



180Degrees
CONSULTING
— SGGSCC —

Industry Analysis Report 2021

SUSTAINABLE FASHION

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Problem Statement

Lack of differentiation amongst sustainable apparel brands.

The objective for sustainable fashion is missing. What's ironic is that customers struggle to make sustainable choices and then the term remains vague. People still prefer fast fashion brands as they provide trendy clothing at lower prices, Sustainable Fashion brands lag behind when it comes to changing trends.

Consumers say they have difficulty when it comes to rating which offerings and which brands are truly sustainable. Moreover, once the decision is made, the industry lacks brand differentiation. All the products seem the same and don't differ.

With this report we shall also take into notice that these brands need to be made popular so that their revenue generation increases and they are able to expand their business through different Branding Strategies.

Report Deliverables:

1. Understanding consumer attitudes and perceptions towards sustainable fashion
2. Determine decision making and evaluation criteria
3. Assessing consumer needs, states and gaps
3. Identifying brand awareness and brand image
4. Recommendations for Marketing Mix and Positioning development

Proposed solutions

Our report consists of many branding strategies For the Sustainable Fashion and Thrift stores to help them eliminate the problems such as brand image. For instance, Stella McCartney brand has always been associated with being a Vegetarian Luxury brand, anti-fur and cruelty free, an ethos ingrained in the brand by family association. Veganism and vegetarianism are seen as more eco-friendly agriculture, and cattle farming is the number one reason for rainforest deforestation, which connects to the original brand values. More such Strategies have been listed on how to promote the brand and achieve the milestones.

Value

The second-hand apparel market, valued at \$28 billion (around ₹2 trillion) in June, is forecast to hit \$64 billion within five years, says a report by ThredUP, the world's largest online thrift store, and research firm GlobalData Retail. Which can be a positive sign for the Indian Thrift stores.

The Indian apparel market is estimated to cross \$59 billion in 2022, making it the sixth largest in the world, according to McKinsey's Fashion Scope. However, sustainable fashion is a small contributor to the apparel market.

Our approach

The survey was carried out in India focusing majorly on the Millennials and the GenZ population to discover consumer attitudes, perceptions, their willingness to pay for it and their ideas on possible measures the fashion industry should adopt to promote sustainability towards sustainable fashion. Indians have realized that they can contribute to saving the planet while looking good at the same time. Consumers have stopped hoarding on trendy garments one after another. The strategy here is to go green when it comes to the manufacturing, sale, and recycling of clothes.

Final thoughts

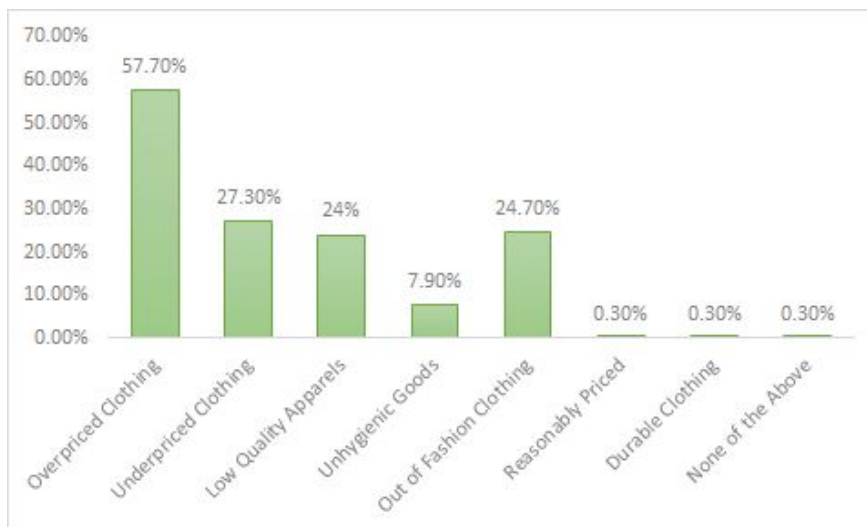
That brings us to the question- Are the Millennials and GenZ of India ready to accept sustainable fashion? Let us dive deep into the answer of this question through the survey which was taken up by 180 Degrees Consulting, SGGSCC to know the current understanding of Sustainable Fashion and its various types amongst the target audience. While the survey provides an interesting overview of the sentiment in the Millennials and GenZ, let us see how it unfolds.

WHAT IS SUSTAINABLE FASHION?

Sustainable fashion can be defined as clothing, shoes and accessories that are manufactured, marketed and used in the most sustainable manner possible, taking into account both environmental and socio-economic aspects. In practice, this implies continuous work to improve all stages of the product's life cycle, from design, raw material production, manufacturing, transport, storage, marketing and final sale, to use, reuse, repair, remake and recycling of the product and its components.

Most people associate the term 'Sustainability' with 'Eco-friendly'. This displays that Sustainability in general may tend to be confused with Sustainability in fashion. In the survey conducted by 180DC SGGSCC to examine the trend towards sustainability in fashion, 71% of respondents believed that sustainable clothing is meant to last longer. A large portion (65%) believed that Sustainable fashion accounts for Recycled fabrics. About 55% of the people thought that sustainable clothing is generally free from chemicals and is sourced organically.

Trends towards sustainability in fashion



We observe that a large portion of the surveyees have slightly erroneous views on what Sustainability in fashion exactly is, in essence, some of them tend to intertwine Eco-friendliness and a Chemical-free procedure while others believe that Sustainable clothing is durable (more than normal). Even though these views aren't 'wrong' per-se, they don't exactly grip the essence of Sustainable Fashion. Sustainable Fashion may or may not be durable, chemical-free, and/or organic.



'Fast Fashion,' refers to clothing that's intentionally designed to be consumed quickly at cheap prices, leading shoppers to view clothes as being disposable - wearing them just a few times before throwing them out or moving on to newer and trendier cost-effective clothes.

