

## INTRODUCTION

With rapid technological advancement and growth of various online resources, e-commerce provides ample marketing opportunities to firms, which is evident from the incremental interest of young generation in online purchases. Further, it has impressed many retailers to sell products and services through online channel to expand their market. E-commerce or online shopping generally utilizes the technological resources vis-à-vis the Internet, smartphones or tablets, which enhances the firm's marketing performances manifold. Retailers are also modifying/integrating their strategies to meet the demands of customers as well as to overcome the stiff competition. This change in the external environment has also provided researchers a new domain of study in consumer behavior where efforts are made to highlight the consumer attitude, satisfaction, preference and the motivating factors for online purchases, etc.

Online shopping is a form of electronic commerce which allows consumers to directly buy goods or services from a seller over the Internet using a web browser. Various other terminologies related to online shopping may include virtual stores or web stores or online stores. Nowadays, retailers generally provide these online services through mobile apps or optimized web pages exclusively for smartphone user which is known as mobile commerce (m-commerce). This mobile commerce has gained a lot of momentum these days.

Virtual stores/shops are generally analogous to physical purchase made at a brick and-mortar format of retail store, and hence, the process could be rightly termed as Business-to-Consumer (B2C) online shopping in case of individual consumer. However if the end-users/consumers are large businesses it can be termed as Business-to-Business (B2B) online shopping.

Online shopping is not a new concept as it appears to be, however, one may be surprised to know that it was invented way back in 1979 by an English entrepreneur named Michael Aldrich. He created a system which when connected to modified TV was able to do real-time processing via household telephone. He named it as Veditex (modified domestic TV technology) and believed it to be a simple menu-driven human-computer interface, was a 'new', universally applicable, participative communication medium after the invention of the telephone. This system was enabled as closed information systems for corporates on one hand, for outside correspondence, it acted as open system capable of transaction processing as well as information retrieval and dissemination, which was later on known as e-business. He described this new mass communications medium as participative and entirely different from the traditional ones 25 years later, it emerged as a precursor to the social networking through the Internet.

Consumers are increasingly adopting electronic channels for purchasing their daily products. Recent years have shown a growing interest of customers in e-shopping. The globalization of competition and development of information technology have enhanced customer awareness and created a situation where people prefer shopping online as it provides quality products as well as saves time in contrast to traditional/offline shopping. These drastic changes that has

been foreseen in the field of e-shopping and the customers preference towards e-shopping motivated the author to conduct a study on customer preference and satisfaction for the purchases made through online mode especially in the apparels segment.

## **CUSTOMER**

A customer is a person or business that buys goods or services from another business. Customers are crucial because they generate revenue. Without them, businesses would go out of business.

According, to Kotler, **A customer as a certain or party who pays a fee for a product or service to fulfill his his or her needs.**

## **CUSTOMER PREFERENCE**

Customer preference refers to the specific choices, tastes, and desires of consumers when it comes to products, services, or experiences. Understanding customer preferences is crucial for businesses to tailor their offerings to meet the needs and expectations of their target audience effectively. This can involve factors such as price sensitivity, quality, brand loyalty, convenience, and personalization. Analyzing and adapting to customer preferences can help businesses improve customer satisfaction, loyalty, and ultimately, drive growth and profitability.

## **CUSTOMER SATISFACTION**

Customer satisfaction refers to the extent to which customers are pleased with the products, services, or experiences provided by a business. It is a measure of how well a company meets or exceeds customer expectations. High levels of customer satisfaction typically lead to repeat purchases, positive word-of-mouth recommendations, and loyalty to the brand. Factors that contribute to customer satisfaction include product quality, price, customer service, convenience, and overall experience. Businesses often use surveys, feedback mechanisms, and other tools to assess and improve customer satisfaction levels. Achieving and maintaining high levels of customer satisfaction is essential for long-term success and competitiveness in the market.

