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CONTRIBUTIONS TO BOOKS

- Sharma T., Kwatra, G. (2008) Effectiveness of Social Advertising: A Study of Selected Campaigns, Corporate Social Responsibility, Edited by David Crowther & Nicholas Capaldi, Ashgate Research Companion to Corporate Social Responsibility, Chapter 15, pp 287-303.

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PERCEPTION, EXPECTATION AND SATISFACTION OF CONSUMERS OF STORE BRAND APPARELS IN CHENNAI CITY

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ABSTRACT
The foregoing analysis indicates that more than one third of consumers belong to the middle age group and nearly two third of them are married. About of half of the consumers are graduates and majority of consumers belong to middle income group. The results show that more than half of the consumers are employed in private sector and nearly two third of them visit the apparel store once in a month. The perception of consumers of apparel store brands show that both price and convenience are strongly agreed, while price offs, size and dressing sense are disagreed by them. The consumers are neutral with colour, design, discounts and attractiveness with apparel brands. The results indicate that value for money, durability, fashion, price and quality are strongly agreed by consumers as they expect from apparel brands. The satisfaction levels for value for money, friends and colleague impression, price, fashion, family impression and return policy are agreed by the consumers while, satisfaction levels for discount and stiching are disagreed by them. The gap between perception and expectation in key features of price, quality, discount and design are totally disagreed by the consumers of apparel brands. The gap between perception and satisfaction in terms of price, quality, discount and design are totally disagreed by the consumers of apparel brands while the gap between expectation and satisfaction in price, quality and design are totally disagreed but discount is disagreed by the consumers of apparel brands. The correlation between perception and expectation and perception and satisfaction is moderately and positively associated with each other at one per cent level of significance. But, the expectation and satisfaction are also positively and weekly associated with each other at one per cent level of significance. Therefore, it is suggested that styling should be specific and sensitive to the large-size male consumer taking into account fashion ability and uniqueness. Sales assistants should be familiar with consumer needs and show empathy. Quite a number of specific requests are such as spaciousness; enough fitting rooms that are comfortable and have sufficient lighting and mirrors; attractiveness of store portal and availability of enough purchase points. Retailers should send brochures and other promotional materials to customers together with their account. The use of magazines, newspapers and radio for promotion should be intensified. Merchandise should be easy to return, refund or credit options are important as well as a service to make garment adjustments. The store should build a personal relationship with customers through personal contact and feedback from customers.

KEYWORDS
Correlation, Expectation, Perception, Satisfaction, Store Brand Apparels.

INTRODUCTION
Store brands, also called private labels, are products that are developed by a retailer and are available for sale only through retailer (Baltas, 1997). Store brands which were first introduced over 100 years ago in few product categories, had seen an impressive growth in past few decades (Tarzijan, 2004). Store brands proliferated in a number of product categories and garnered major market share as retailers perceived numerous benefits by their introduction. Apart from providing higher retail margins in comparison to national brands, store brands added diversity to the product line in a retail category. Added benefits accrued to the retailer in terms of differentiating its offerings from competing retailers as well as having greater leverage with manufacturers of national brands (Ashley, 1998). The brand names of such products are owned by the retailer. There are basically two requirements for a store brand or a private label. First of all, it must be a unit package. Secondly, the unit pack must distinctly bear only the brand name of the store or any other party with whom the store has initiated its store brand programme (Raju *et al.,* 1995).

If properly positioned, store brands can contribute handsomely to the sales revenue of a store. Store brands have been found to increase category profitability, negotiation power of the retailer and consumer loyalty. There are various routes available to a retailer for ensuring business sustainability. Apart from creating strong differentiation in terms of merchandise range and quality, improving the supply chain and price competition, a retailer can achieve sustainability by developing store brands that are in sync with customer needs and wants. Currently, organized retail in India is estimated to have only four per cent share. In the total retail market, it is expected to grow at 25-30 per cent in coming years. Thus, with the growth of organized retail in India, the store brands are also expected to grow as experienced in other developed countries. The growth of store brands in India presents an interesting opportunity for the retailer to understand the motivations of consumers behind choice of store brands.