The word sustainable is defined as *“capable of being sustained.”* Therefore, a sustainable fashion industry is one that must **operate in ways that can continue working for years and years to come.**

Unfortunately, this does not hold true for today’s dominant ‘fast fashion’. The fast fashion cycle is far from sustainable, because it depletes the Earth’s natural resources at exponential rates, exploits workers around the world, and results in an overwhelming amount of waste generation.

In contrast to traditional fashion houses that only have a few seasonal collections per year, fast fashion brands may churn out as many as one new collection per week (or more) in efforts to drive continuous, mindless consumption.

SUSTAINABLE FASHION IN INDIA

Circularity and reusing fashion have sought great popularity on the global front in the last five years. But this concept has existed in India for ages now. It has been an age-old tradition for Indians to wear pre-used clothes and hand-me-down clothes from their elder siblings or relatives. A garment bought in a family was usually first used by the intended person, only to be then passed down to whomever it would fit. Once the garment became unfit for wearing, it would be used as a washcloth or for dusting purposes.

With the advent of the concept of ethical fashion, consumers all around the world are gravitating towards sustainable and eco-friendly fashion. They are consciously opting for pre-existing clothes which are in good condition. They try to no longer make purchases based on what's trending in the market. They do not hoard their closets, but believe in minimizing the clutter and sticking to the wardrobe essentials.

The last decade saw a different side of the Indian customer. With the burgeoning middle class having bigger spending power than ever before, Indians were more than willing to try out the brands available in the market. The surge of fast fashion brands gave people access to a wide variety of clothes at lower prices. Indians, because of this, came out of the mindset of being spendthrift.

The Fashion and Luxury industry benefited highly in India with the average customer buying about 60 per cent more clothes in 2014 than they did in 2000, but only retaining them for half as long.

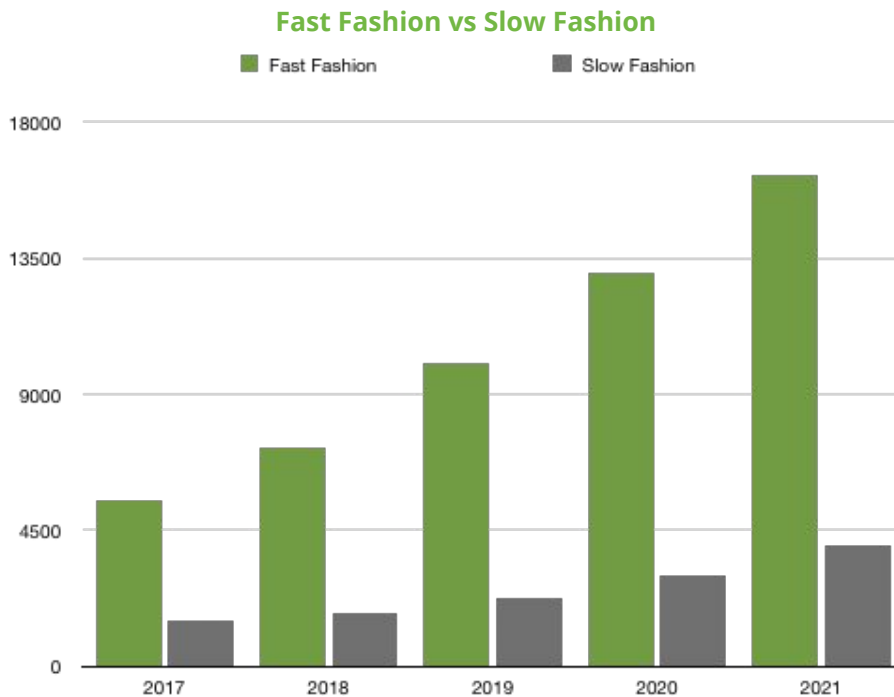
Most respondents of our survey, shop from Local stores, accounting for 45.5% of the total responses. Nearly 41% shop from High-end stores. We can observe that most of the consumers do not shop from stores that provide an option for sustainability as it is only a recent emergence. About 5% of the people shop from Thrift stores which is small but prominent. This clearly depicts that thrifting is a fresh concept and that the Indian demographic is not yet well-acquainted to it and would usually prefer shopping from already well-established brands or stores (local or high-end).

A bunch of thrift, local and high end depending upon the use
A variety of the above mentioned
All of the above
Ask my mom
Both branded and local stores
Branded stores, not really high end though
DEPENDS
Depends
e-commerce platforms
High end brands as well as local stores
High end stores and street shopping both
High-end brands
I have every brand's label outfits in my wardrobe, be it highend high
Local stores
Mall
Not fixed
Online
Online Shopping
Online sites
Online stores
some from local, some from high end stores
Sometimes highend sometimes reg like ck polo Zara
Thrift stores
Wherever i find my size :(and also Brands and thrift

One of the main reasons behind this sudden surge of eco-friendly product buyers is because of the spurt of awareness. More and more top brands are stepping forward to promote ethically sourced clothing because the buyers are now raising questions. They are being mindful. Many brands are also promoting recycling and customization of garments which is a huge step in the right direction.

Indians have realized that they can contribute to saving the planet while looking good, at the same time. Consumers have stopped hoarding trendy garments one after the other. The strategy here is to go green when it comes to the manufacturing, sale, and recycling of clothes. The shift has also come in producing sustainable clothing, and in the consumption of it.

People are trying to limit their consumption as opposed to recklessly purchasing tons of clothes. Most of the Indian buyers who have become eco-friendly in their ways are trying to cut down on the number of clothes they buy and invest in ethical fashion, which is produced by using the methods of fair trade.



The Indian apparel market is estimated to cross \$59 billion in 2022, making it the sixth largest in the world, according to McKinsey's Fashion Scope. However, sustainable fashion is a small contributor to the apparel market.