## **SHOPPING**

Shopping is the process of browsing, selecting, and purchasing goods or services from retailers or vendors. It involves various activities such as comparing prices, evaluating product features, and making decisions based on personal preferences, needs, and budget constraints. It includes offline and online shopping :

**Offline Shopping** – Offline shopping is a traditional way of purchasing services or products by directly visiting to the store/shop/ or vendor. It involves visiting stores in person, browsing through products displayed on shelves or racks, interacting with sales representatives, and making purchases at the point of sale counters.

**Online Shopping** – Online shopping refers to the process of purchasing goods or services over the internet through websites or mobile applications. Consumers find a product of interest by visiting the website of the retailer directly or by searching among alternative vendors using a shopping search engine, which displays the same product's availability and pricing at different e-retailers. Online shopping, is also known as e-commerce

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

According to Kotler and Keller (2009), a buyer goes through five stages while making a decision to purchase. These stages are "problem recognition, information search, and evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and purchase behavior".

Kotler (2000) defined satisfaction as "a person's feeling of pleasure or disappointment resulting from comparing a product's perceived performance (or outcome) in relation to his or her expectations"

Hover and MacInnis (2001) stated that satisfaction can be associated with feelings of acceptance, happiness, relief, excitement, and delight. There are many factors that affect customer satisfaction.

According to Hansemark and Albinsson (2004), "satisfaction is an overall customer attitude towards a service provider, or an emotional reaction to the difference between what customers anticipate and what they receive, regarding the fulfillment of some need, goal or desire".

Demangeot and Broderick (2007) reported that "information search experiences affect the attitudes towards the site and its brands".

Christian and France (2005) identified several factors responsible for customer satisfaction in case of online purchases, few of them are privacy (Technology factor), Merchandizing (Product factor), and convenience (Shopping factor); also followed by trust, delivery, usability, product customization, product quality and security. Surprisingly, security was chosen as the last choice compared to others. It was assumed that security is perceived as a standard attribute in any website so other attributes take priority once customers have to choose the site to shop from.

Chang et al (2005) studied categorization of variables which drive online shopping activity. According to their study, features are divided into three main categories. First is the perceived characteristics of the web sale channel which include risk, advantage, online shopping experience, service quality, trust; second category is website and product characteristics which are risk reduction measures, website features and product characteristics, and the last category is consumer characteristics. Consumer characteristics are driven by various types of features. Consumer shopping orientations, demographic variables, computer, Internet Knowledge and usage, consumer innovativeness and psychological variables.

## **OBJECTIVE**

This study focuses on the following objectives:

- To find the percentage of people using e-commerce websites for purchasing apparels and the most preferred website.
- To study or identify the top five reasons for using mobile apps.
- To find out the factors as well as level of satisfaction towards mobile apps for purchase of apparels.
- To study the association between satisfaction level and demographic profiles of respondents, if any.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

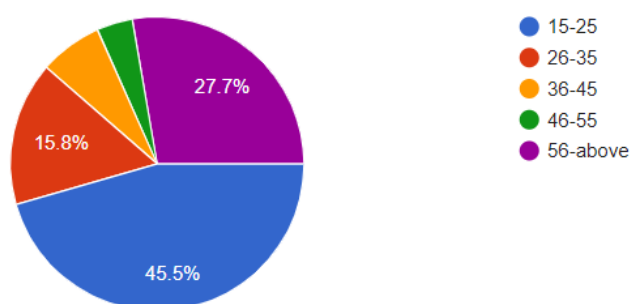
The research is descriptive and exploratory in nature. It is based on primary data and secondary data .The data has been collected through a survey and the data was collected by way of a questionnaire which was taken from the IUP Journal of Marketing (Preference and satisfaction towards online apparel purchase : a customer perspective by DW Kushwaha) , Vol. XIX, No. 2, May 2020 and the same was circulated through a Google form which was filled by 100 respondents. The questionnaire consisted of two parts with the first part consisting of demographic factors and, frequency of online apparel purchase and the second part consisting of factors influencing customer preference and satisfaction towards online apparel purchase. Apart from demographics, all the questions were framed based on Likert scale. The sampling method adopted was convenience.

## DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

### Age

101 responses

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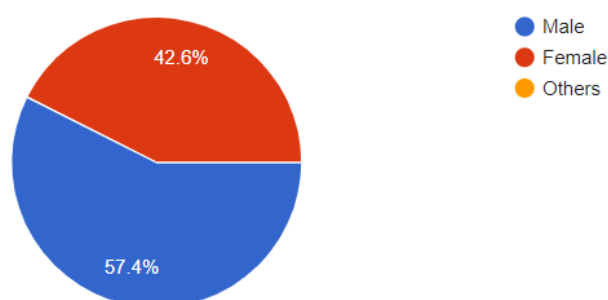


**INTERPRETATION** – 45.5% of the respondents belong to the 15-25 age group while 27.7% of the respondents belong to the 56-above age group followed by 15.8% of the respondents belonging to 26-35 age group.

### Gender

101 responses

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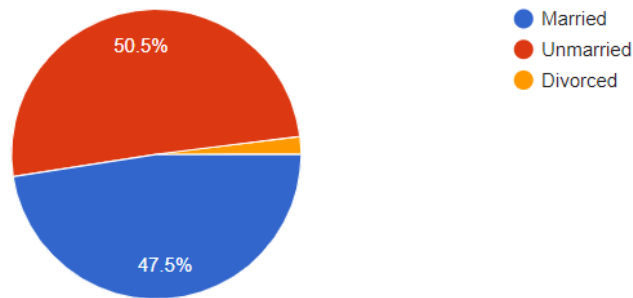


**INTERPRETATION** – 57.4% of the respondents are male while 42.6% of the respondents belong to female category.

### Marital Status

101 responses

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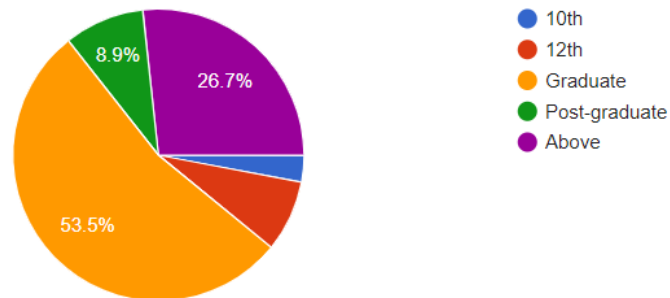


**INTERPRETATION** – 50.5% of the respondents are unmarried while 47.5% of the respondents are married while 2% of the respondents are divorced.

### Education

101 responses

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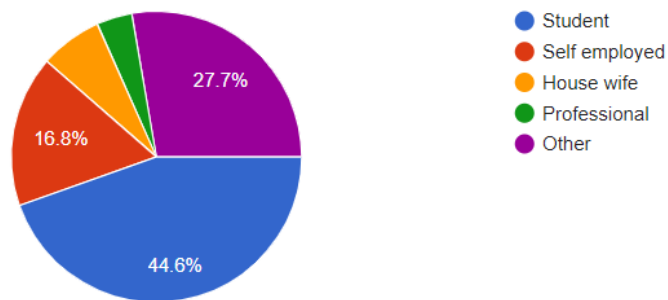
**INTERPRETATION** – 53.5% of the respondents are graduate, 26.7% of the respondents are above post-graduate, 8.9% of the respondents have done post-graduate.