The store brand boom is not just restricted to the mature markets, but is also seen in emerging markets like India. Retail chains across the Indian sub-continent have developed store brands to bridge the gaps in their product mix and are increasingly using store brands for catering to regional tastes and preferences. In India, store brands presently contribute to a turnover of Rs. 800 crore. Various retail entities have launched their store brands in the recent past and most of them have been either from the food or apparel industry. Store brands who were once completely unknown are fast gaining popularity and are now able to compete with known global brands. The range of store brands varies from apparel to health and beauty and furnishings and customers are most willing to test out new and unknown brands. In-store brands account for about five per cent of the total organized retail market, so the potential for growth is still enormous. With this back ground, the present study was attempted to examine the perception, expectation and satisfaction of consumers of store brand apparels in Chennai city.

METHODOLOGY
Men's apparel market is 46 percent of the total apparel market in India. Preference for readymade garments is increasing and this has become inevitable with the rise in urbanization. The preference for the branded Western and Indo-western apparels among the working women is on the rise, which is a welcome relief for the manufacturer and retailers of branded apparel. India's Gen Y is increasingly being exposed to Western culture through films and cable television. A large,

young working population, growing numbers of working men and emerging opportunities in the services sector are all boosting the average spending of affluent consumers on branded clothing.

The organized retailing in Chennai is still in a stage of evolution and retailers need to understand the value of retail as a brand rather than remaining as retailers selling brands. However, the characteristics of the branding process, which are of interest to the retailers, are still the characteristics of the traditional product brands-they are simply extended to the intangible part of the business. Thus, the characteristics of a branded product are simply applied in a different space.

Since, Chennai is not a saturated market, and with an expected growth of 10-12 per cent over the next 10 years. Chennai is under-branded and under penetrated in many categories of apparels. Clearly, Chennai market has scope for more brands and all brands can co exist. Hence, among the four major metropolises in India, the Chennai city has been purposively selected followed by retail stores and consumers for the present study. The data and information have been collected from 500 consumers of store brand apparels by adopting multi stage random sampling technique through pre-tested, structured interview schedule through direct interview method pertains to the year 2009-2010.

In order to understand the general characteristics of consumers of store brand apparels, the frequency distribution and percentage analysis are carried out and the levels of perception, expectation and satisfaction are calculated by weighted mean. The difference between perception, expectation and satisfaction of store brand apparels is analyzed by employing t-test and the relationship between perception, expectation and satisfaction of store brand apparels is analyzed by computing correlation coefficients.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF CONSUMERS OF STORE BRAND APPARELS

The general characteristics of consumers of store brand apparels were analyzed and the results are presented in **Table 1.** The results show that about 34.40 per cent of consumers belong to the age group of 26-30 years followed by less than 25 years (29.00 per cent), 31-35 years (19.40 per cent) and more than 35 years (17.20 per cent). The results indicate that about 63.20 per cent of consumers are married, while, the rest of 36.80 per cent are unmarried. From the table, it is clear that about 51.80 per cent of consumers are graduates followed by post graduates (43.20 per cent) and school education (5.00 per cent) and about 43.60 per cent of consumers belong to the income group of 3.1-4 lakh followed by 4.1.-5 lakh (34.40 per cent), 2-3 lakh(11.40 per cent) and more than five lakh (10.60 per cent).

TABLE-1: GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF CONSUMERS OF STORE BRAND APPARELS

Variables with Category	Respondents(N=500)		Variables with Category	Respondents(N=500)	
	Number	Per Cent		Number	Per Cent
Age			**Annual Income (Rs in Lakh)**		
<25	145	29.00	2.0-3.0	57	11.40
26-30	172	34.40	3.1.-4.0	218	43.60
31-35	97	19.40	4.1.-5.0	172	34.40
>35	86	17.20	>5.00	53	10.60
Marital Status			**Nature of Employment**		
Married	316	63.20	Private	276	55.20
Unmarried	184	36.80	Professional	166	33.20
			Government	58	11.60
Educational Qualifications			**Frequency of Visit**		
School	25	5.00	Once in a Month	317	63.40
Graduation	259	51.80	Every Two Month	164	32.80
Post Graduation	216	43.20	Occasional	19	3.80

Source: Primary & Computed Data

The results indicate that about 55.20 per cent of consumers are employed in private sector followed by professionals (33.20 per cent) and Government (11.60 per cent) and about 63.40 per cent of consumers visit the apparel store once in a month followed by every two months(32.80 per cent) and occasional(3.80 per cent).