McKinsey reported that 66 percent of people want to pay more for sustainable apparel now.

NEED FOR SUSTAINABLE FASHION



In regards to the fashion industry, new collections keep hitting stores on a weekly basis while the prices aim for the lowest margins, consumers have had the ability to discard, throw away and continue buying an enormous amount of clothing to keep up with the trends at an unprecedented rate. And like everything, this too comes with a hefty cost, the environment. The amount of waste produced by the world of fashion is unfathomable. When the clothes are disposed off, 73% of clothing ends up incinerated or in a landfill. Not only is this a loss of our natural resources but, these methods also pollute the environment. The majority of the clothing items are made from synthetic materials such as viscose and polyester making the clothing impossible to biodegrade. As a result, if thrown away and not recycled, these garments can stand in a landfill for over 200 hundred years, releasing toxins and holding no purpose.

Rarely do people realize that clothes, too, cause pollution. The fashion industry's carbon footprint accounts for around 10% of global greenhouse gas emissions thus, contributing actively and massively to global warming which would lead to climate change. These also emit gases like N₂O, which are 300 times more harmful than CO₂.

Increased production also leads to resource depletion. Synthetic fibres require chemicals (fertilizers and pesticides) in large quantities for production, also harming the soil and eventually leading to more problems such as food insecurity. These perilous chemicals often cause diseases or even deaths among farmers and inflict serious birth defects on children. Moreover, these synthetic materials (petroleum-based and made from fossil fuels) require significantly more energy in the production phase than natural or recycled fibers.

The production process uses around 93 billion cubic metres of water annually, often adding to the challenges faced in water-scarce regions. In fact, production and general wear of just one pair of denim jeans (main integrant being cotton) uses up to 2900 gallons of water. Textile dyeing and associated activities contribute to 20% of all industrial water pollution. According to the Central Pollution Control Board, 2014, the Dyes and Dye intermediates industry which constitutes an important raw material for the fashion industry is one of India's most polluting industries.

Clothes made from synthetic fibers (like polyester, nylon, acrylic) are forms of plastic. Microplastic & microfibers are carriers for toxic chemicals and every time you wash fabrics made from these fibers, microplastics are degraded and broken off, and many eventually end up in the oceans, ocean life, and our mouths. A single washing load can release approximately 700,000 fibres which goes to waste water treatment. Although some of these fibres are intercepted but a good number tends to escape to the water bodies causing hormonal and genetic issues in aquatic organisms.

It is a well-known fact that the fashion industry loves to kill animals. It's estimated that over 430 million animals are slaughtered and killed every year for the industry. In addition, exposure to toxic chemicals used to process and dye the leather in tanneries causes cancer and subsequent deaths. Leather leads to a serious ecological problem in which runoff waste creates an overgrowth of plant life in water systems, which depletes the oxygen levels in the water and suffocates the animals. It is the leading cause of hypoxic zones, also known as "dead zones." Embracing the use of cruelty-free alternatives and ending animal cruelty is hence, paramount.

Fast fashion is also based on the exploitation of those who make those clothes. Minimum wages (if at all), endless working hours, unacceptable health & safety conditions, and the prohibition of workers unions is what reality for most garment workers in the fast fashion sector looks like. Moreover, verbal and physical abuse are still practiced in many parts of the industry. Child labour is also a very common practice in such factories. Choosing ethical fashion would mean you support basic human rights.

All this clearly indicates that in today's contemporary world, the need for adopting sustainable fashion by everyone is indispensable. While it may not solve all of our problems including but not limited to unsafe chemicals, water shortages, energy consumption, and overflowing landfills, it allows us to reduce our impact on the environment and invest in safer and more sustainable practices. Fashion giants and upcoming brands must pivot and deploy a triple bottom line approach in their operations - catering not just to profits, but to their people and to the planet as well.

Another motivation for thrifting is from the gradual realisation of the hazardous consequences of fast fashion, such as emission of greenhouse gases, the use of massive amounts of water and energy, depletion of non-renewable sources and the accumulation of fashion waste. Thrifting, therefore has become a sustainable alternative for customers. Here are some substitutes:

The fashion industry by the numbers



\$2.5

TRILLION INDUSTRY



fashion contributes

20%

OF INDUSTRIAL WATER WASTE



fashion contributes

10%

OF GLOBAL CARBON EMISSIONS



150 MILLION

LIVES ARE TOUCHED BY THE GLOBAL APPAREL INDUSTRY



80%

WOMEN THROUGHOUT THE SUPPLY CHAIN



85%

OF TEXTILES ARE SENT TO LANDFILLS

Low impact natural and organic materials:

Natural materials such as **hemp, linen, cotton, silk, wool, leather, and cellulose fibers** are generally preferable over virgin, petroleum-derived synthetics like polyester, acrylic, and nylon.'

Recycled or deadstock materials:

Using pre-existing materials to create new clothing is always a great choice because it does not require the extraction of new resources from the Earth but rather makes use of materials that would otherwise go to waste.

Eco-friendly dyes and Bluesign or OEKO-TEX certifications:

It's also important to consider the environmental impact of the dyes and textile treatment processes. Many dye and finishing processes involve egregious amounts of water and the use of toxic chemicals.

Zero or low waste design:

A lot of waste in the fashion industry comes from cutting out patterns, so some sustainable fashion brands are designing patterns that result in zero wasted material instead.

Locally made clothes and ones made in renewable energy run facilities:

With all of the dyeing, sewing, and shipping involved, the fashion industry has a high carbon footprint.