## Occupation

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101 responses



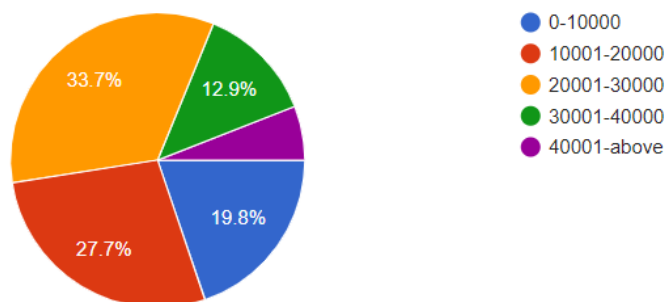
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**INTERPRETATION** – 44.6% of the respondents are students closely followed by 27.7% other occupation people, 16.8% of the respondents are self-employed.

## Annual Income

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101 responses



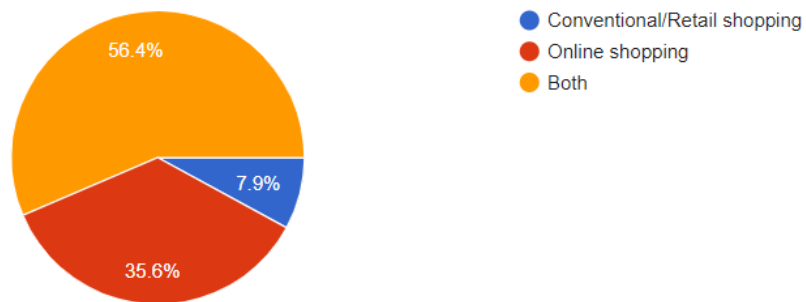
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**INTERPRETATION** – 33.7% of the respondents earn between 20001-30000 annually, 27.7% of the respondents earn between 10001-20000 annually, 19.8% of the respondents earn between 0-10000 annually.

### 1. For buying apparels (clothes), which buying method do you prefer ?

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101 responses

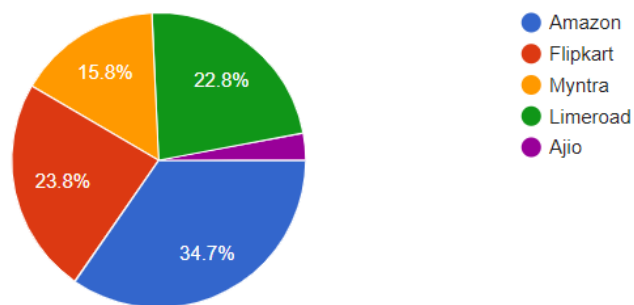


**INTERPRETATION** – 56.4% of the respondents shop both online and conventionally, 35.6% of the respondents shop exclusively online and 7.9% of the respondents shop exclusively through conventional/retail methods.

### 2. Through which website(s) do you prefer to buy apparels most ?

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101 responses

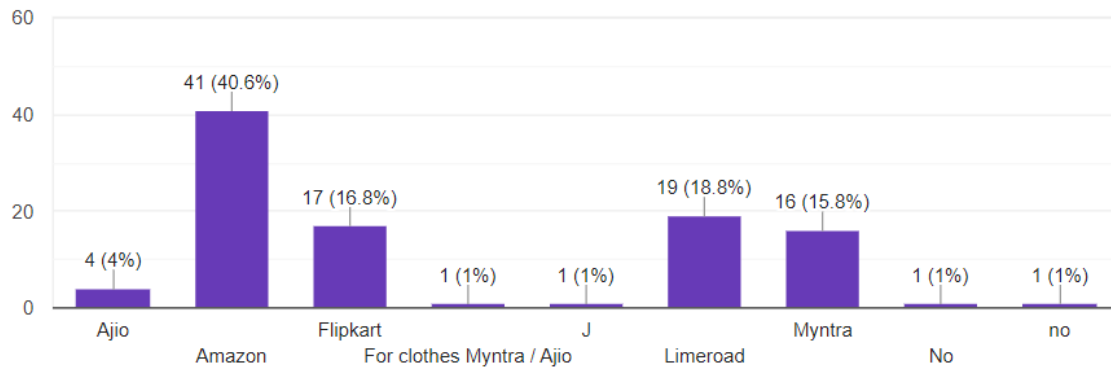


**INTERPRETATION** – 34.7% of the respondents prefer Amazon for apparels, followed by Flipkart at 23.8% and Limeroad at 22.8%.