PERCEPTION OF CONSUMERS ON STORE BRAND APPARELS

The perception of consumers on store brand apparels was analyzed by calculating weighted mean score and the results are presented in **Table 2**. The results show that both price and convenience are strongly agreed while price offs, size and dressing sense are disagreed by the consumers as perceived. The consumers are neutral with colour, design, discounts and attractiveness with apparel brands. The expression, preference, confident, suitability, image, accessories, customer service, ambience, ease, quality and professionalism are agreed by them.

TABLE- 2: PERCEPTION OF CONSUMERS ON STORE BRANDS APPARELS

Perception	Weighted Mean Score	Status
Price	4.73	Strongly Agree
Convenience	4.69	Strongly Agree
Expression	4.44	Agree
Preference	4.31	Agree
Confident	4.10	Agree
Suitability	4.09	Agree
Image	4.00	Agree
Accessories	3.96	Agree
Customer Service	3.94	Agree
Ambience	3.93	Agree
Ease	3.61	Agree
Quality	3.59	Agree
Professionalism	3.49	Agree
Colour	3.35	Neutral
Design	3.26	Neutral
Discounts	2.99	Neutral
Attractiveness	2.95	Neutral
Price Offs	2.23	Disagree
Size	2.20	Disagree
Dressing Sense	2.18	Disagree

Source: Primary & Computed Data

EXPECTATION OF CONSUMERS ON STORE BRAND APPARELS

The expectation of consumers on store brand apparels was analyzed by calculating weighted mean score and the results are presented in **Table 3.** The results indicate that value for money, durability, fashion, price and quality are strongly agreed by consumers as they expect from apparel brands. Besides, friends and colleague impression, family impression, discount, stiching, design and return policy are agreed by them as their expectations.

TABLE- 3: EXPECTATION OF CONSUMERS ON STORE BRANDS APPARELS

Expectation	Weighted Mean Score	Status
Value for Money	4.77	Strongly Agree
Durability	4.61	Strongly Agree
Fashion	4.58	Strongly Agree
Price	4.56	Strongly Agree
Quality	4.56	Strongly Agree
Friends and Colleague Impression	4.04	Agree
Family Impression	4.00	Agree
Discount	3.85	Agree
Stiching	3.85	Agree
Design	3.85	Agree
Return Policy	3.80	Agree

Source: Primary & Computed Data

SATISFACTION OF CONSUMERS ON STORE BRAND APPARELS

The satisfaction of consumers on store brand apparels was analyzed by calculating weighted mean score and the results are presented in **Table 4.** From the table, it is clear that the satisfaction levels for value for money, friends and colleague impression, price, fashion, family impression and return policy are agreed by the consumers while, satisfaction levels for discount and stiching are disagreed by them. The satisfaction levels are neutral with quality, durability and design as experienced by the consumers.

TABLE- 4: SATISFACTION OF CONSUMERS ON STORE BRANDS APPARELS

Satisfaction	Weighted Mean Score	Status
Value for Money	4.43	Agree
Friends and Colleague Impression	4.21	Agree
Price	4.16	Agree
Fashion	4.03	Agree
Family Impression	4.02	Agree
Return Policy	3.83	Agree
Quality	3.23	Neutral
Durability	3.16	Neutral
Design	2.97	Neutral
Discount	2.22	Disagree
Stiching	2.00	Disagree

Source: Primary & Computed Data

GAP BETWEEN PERCEPTION, EXPECTATION AND SATISFACTION OF KEY FEATURES OF APPAREL BRANDS

The gap between perception, expectation and satisfaction of key features of store brand apparels was analyzed and the results are presented in **Table 5**. The results show that the gap between perception and expectation in key features of price, quality, discount and design are totally disagreed by the consumers of apparel brands. The gap between perception and satisfaction in terms of price, quality, discount and design are totally disagreed by the consumers of apparel brands while the gap between expectation and satisfaction in price, quality and design are totally disagreed but discount is disagreed by the consumers of apparel brands.