Second hand or durable clothes:

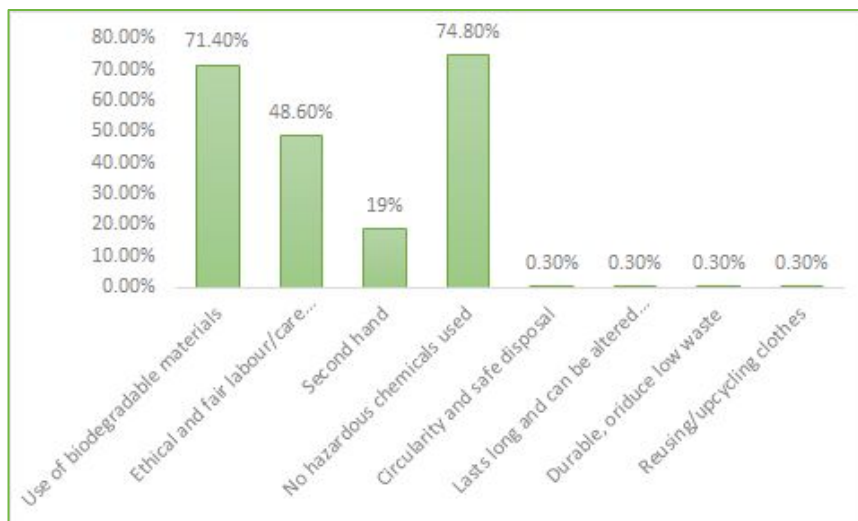
Instead of opting for fast fashion that is cheap and meant to be thrown away quickly, you can be a more sustainable fashion consumer by also responsibly caring for your clothes to prolong their lives or **buying second hand**, which keeps clothes out of landfills for longer.

An astonishing 59% of the demographic in our survey was already familiar with thrift as a concept. Since, most of the surveyees are relatively young, this gives hope that the youth is exploring the concept of thrift and potentially adopting the idea. This also depicts that the concept is beginning to spread among the youth. Almost 25% of respondents answered 'Maybe'. This may be the realisation that thrift and sustainable fashion is more than what they think of it to be and that they have an ambiguous idea of the topic. Nearly 17% did not know about thrift. Even though this number is comparatively small, it shows that there is still a notable number of people who are not yet familiar with the term.

From the primary research that we conducted, we observed that people usually associate sustainability in fashion with low chemicals, less pollution, and biodegradable materials (about 70% of people responded in the given manner). Even though such features are included in sustainable fashion, they do not cover everything that it entails. Sustainability in fashion is more of an umbrella term and people don't generally realise that.

Nearly 49% of consumers believe that fair labour practices come under sustainable fashion. This is surprising as people don't generally account for the people behind the production process. Almost 20% of surveyees believe that 'Second Hand' is one of the only features of Sustainable Fashion, which, of course is false.

Features of Sustainable Fashion



FORMS OF SUSTAINABLE FASHION



There are many forms of sustainable fashion. It ranges from making clothes in a more environmentally friendly manner to secondhand/vintage or underlining the benefits of swapping, renting or borrowing clothes as opposed to purchasing newly produced clothes. All strategies promoting more environmentally, socially and ethically conscious production and consumption are important steps towards a more sustainable industry. In order to produce clothes in an environment jolly manner, they can be categorised into 7 major types:

- Garments should be manufactured on demand, or be custom-made. It's often less wasteful overall, as at this point, fabric consumption can be planned more accurately resulting in reducing the time taken on each garment (reducing the electricity & carbon impact).
- They should be manufactured in an environmentally friendly manner taking into consideration the environmental problems such as climate change, plastic pollution, waste, and the indiscriminate use of resources.
- The clothes should be of high quality and of timeless design so that they last longer.
- With consideration to various ethical aspects like child labor, gender rights, safe working conditions, fair trade activities, and all other social justice aspects must be kept in mind to improve the working conditions of people involved in the fashion supply chain. It also includes products manufactured without the use of materials of animal origin or those obtained without cruel means.

- The clothes should be used long and well through good care, repair and perhaps redesign. It helps with waste reduction which as the clothes would otherwise end up in a landfill. Additionally, it reduces carbon and gas emissions, from manufacturing to transport.\
- When the product is no longer desired by someone, it should be handed in to a secondhand shop, donated to charity or handed over to friends, relatives or perhaps a swap-shop, to prolong its active life. Since these garments already exist, therefore, there is no need of noxious manufacturing.
- When the garment is completely worn out, it should be returned to a collection point for recycling of the textile material, which can hence be reused in the manufacturing of new clothes or other textile products. Ideally, instead of buying newly produced clothes, one should consider renting, borrowing or swapping clothes, or buying secondhand or vintage.

INTRODUCTION OF THRIFT IN INDIA



Thrifting is not a new concept in India. From street-side pop ups to small shops selling eccentric pieces, Indian cities have had these establishments forever. With places like Delhi's Sarojini Nagar market and Mumbai's Fashion Street garnering a cult following, it's becoming a trend now, owing to the increased time spent online and the growing awareness among Gen Y and Z about how wasteful fast fashion can be. An appreciation of the need for a more mindful life post covid-19 has given such a boost that many of the online thrift stores are likely to turn into full-time careers. The second-hand apparel market, valued at \$28 billion (around ₹2 trillion) in June, is forecast to hit \$64 billion within five years, says a report by ThredUP, the world's largest online thrift store, and research firm GlobalData Retail. By 2029, 17% of a person's share of closet space will be second-hand; the figure was 3% in 2009. On average, products are priced in the ₹800-3,000 range, with vintage pieces being more expensive. It is the uniqueness of second-hand clothes that drives online thrift stores, some are exotic styles and others have rare prints.