### 3. Of all the websites mentioned in question 2, which one do you prefer the most ?

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101 responses

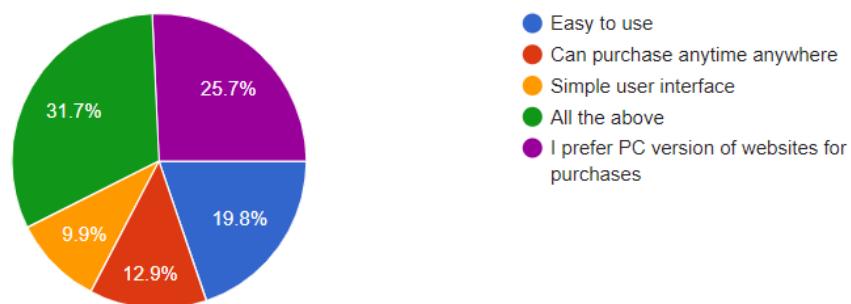


**INTERPRETATION** - 40.6% of the respondents prefer Amazon for apparels followed by Limeroad at 18.8% and Flipkart at 16.8%.

### 4. Do you prefer buying apparels through smartphone apps over the regular desktop websites? If yes, why?

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101 responses

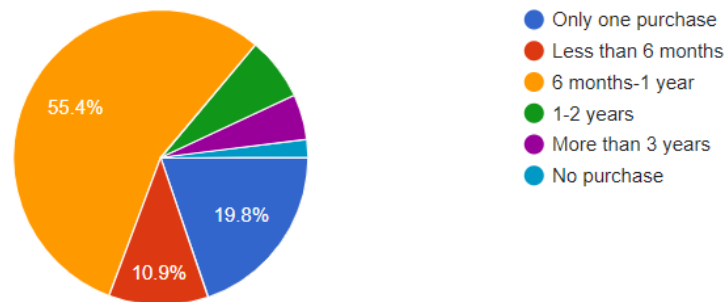


**INTERPRETATION**—31.7% of the respondents prefer a mix of factors, 25.7% of the respondents prefer PC versions and 19.8% of the respondents value ease of use while 12.9% prioritize convenience.

## 5. How long have you been buying apparels through apps ?

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101 responses

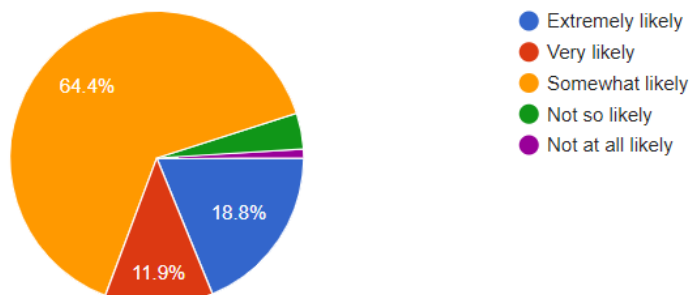


**INTERPRETATION**—55.4% of the respondents make purchases every 6 months to 1 year while 19.8% of the respondents make only one purchase and 10.9% of the respondents purchase less often than every 6 months.

## 6. How likely are you to purchase any of the apparels through apps again ?

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101 responses

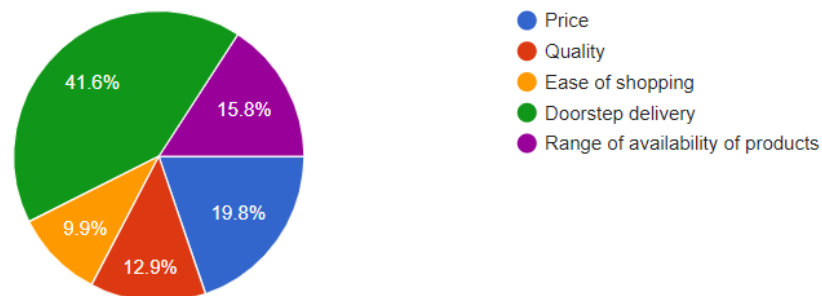


**INTERPRETATION**— 64.4% of the respondents are somewhat likely, 18.8% of the respondents are extremely likely and 11.9% of the respondents are very likely.