TABLE- 5: GAP BETWEEN PERCEPTION, EXPECTATION AND SATISFACTION OF KEY FEATURES OF STORE BRANDS APPARELS

Features	P-E		P-S		E- S	
	Weighted Mean	Status	Weighted Mean	Status	Weighted Mean	Status
Price	0.17	Totally Disagree	0.57	Totally Disagree	0.40	Totally Disagree
Quality	0.97	Totally Disagree	0.36	Totally Disagree	1.33	Totally Disagree
Discount	0.86	Totally Disagree	0.77	Totally Disagree	1.63	Disagree
Design	0.59	Totally Disagree	0.29	Totally Disagree	0.88	Totally Disagree

Source: Primary & Computed Data

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PERCEPTION, EXPECTATION AND SATISFACTION OF STORE BRANDS APPARELS

The difference between perception, expectation and satisfaction of store brand apparels was analyzed by employing t-test and the results are presented in **Table 6.** The results show that the t-value for perception-expectation is 131.666 which is significant at one per cent level of significance. Hence, there is a significant difference exiting between perception and expectations of consumers on apparel brands. The t-value for perception-satisfaction is 180.524 significant at one per cent level of significance. It indicates there is a significant difference between perception and satisfaction among consumers. The results also indicate that t-value for expectation-satisfaction is 56.252 significant at one per cent level of significance. Therefore, there is a significant difference between expectation and satisfaction among consumers about apparel brands.

TABLE-6: DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PERCEPTION, EXPECTATION AND SATISFACTION OF STORE BRANDS APPARELS

	t-Value	df	Sig
Perception-Expectation	131.666**	998	0.01
Perception-Satisfaction	180.524**	998	0.01
Expectation-Satisfaction	56.252**	998	0.01

Source: Primary & Computed Data

*Note: ** indicates significant at one per cent level.*

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERCEPTION, EXPECTATION AND SATISFACTION OF STORE BRANDS APPARELS

The relationship between perception, expectation and satisfaction of store brand apparels was analyzed by computing correlation coefficients and the results are presented in **Table 7**. From the results, it is apparent that the correlation co-efficient between perception and expectation is 0.27, which is moderately and positively associated with each other at one per cent level of significance. The perception and satisfaction is also moderately and positively correlated with each other with the value of 0.25, significant at one per cent level of significance. Besides, the relationship between expectation and satisfaction show that both are also positively and weekly associated with each other with the value of 0.15 which is significant at one per cent level of significance.

TABLE -7: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERCEPTION, EXPECTATION AND SATISFACTION OF STORE BRANDS APPARELS

	Perception	Expectation	Satisfaction
Perception	**1.00**		
Expectation	0.27**	**1.00**	
Satisfaction	0.25**	0.15**	**1.00**

Source: Primary & Computed Data

*Note: ** indicates significant at one per cent level*

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The foregoing analysis indicates that more than one third of consumers belong to the middle age group and nearly two third of them are married. About of half of the consumers are graduates and majority of consumers belong to middle income group. The results show that more than half of the consumers are employed in private sector and nearly two third of them visit the apparel store once in a month.

The perception of consumers of apparel store brands show that both price and convenience are strongly agreed, while price offs, size and dressing sense are disagreed by them. The consumers are neutral with colour, design, discounts and attractiveness with apparel brands. The results indicate that value for money, durability, fashion, price and quality are strongly agreed by consumers as they expect from apparel brands. The satisfaction levels for value for money, friends and colleague impression, price, fashion, family impression and return policy are agreed by the consumers while, satisfaction levels for discount and stiching are disagreed by them.

The gap between perception and expectation in key features of price, quality, discount and design are totally disagreed by the consumers of apparel brands. The gap between perception and satisfaction in terms of price, quality, discount and design are totally disagreed by the consumers of apparel brands while the gap between expectation and satisfaction in price, quality and design are totally disagreed but discount is disagreed by the consumers of apparel brands. The correlation between perception and expectation and perception and satisfaction is moderately and positively associated with each other at one per cent level of significance. But, the expectation and satisfaction are also positively and weekly associated with each other at one per cent level of significance.

Therefore, it is suggested that styling should be specific and sensitive to the large-size male consumer taking into account fashion ability and uniqueness. Sales assistants should be familiar with consumer needs and show empathy. Quite a number of specific requests are such as spaciousness; enough fitting rooms that are comfortable and have sufficient lighting and mirrors; attractiveness of store portal and availability of enough purchase points. Retailers should send brochures and other promotional materials to customers together with their account. The use of magazines, newspapers and radio for promotion should be intensified. Merchandise should be easy to return, refund or credit options are important as well as a service to make garment adjustments. The store should build a personal relationship with customers through personal contact and feedback from customers. To remain competitive, apparel stores must continue low pricing and weekly sale advertisements. In addition, stores must continue to promote their store labels and brands as well as focus on small niche markets. Without a combination of low price and high quality, store brands will not succeed. Low price store brands end up eliminating price competition, which intensifies consumer price sensitivity, satisfaction and loyalty.

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