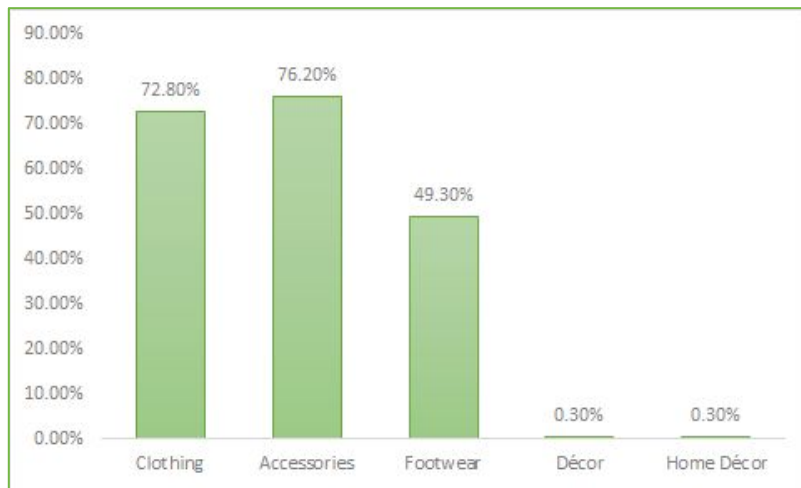
The first lockdown saw an increase in the number of such online thrift stores. No access to stores or export surplus during the pandemic contributed towards this trend and gave birth to online-thrift stores.

Proportion of Purchasing Audience

For many shoppers, though, choosing a sustainable product is a personal priority, and they want people to know about it. It's called *Social Signalling*, a theory that denotes that we buy certain things because of what they say about us to the people around us. People buy designer bags not only because they like the style, but because of the message they tell the world when they're holding one and the social status the product imbues.

Prius owners proudly reported that the primary reasons for purchasing the car are because it "makes a statement about me" and that "it shows the world that its owner cares about the environment". This gives them a sense of superiority towards society as they are part of a change. A change aiming towards a better environment.

People's requirements from online Thrift Stores

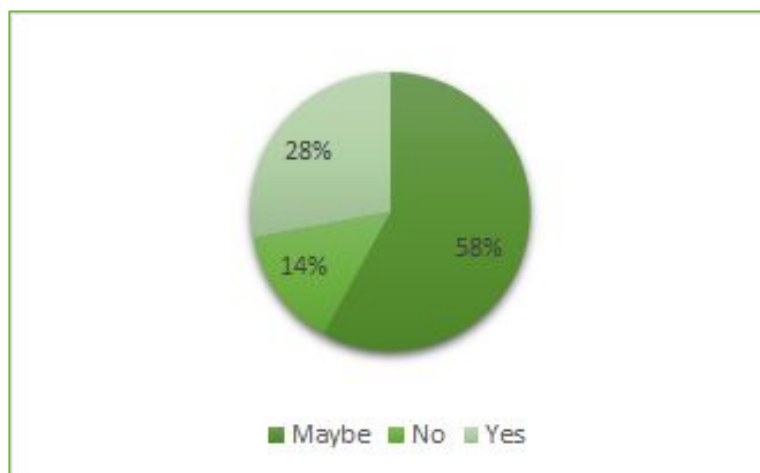


For some people, sustainability is synonymous with Khadi; for others, it comes with the handloom tag. The younger millennials are far more aware of the term and as far as audience's preferences are concerned, 72.8% of the people in our research survey believe that thrift stores must focus on selling thrifted clothes, in essence, the clothing items while 76.2% believe that thrift stores must sell more accessories. 49.3% want thrift stores to sell footwear. Among other requirements some want thrift stores to put forward some items for home decor. These opinions and needs from thrift are diverse and depend from person to based on their individual shopping needs.

According to our survey, The prime reasons for shopping from thrift stores include the cost-effectiveness of thrifting, offerings of a variety of clothing, quality items, and their accessibility and eco-friendliness. It was seen that 69% believe being cost-effective is the prime reason for them to shop thrift. 41.4% believe that they would shop thrift because it offers a plethora of clothing and 32.1% believe that they would shop thrift because it is substantially accessible. Among other reviews, 26.2% believe thrifting offers good quality and 25.5% believe that since it is eco-friendly, they would shop thrift.

A large number of people are not willing to buy from thrift stores on account of several reasons. 53.2% believe that they wouldn't like thrifting as they are not a fan of second-hand goods. 52.8% people believe that since they have hygiene issues therefore they'd dislike the culture. However, 21.4% of people believe that thrifted clothes are out of fashion, hence they would continue buying normal fashion. Some other people's reviews include that thrift clothes are cheap replicas, they lack quality, and have size and style issues, they are overpriced and believe that thrifted products are not as durable. Well some of the consumer opinions are just myths based on a lack of knowledge towards thrifting while some are based on previous experiences while shopping from thrift stores.

Willingness among people to thrift



Trends in fashion change continuously. What is fashionable and trendy today might be considered out of trend tomorrow. When it comes to assessing whether one can find trendy clothes in thrift stores, most of the people (57.2%) responded with maybe, thinking that it would entirely depend on changing trend styles. However, 28.3% replied with yes, implying they believe thrift would have popular clothes and 14.5% replied with a clear no, implying they won't find anything trendy while thrifting. Thrift stores can be improved by being more accessible to the consumers. This can be done by bringing them on a common platform like 'ReThought' which will benefit the thrift stores as well as the consumers.

FLOURISHING INSTAGRAM THRIFT STORES IN INDIA



1) @lulu_thrift_ (17.8k Followers)

This Manipur-based thrift store with its funky and appealing edits offers no particular style, or all and has a little something for everyone. Most of their offerings consist of dresses and tops.

Price Range: ₹ 450 onwards

The price range is pretty affordable considering most of their products are branded ones, from Dolce and Gabbana to Zara, the thrift store has an array of brands to offer. It is one of the very few Instagram thrift stores to be based out of the North-East and it has done pretty well for itself.

2) @lusthrift (32.4k followers)

With jaw-dropping dresses on sale recently, Lust Thrift procures some extremely stylish shirts and intricate brassieres along with well-fitting jeans. They have hit the bullseye when it comes to stroking the perfect balance between minimalist and bold fashion.