### 7. Reasons for purchasing apparels through apps ?

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101 responses

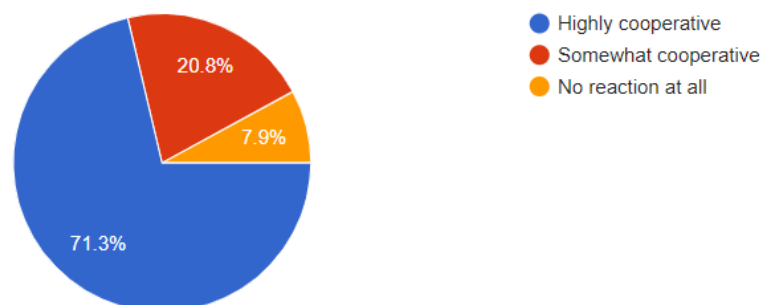


**INTERPRETATION**—According to respondents, doorstep delivery is a priority for 41.6%, price for 19.8% and product range for 15.8%.

### 8. Did you ever have to replace the products bought ? If yes, what was the reaction of the company ?

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101 responses

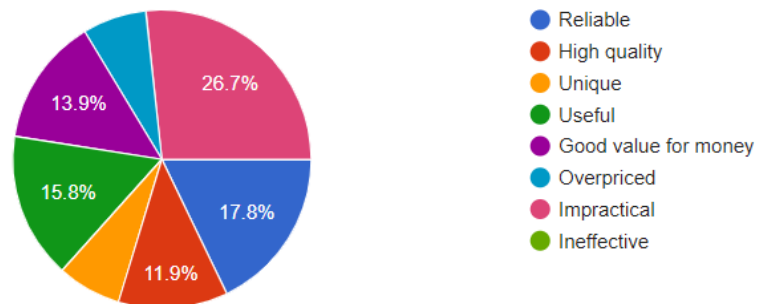


**INTERPRETATION**—According to respondents, 71.3% of companies were highly cooperative and 20.8% were somewhat cooperative.

### 9. Which of the following describes best about the product you buy through apps ?

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101 responses

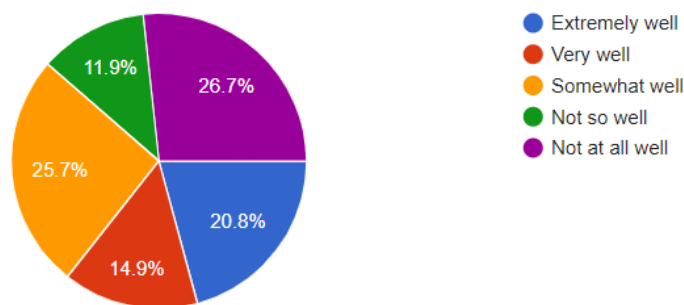


**INTERPRETATION**—According to respondents, 26.7% impractical, 17.8% reliable, 15.8% useful and 13.9% good value for money.

