional view holds that “men are from Mars and women from Venus (Gray, 1992)”, we did not find differences in their perceived personality characteristics such as being agreeable, open minded, extroverted, or stable (Table IV). The only difference was men thought they were more industrious (efficient, precise, diligent, etc.), reflecting a masculine view. So, the same personality traits – agreeable, open minded, extroverted – can be leveraged when promoting fashion goods to both men and women.

Income. Interestingly, respondent household income did not have a significant main effect on FSP. Thus, *H1c* is not validated. The finding suggests that fashion shopping joy is not the sole prerogative of the rich and wealthy. Even lower income consumers enjoy fashion shopping at their level. This finding is consistent with purchase behaviour in grocery products, where it has been observed that lower income consumers actually prefer national brand grocery products to unbranded or private label goods because buying national brands is an expression of their status and causes them to feel happy about themselves (Sethuraman and Gielens, 2014). Along the same lines, shopping for fashion goods may be an avenue by which not-so-rich consumers pursue a happier lifestyle. Thus, our findings support the theory of the emergence of a new middle class, particularly in developing nations (Kravets and Sandikci, 2014), who may like to use fashion products as a means of upgrading their social status and enhancing their self-concept (Khare and Rakesh, 2010). Fashion marketers should therefore create fashion products in different price tiers in order to evoke a sense of trendiness and coolness across the income spectrum.

Consumer personality and fashion shopping

While demographics explained only about 9 per cent of the variance in FSP, the five personality factors explained five times the variance (46 per cent). This finding indicates that it is not what demographic background you come from that makes you a fashion shopping lover but what personality traits you possess. Our results validated *H2a-H2c*. In fact, all five personality factors we tested have significant effects on FSP.

Agreeable. Being agreeable is positively associated with utility for fashion shopping. All indicators of the construct (cordial, generous, loyal, sincere, unselfish) are also individually significantly positively correlated with FSP (Table I, last column). Being agreeable generally means wanting to please others and be socially connected. Developing an interest in trendy/cool fashion products may be one way of

strengthening social connectivity. Fashion goods marketer can promote fashion shopping through fostering an image of friendship in their advertising and retail billboards as well as leveraging social media for promoting their fashion products.

Extrovert. An extrovert, by definition, is someone who is interested in and excited about things happening around him or her – be it people, events, or goods. Therefore, it is not surprising that an extrovert would derive pleasure from shopping for trendy fashion products. All five measures of extroversion (happy, determined, dynamic, energetic, active) are significantly positively correlated with FSP. Thus, fashion goods marketers can build a lifestyle around extroverted people (watching sports, going to movies, eating at nice restaurants, having fun) in order to advertise and promote fashion shopping.

Industrious. This trait is the only one in our research that is negatively related to FSP. Being industrious implies being efficient, scrupulous, precise, conscientious, and diligent. All these traits are qualities of a hardworking, meticulous person who values a product more for its functionality than the hedonistic pleasure that it provides. Thus, an industrious personality may buy a new laptop or a smart phone for its advanced features but may not care to buy new clothing just because it is trendy. Older people, as well as those in certain occupations may be more industrious and less prone to purchasing fashion goods and hence less attractive for fashion marketing.

Open minded. Like being extroverted, being open minded is naturally linked to being fashion minded, since the underlying foundation for both traits is to be receptive to things that are new and different. It is therefore not surprising to observe a significant positive association between being open minded and being fashion prone. Again, all indicators of open mindedness (sharp, creative, innovative, modern, informed) are positively correlated with FSP. The implication from this finding is that fashion marketers can both evoke dynamism (for extroverted personalities) and curiosity (for open-minded personalities) in their quest to attract buyers to fashion goods.

Stable. A somewhat surprising finding was the positive relationship between stable personalities and fashion shopping. Stable was measured in terms of being optimistic, confident, solid, relaxed, and quiet. We first believed these are virtues of mature and older people that would detract – or at least not attract – them towards fashion shopping, which is considered more emotional, youthful, and fun oriented. However, we found that younger consumers tend to perceive themselves to be more stable, and stable personalities tend to be more prone to fashion shopping. Maybe in this materialistic economy, being stable affords consumers the luxury of engaging in discretionary spending and fashion shopping. Future theoretical research can explore this relationship further. What represents stability in the minds of consumers and how does that stability influence shopping behaviour?

FSP and purchase

Consistent with *H3a* and *H3b*, we find reasonably strong positive relationship between FSP and fashion clothing purchase as well as fashion shopping frequency, thereby affirming that attitude towards fashion shopping leads to potential purchases of fashion goods.

Theoretical implications

The most significant contribution of the present study is the establishment of the linkage between consumer personality and fashion shopping behaviour. The findings

that all personality dimensions have a significant effect on FSP supports the role of personality in consumer buying behaviour (Kermani, 2011; Guido *et al.*, 2011). In addition, our findings augment the work of Casidy (2012) who found different personality clusters to have different fashion orientation. The differential effect of the personality dimensions hint at the possibility of this orientation to affect FSP. This also necessitates the role of a deeper understanding of consumer personality types in a market for fashion goods, since the same would influence the buying behaviour. This need is previously highlighted in literature as well (Hines and Bruce, 2007; Khare and Rakesh, 2010).