Price Range: ₹ 550 onwards

Metallic skirts, flowing chiffon tops, bold trousers, chic denim and big ruffled shirts — there isn't a word in the dictionary to define their aesthetic. With their page being followed by the famous Instagram fashion influencer duo of Komal Pandey and Siddharth Batra, they clearly have come a long way.

3) @oakark_thrift (24.4k Followers)

Oakark's vast collection includes various drops of nightwear (ice-cream print pink shorts? Yes, please), sports bras, and training attire. Although they are based in India, they ship worldwide.

Price Range: ₹ 500 onwards

Oakark Thrift is known for its wide range of collections, starting from tops, tees, and corsets to bathrobes, training attires, and nightwear. With their ever-increasing popularity, they also opened up a section exclusively for men.

4) @pandapickedstore (38k Followers)

One look at Panda Picked and you're thinking, 'I definitely need to start going out more'. Home to vintage, casual and intimate wear, founder Preeti Yadav of Panda Picked reiterates the importance of 'buying less, but better' through the store's motto.

Price Range: ₹390 onwards

Seen on influencers all over Instagram, Panda Picked quickly gained momentum due to their lush corsets, that give off a witch-from-the-Victorian-era vibe. In case you're looking to feel as good as you look without burning a hole in your pocket, turn to Panda Picked.

5) @thrift.nthrive**(22.4k Followers)**

If you are looking for a place that provides almost everything under the sun, especially attractive denims, thrift.nthrive is the go-to destination for you. They describe 'Thrifting as accessibility and experimentation, and limiting them to a certain niche wouldn't be fun.'

Price Range: ₹350 onwards

Evergreen thrift is a one stop destination for thrifters, who have an inherent craving for rare items. The changing seasons also act as a stimulus of their collections. In winters, you can find lots of knits, skirts, sweaters, etc. Similarly in summer, it is more of bodysuits, dresses, and corsets.

6) @mumbaithrifts**(14.8k Followers)**

If tie-dye cropped sweatshirts and light-washed denim with unicorns on them sound like your cup of tea, Mumbai Thrifts is your destination, with so much more in store.

Price Range: ₹400 onwards

Handpicked, upcycled, and retro fashion, Mumbai Thrifts curates vintage stuff that you will put you in awe. There are always plenty of things to choose from, they have regular drops and they cater to all genders.

7) @nushthriffts**(18.8k Followers)**

From really cool accessories to the cutest outfits, Nush Thriffts has a collection like no other! They have preloved and new clothing pieces that would make a lovely addition to your closet.

Price Range: ₹600 onwards

Cute retro knitwear, colourful bell-bottomed pants, vintage vest sweaters, plaid skirts, shoes and 90s printed tees, all come together at Nush Thriffts, a cute online thrift store that upcycles pre-owned apparel. Nush Thriffts is your best bet if you aren't looking to shell out big bucks. The flipside is that you might not be spoiled for choices either.

8) @thesalvagestory**(6758 Followers)**

In their own words, they are 'a sustainable fashion store which promotes eclectic personal style and curating a lasting wardrobe'. If your biggest qualm with thrift stores is that they may not have the variety of silhouettes and cuts that fast-fashion offers. Then, please check out the Salvage Story.

Price Range: ₹799 onwards

This online thrift store, available on Instagram only, has everything from asymmetrical tops, to loose boho shirts, well-fitted formal shirts, floral tie-up tops and of course, a few vintage pieces, too!

9) @folkpants**(11.7k Followers)**

From the scenic hills of Ukhrul, Manipur emerged Folkpants; an Instagram-based vintage store by two sisters. Their aesthetic is everything you daydream of — green pastures, picnic baskets, blue skies, and timeless fashion.

Price Range: ₹800 onwards

Folkpants showcases a curated mix of second-hand and vintage pieces collected from the hilly North-Eastern state and across the world. It has a slightly eccentric style that might require an acquired taste, but worth checking out once for sure. If sheer tops, polka dot skirts, flowing dresses and chic kitten heels make up your Pinterest feed, they've got you. Each piece is sourced from their hometown and their travels across cities, bringing you a diverse selection of attire.

10) @bombayclosetcleanse**(19.5k Followers)**

If you dig feminine silhouettes then tops, dresses and jackets from Bombay Closet Cleanse or BCC is just where you need to be. Though based in Mumbai, BCC ships worldwide, and has on-offer garments from wardrobes across the world.

Price Range: ₹750 onwards

Cut mini dresses, floral blouses, tie-up shirts, bodycon dresses and even berets can be found here. They also have 100 percent charity sales where all the profits go to a particular cause. Sustainable, great fashion and for a cause? That's a triple win right there.

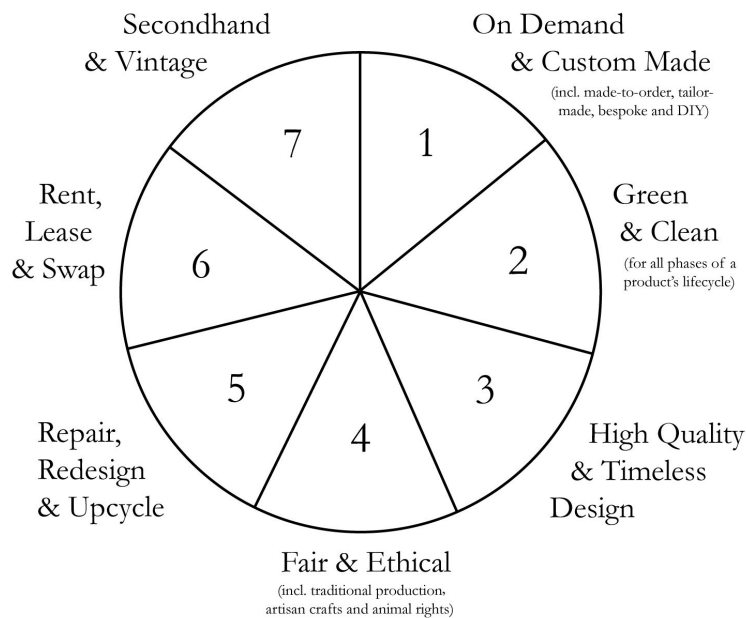
11) @evergreenthriftindia

(17.4k Followers)

They describe 'Thrifting as accessibility and experimentation, and limiting them to a certain niche wouldn't be fun'. Evergreen thrift is a one stop destination for avid thrift shoppers, who have an inherent craving for rare items. The changing seasons also act as a stimulus of their collections.