### 10. How well did the products meet your needs ?

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101 responses

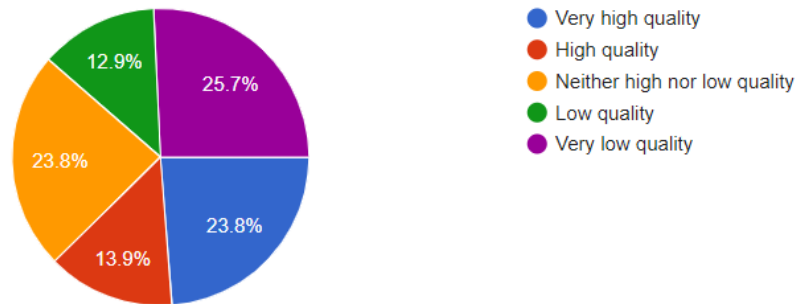


**INTERPRETATION** – 26.7% of the respondents are not at all well, 25.7% of the respondents are somewhat well and 20.8% of the respondents are extremely well.

### 11. How would you rate the quality of the products ?

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101 responses

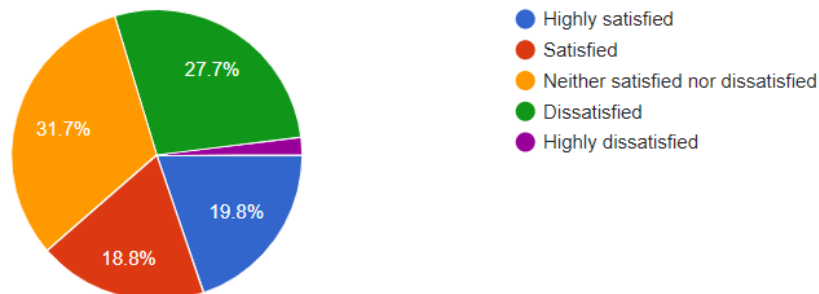


**INTERPRETATION**—25.7% of the respondents rated quality as very low while 23.8% of the respondents rated quality as very high and 23.8% of the respondents rated quality as neither high nor low.

### 12. Overall how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided through apps for apparels ?

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101 responses

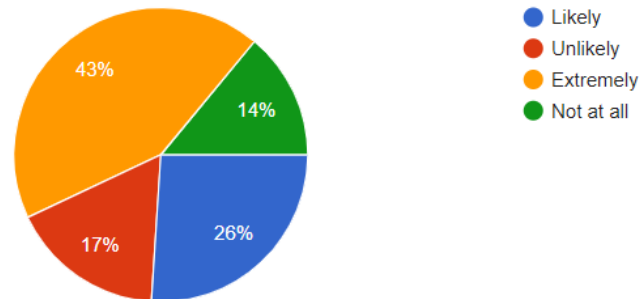


**INTERPRETATION** – 31.7% of the respondents are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 27.7% of the respondents are dissatisfied while 19.8% of the respondents are highly satisfied with the service provided through apps for apparel.

13. How likely it is that you would recommend purchasing apparel through app to a friend or a colleague?

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100 responses



**INTERPRETATION** – 43% of the respondents are extremely likely while 26% of the respondents are likely to recommend purchasing apparel through an app.

14. In your view, what one change should the companies bring in the process ? Any experience, problem or suggestion you would like to share.

18 responses

No
Never
No charge
Product quality
yes

**INTERPRETATION** – 40% of the respondents suggest no change in the shopping process, while 27% of the respondents suggest change in product quality.



## **FINDINGS**

- The respondents use both conventional and online shopping for buying apparels.
- The respondents use amazon for buying apparels.
- The respondents agree with all of the options for buying apparels through smartphone app over the regular desktop websites.
- The respondents have been buying apparels for 6months-1 year.
- The respondents somewhat likely purchase any apparel through app again.
- The respondents use doorstep delivery for purchasing apparels through apps.
- The respondents think that that company is highly cooperative while replacing product.
- The respondents describe the product they buy through app as impractical.
- The respondents say that the products not at all meet their needs.
- The respondents' rate describes quality of the product as very low quality.
- The respondents are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the service provided through app for apparels.
- The respondents are extremely likely to recommend purchasing apparels through app to a friend or a colleague.