Interesting insights could be derived from the individual effects of personality dimensions on FSP. The positive and significant effect of extroversion and open mindedness support the fun and novelty effect of fashion shopping (Vieira, 2009; Khare *et al.*, 2012). Likewise, the positive effect of agreeableness and stability support the argument that fashion shopping is a mode of relaxation and recreation (Goldsmith *et al.*, 1999).

The effect of demographics on FSP was interesting and had mixed results. The non-significant role of income contradicts the traditional view that relatively richer people would be more prone to fashion shopping (Maden *et al.*, 2015). However, our findings support the theory of the emergence of a new middle class, particularly in developing nations (Kravets and Sandikci, 2014), who may like to use fashion products as a means of upgrading their social status and enhancing their self-concept (Khare and Rakesh, 2010). For both the age and the gender variables we found significant differences to occur between young and older audience and between male and female buyers thereby supporting existing literature (Gao *et al.*, 2009b; Hansen and Jensen, 2009; Runyan *et al.*, 2013, Miller and Mills, 2012). However, at the statistical level, the effect size of age on FSP was not very high, thereby indicating that even elderly audience may enjoy fashion shopping.

In addition, the findings of a significant effect of FSP on fashion clothing purchase, and purchase frequency implies that FSP could act as a mediator between demographics, personality, and buying behaviour. Interestingly, the effect of consumer demographics and psychographics have been rarely connected (and tested) to behaviour (Kang and Park-Poaps, 2010) wherein our study makes a contribution.

To summarize the theoretical contributions, the study for the first time integrates both consumers' demographic and psychographic profiles and provides number of important insights about how it influences their fashion consumption decision. This relationship is conceptually interesting and intriguing as it bridges the three very important aspects of consumer behaviour (i.e. personality, demographic profile, and fashion buying proneness) which are related to each other but rarely intermingled. Thereby, the study adds to the literature of fashion retailing by personality aspect of shopping patronage.

Managerial implications

In the present study, we investigated the demographic and personality antecedents of FSP in the Indian marketplace. In particular, we considered the influence of three common demographic variables (age, gender, and income) and five personality factors (agreeable, extroverted, industrious, open minded, and stable) on FSP. Our results validate earlier findings while also providing additional insights. The major managerial implications derived from our study are summarized below.

The traditional view that younger consumers are more prone to fashion shopping is validated. The youth segment can be a primary target segment for fashion goods

marketers in the Indian and global markets. These young consumers perceive themselves to be more agreeable, extroverted, and open minded – personality factors that are conducive for fashion shopping. Marketers should evoke these personality traits when promoting fashion goods to the youth market.

The traditional view that females are more fashion shopping prone than males also holds in the Indian market. Marketers can target females as a primary segment. However, male consumers also appear to be fashion shopping prone. In fact, younger males are more fashion shopping prone than older females. These findings suggest that, other things equal, marketers may want to target young females followed by young males.

Surprisingly, income is not a significant determinant of FSP. This suggests that fashion shopping is an avenue for all income groups to express themselves or exhibit their social status. Hence, there is potential for marketers to offer fashion products at different price tiers across the income spectrum.

Personality characteristics were found to be more important predictors of FSP than demographics. Thus, managers should therefore focus on personality-driven marketing than demographics-driven marketing for promoting fashion goods.

The positive and significant effect of extroversion and open mindedness support the fun and novelty effect of fashion shopping. Likewise, the positive effect of agreeableness and stability support the argument that fashion shopping is a mode of relaxation and recreation. Hence, novelty, fun, relaxation, and recreation may be “hot buttons” that marketers can use to promote fashion shopping, especially among youth.

Conclusion

In this research, we study the effect of select demographic and personality characteristics on consumers' propensity to shop for fashion goods (FSP) in the context of Indian market. We believe this is the first study to jointly consider demographic and personality variables and their relationships with attitude towards fashion shopping. We adopt advanced Bayesian structural equation modelling technique to estimate the path coefficients and assess the strength of the relationships among these variables. Thus we make dual contribution of both adding to our general understanding of the consumer as it pertains to fashion shopping as well as gain insights into the large and growing Indian fashion goods market. Our results offer several insights and implications for managerial practice and theoretical advancement.

Our study has some limitations, which qualify our findings and provide directions for future research, in addition to the ones listed above. First, the findings are based on a survey of self-reported measures. Future research can use personality tests to measure these traits and use actual behavioural measures of fashion shopping.

Second, we investigated only three demographic and five personality factors. There may be other demographic variables such as race, occupation, and geography, and other personality traits such as social, sophisticated, or spontaneous that may influence fashion shopping. In addition, theoretical research could also shed light on the evolution of personality characteristics with age. Are being open minded, extroverted, and agreeable characteristics of the present millennial generation that will persist even when they get older? Or, as people mature, do they become more realistic and opinionated, hence less agreeable and open minded?

Third, both young and old consumers, especially females are fashion shopping prone but may have distinct motivations. Future theoretical research should try to understand if the needs for fashion shopping are different between the young and the

old, and if so what the distinct motivations are so that marketers can adopt suitable strategies to target these segments.

Fourth and last, FSP seems to pervade across income groups. Future research can identify the reasons for this finding and how low-income and high-income groups exhibit their FSP. To summarize, given the scope of the study, we feel that it has a novel contribution for academia and practice and enough triggers for future research.

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