Price Range: ₹399 onwards

In winters, you can find lots of knits, skirts, sweaters, etc. And, similarly in summer, it is more of bodysuits, dresses, and corsets. There prices are significantly reasonable with a very small section of their collection priced above ₹1,000 or ₹2,000. They ship all over India.



© Green Strategy, www.greenstrategy.se
By Dr. Anna Brismar 2019

THRIFT FASHION VS SUSTAINABLE FASHION: A COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

Over the last 20 years, clothing production has doubled. And no wonder, some brands offer several collections every year – and certain fast fashion brands like ZARA and H&M, even through their Indian franchises, offer up to a whopping number of collections. The result? An equivalent of one garbage truck full of clothes is burned or dumped in a landfill every second. This is an alarming quantity of wasted textiles, but even more so, a seriously worrying waste of resources to get us to the end product in the first place.

Specifically, in thrift fashion, there's no ethical conundrum as to who made the product. You are not paying the corporation that produced a garment, rather than paying the owner of the thrift store or the vintage store, or the person renting the garment, or the recycling facility or charity shop instead. There's no need to question the sustainability of a fabric, because it already exists and it will either continue to be used or get recycled.

To counter this, it might be said that most other forms of sustainable fashion (manufactured sustainable fashion) like vegan clothing, traditional handcrafted fashion (the ones manufactured by reputed companies like Anokhi, Nicobar etc.) as well as fashion using organic raw materials are also environmentally friendly as they too go a long way in conserving nature and reducing emissions caused by factory manufactured clothing. However, the cost of maintaining this level of sustainability and environment feasibility is quite high and in most cases, higher than their widely used factory manufactured alternatives known as conventional fashion. The amount of R&D as well as precision and skill that goes into curating such clothing, so as to be as environmentally viable as possible to justify its price tag.

A Circular Fashion Economy is the one that doesn't involve burning of clothing, simply disposing it off or burying it in a landfill. It is much better than the dangerous and maddening linear cycle of exponential production leading to the inevitably explosive amount of waste that us humans have ended up creating, which essentially describes modern-day conventional fashion or 'fast fashion', for so many reasons.



For instance, Nicobar is a contemporary lifestyle brand that makes clothing, home decor and travel accessories. Inspired by the Indian Ocean and a relaxed island aesthetic, their philosophy of simplicity in timeless products designed to last and influenced by natural design and materials, is echoed in their beautiful stores, which signifies a world of beautiful bamboo dresses, organic cotton and tropically inspired eco-friendly homeware.

The philosophy behind this kind of fashion they specialise in seems very grounded and humble but an altogether different story is portrayed in their pricing structure with the lower limit being around ₹1800 and the upper going as high as ₹13000. It clearly caters to the prosperous sections of the society, which constitutes a very small proportion of the Indian population, as far as income is concerned.

Thrift fashion on the other hand is accessible to most stratas of society. Buying secondhand gives people the opportunity to begin their journey into sustainable fashion- even if they don't have the means to buy new consciously made options.

On the contrary, if everyone who wanted to shop consciously stopped buying new clothes, this would have a negative impact on small sustainable fashion brands and garment workers around the world. As strict global lockdown battered global economies during the covid-19 pandemic, numerous western retailers cancelled orders or demanded exorbitant discounts from suppliers in countries such as India, Bangladesh, Cambodia and Thailand. The result? Many workers were going without pay or worse, losing their jobs.

Sustainable fashion brands' (especially the smaller ones) focus on transparency, ethics and sustainability is just as unwavering and true as any thrift brand. Even the economics of demand and supply and other stakeholders like employees of these corporations, factory workers etc are in their favour due to which forms of sustainable fashion other than thrift fashion as well as conventional fashion can't just be shunned once and for all. Thrift fashion cannot exist without the other sustainable and conventional modes of fashion because it is the refurbished and reused version of those.

A judicious mix of all these different types of fashion in your wardrobe and at the same time not being too heavy on your pockets is what is actually needed to make fashion feasible not only from the point of view of the environment but also from an economic standpoint.

PRICING AND REVENUE MODELS

Just like any other industry, there are a number of factors like cost, demand, competition, brand positioning etc which are at play when determining pricing and revenue models in the thrift store industry. We are going to take a detailed look at some of these factors and how they influence the pricing and revenue strategies of thrift stores.

COST

Because of their nature of the business and the mode of deployment (which is mostly online), thrift store owners hardly have to bear any manufacturing costs. But there are some indirect costs which they have to incur like: travelling expenses, sourcing them, a part of shipping charges which they have to bear due to taxes etc. Many thrift stores also incur promotional/marketing costs by running ads on social media to increase their brand awareness. Many big thrift store owners also sometimes conduct photoshoots where they have to incur costs to pay the photographer, models(who promote their products) and make-up artists. During our chat with **Folkpants**, a famous Instagram thrift store, we got to know that these thrift stores often employ people part-time to assist and help them ease their workload. All these costs play a major role in determining the final price of the product.

