

Evaluating the Impact of Color on Customer Buying Behaviour: A Case of Apparel Products with Evidence from Sri Lanka

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Abstract

This study evaluates the influence of color on customer buying behavior in Sri Lanka's apparel industry, focusing specifically on local consumers in the Western Province. While the industry contributes over 52% of national export earnings and maintains global competitiveness, the research scope is limited to local apparel consumers,—regardless of whether product's origin. The problem addressed is the underutilization of color psychology as a strategic tool in apparel marketing and design, despite its proven impact on consumer perceptions globally. The research intended to evaluate the impact of color on purchasing decisions, specifically concerning product type, packaging, perceived quality, cultural significance, and therapeutic effects. A quantitative research design was employed,—utilizing a structured questionnaire distributed to a sample of 385 apparel consumers aged between 18 and 64, who were chosen through a process of simple random sampling. The theoretical framework included five independent variables and one dependent variable, with hypotheses being examined through correlation and regression analyses. Results indicated that all five hypotheses were accepted, validating the existence of significant positive relationships between every color-related dimension and customer purchasing behavior. The findings suggest that color directly influences consumer attitudes, brand attractiveness, and loyalty, where rural and older consumer segments still had strong affinity for culturally established colors. This research adds to the existing knowledge by placing color psychology in the perspective of the apparel market and providing empirical insights into its impact on consumer buying behavior. In addition, it offers actionable suggestions to local clothing manufacturers, marketers, and retailers to integrate color strategies in product development, branding, and promotional campaigns, ensuring harmony between cultural values and modern consumer expectations. Future research should broaden the geographical scope, incorporate cross-cultural comparisons, and study the influence of color in online retailing contexts, combining quantitative methods with qualitative techniques to provide even deeper insights.

Keywords: apparel industry, color psychology, customer buying behavior, perception of color