## CONCLUSION

The present study focuses on the survey of customer satisfaction towards mobile shopping of apparels through apps. 100 people in the age range of 15-56 years were surveyed. Interestingly, it was found that 15 of them used mobile shopping strictly and the others used both online as well as retail marketing as their mode of shopping for clothes.

It was found that the respondents have been buying apparels through apps since 1-2 years. The most preferred website/app was Amazon which was chosen by 34.7% (n=35) of the respondents.

The ease of shopping and doorstep delivery was the major driving factors behind their choosing the online mode of making purchases.

A majority of the people were satisfied with the services provided by the sellers and would recommend purchasing apparel through app to a friend or a colleague. Almost all of them found them cooperative in case of replacement to be made for the apparel 26% felt that the apparels bought online are impractical. Respondents opined that the products are serving their needs extremely well and the product quality was neither high nor low. However, 31.7% (n=32) of the respondents were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the service provided by the apps for apparels.

## **LIMITATION**

- The time invested in the research is less.
- The amount invested in the research is also less.
- The sample size used for the research is also small.

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## **APPENDIX**

**1. Age (Years)**

- ☐ 15-25
- ☐ 26-35
- ☐ 36-45
- ☐ 46-55
- ☐ 56-above

**2. Gender**

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Others

**3. Marital Status**

- ☐ Married
- ☐ Unmarried
- ☐ Divorced

**4. Education**

- ☐ 10th
- ☐ 12th
- ☐ Graduate
- ☐ Post-graduate
- ☐ Above

**5. Occupation**

- ☐ Student
- ☐ Self employed
- ☐ House wife
- ☐ Professional
- ☐ Other

**6. Annual Income**

- ☐ 0-10000
- ☐ 10001-20000
- ☐ 20001-30000

- 30001-40000
- 40001-above

**7. For buying apparels (clothes), which buying method do you prefer?**

- Conventional/Retail shopping
- Online shopping
- Both

**8. Through which website(s) do you prefer to buy apparels most?**

- Amazon
- Flipkart
- Myntra
- Limeroad
- Other

**9. Of all the websites mentioned in question 2, which one do you prefer the most?**

- \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Do you prefer buying apparels through smartphone apps over the regular desktop websites? If yes, why?**

- Easy to use
- Can purchase anytime anywhere
- Simple user interface
- All the above
- I prefer PC version of websites for purchases
- Other

**11. How long have you been buying apparels through apps?**

- Only one purchase
- Less than 6 months
- 6 months-1 year



- 1-2 years
- More than 3 years
- No purchase

**12.How likely are you to purchase any of the apparels through apps again?**

- Extremely likely
- Very likely
- Somewhat likely
- Not so likely
- Not at all likely

**13.Reasons for purchasing apparels through apps?**

- Price
- Quality
- Ease of shopping
- Doorstep delivery
- Range of availability of products
- Other

**14.Did you ever have to replace the products bought? If yes, what was the reaction of the company?**

- Highly cooperative
- Somewhat cooperative
- No reaction at all

**15.Which of the following describes best about the product you buy through apps?**

- Reliable
- High quality
- Unique
- Useful
- Good value for money
- Overpriced
- Impractical
- Ineffective
- Other

**16.How well did the products meet your needs?**

- ☐ Extremely well
- ☐ Very well
- ☐ Somewhat well
- ☐ Not so well
- ☐ Not at all well

**17.How would you rate the quality of the products?**

- ☐ Very high quality
- ☐ High quality
- ☐ Neither high nor low quality
- ☐ Low quality
- ☐ Very low quality

**18.Overall how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided through apps for apparels?**

- ☐ Highly satisfied
- ☐ Satisfied
- ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- ☐ Dissatisfied
- ☐ Highly dissatisfied

**19. How likely it is that you would recommend purchasing apparel through app to a friend or a colleague?**

- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Extremely
- ☐ Not at all

**20.In your view, what one change should the companies bring in the process? Any experience, problem or suggestion you would like to share.**

- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_