MARKET CONDITION

With more and more people looking to switch over to sustainable fashion each day, thrift stores have emerged perfectly to fulfil that demand while also providing some other additional benefits. The negligible cost of setting up an online thrift store has meant that the supply side is well equipped to meet the growing demand for sustainable fashion. Recently, there has been a surge in the opening of thrift stores which has led to a highly competitive market. Its implications on pricing and revenue are discussed below.

COMPETITION

The negligible cost of setting up an online thrift store has led to a high competitive environment for the online thrift stores. The market is really saturated and brands need something unique which they can offer to their customers in order to attract them. Often in this highly competitive environment, thrift store owners tend to spend more on promotional/marketing campaigns on social media in order to increase their visibility. This will again have an impact on their costs. The dilemma here is that shifting the cost over to the customer in order to avoid the decrease in profit can lead to the customer shifting over to other thrift stores offering at a lesser price. The newcomers are the ones who often find themselves in this dilemma and it can be highly overwhelming for them to grow in this saturated market.

SALES

The sale of products are based on seasonal demands- i.e. lighter pieces for summer and outwear in winter. The market is very dynamic and things keep changing every now and then. Most of the brands re-invest the income on procuring more items and to meet daily expenses and needs.

So ultimately which factors play a major role in determining price?

In some of our brief talks with the owners of some of these online thrift stores, many of them stated that other competitor's prices in the market play a huge role in determining the price of their product as well. There are some other factors at play as well such as the cost of production, brand image and the type of product they are offering which play an important role as well. "We consider the price at which the products were brought, the rarity of the piece if its vintage or a branded item, and yes we do look at the competitors pricing to stay within a reasonable range", responded **Folkpants** when we enquired them about the parameters which they look at when deciding for the price.

Is running a thrift store profitable in India?

It is certainly profitable which is quite evident in the growth of some of the big online thrift stores in such a short period of time. Some of the owners who started it as a side business have gone full time and are expanding their operations. But since, the market is becoming more and more saturated(as stated above), it will become increasingly difficult for the small/new players in the industry as it was evident in our conversations with owners of small thrift stores.

BRANDING STRATEGIES



1. Attitude Branding

Sometimes a company will rely on an overall feeling or attitude to market its products and reflect its business. This branding strategy brings the business to life by marketing a larger feeling to create an emotional connection between the brand and its customers. Brands such as Nike use attitude branding not only to sell athletic shoes but also to promote a healthy lifestyle that aligns with its infamous slogan, "Just do it."

2. Honestby is a womenswear brand launched in 2012 by Bruno Pieters, former Creative Director at Hugo Boss. Disillusioned with the excesses of the fashion industry, Pieters adopted the ethos of a brand with a 'radical new concept' of 100 percent transparency in all information about the production process, materials used, even going as far as a complete 'cost breakdown of its products' (honestly.com). Pieters believes that by disclosing all this information we are not only celebrating fashion, but also the story behind it, giving consumers an informed choice about their purchases. Helping designers follow his example, Pieters invites designers to collaborate with the brand, in-store and online. British designer Christopher Raeburn uses the 'Remade' philosophy of remade, reduced and recycled. Whilst 'reworking surplus materials, products and artefacts' into the collections and minimizing carbon footprint by localized manufacturing, the heart of the designers ethos is providing the customer with a 'completely unique and desirable product' and still maintaining 'strong sustainable choices' (christopherraeburn.co.uk).

3. Safia Minney for People Tree used traditional artisan skills and local communities throughout Africa and Asia to produce their garments. Going even further, People Tree has created a foundation that supports farmers and artisans through scaling up, training, providing technical support and environmental initiatives, and raising awareness and campaigning for fair and sustainable fashion (peopletree.co.uk).

The ethos of the brand provides the consumer with a good feeling, with every purchase, helping those less fortunate to create a better life for themselves.

4. Stella McCartney as a brand has always been associated with being a Vegetarian Luxury brand. Anti-fur and Cruelty-free, an ethos ingrained in the brand by family association. Veganism and vegetarianism are seen as more eco-friendly agriculture, and cattle farming is the number one reason for rainforest deforestation, which connects to the original brand values. Initiatives such as Clean by Design, a joint programme with their Italian production mills, to reduce water and energy use; no use of pvc within the brand; dedicated to improving human rights of workers through the Ethical Trading Initiative; use of recycled fabrics and further funding of research into circularity.

5. The ethos of the Artisanal womenswear brand, 'Bamford' is to work with traditional artisans to keep their skills alive both, in the UK as well as abroad. Consumers purchasing the brand have the added experience and emotional attachment of feeling that they are making a difference in the world.

6.. Marks and Spencer, as part of their Plan A, introduced the take back scheme of 'Shwopping', later followed by similar schemes by H&M and Zara. Impact of the gains of such schemes are debatable as to whether this reduces the amount of textiles to landfills or only creates a fresh round of consumption' (Fletcher 2013). The majority of garments sent to landfills can be reworn, reused or recycled and take back schemes such as the ones introduced in retail stores are preventing some textiles from ending up in land-fills.

7. Climatex Lifecycle was developed in collaboration with Designtex and Rohner Textil, resulting in an upholstery fabric made from biodegradable fibres, with safe processing treatments, allowing it to be composted, providing food for the ecosystem.

8. H&M uses organic cotton and other more sustainable materials, such as tencel, working with factories to provide better working conditions and a living wage, as well as providing take back schemes to prevent textiles from going into landfills.

9. Mud jeans have introduced a pioneering 'Lease a jeans' model to ensure they tray the owners of the raw materials so they can be taken back after use and remade into new products. The idea is that manufacturers remain the owners of the product and 'consumers pay for the performance only.' Once the product quality has totally depleted, the jeans can then be shredded and together with new organic cotton fibres be remade into a new pair of jeans.

10. De Mellier, the brand continues its initiative 'A Bag, A Life', whereby for every bag purchased, life-saving vaccines and treatments are aimed at saving a child's life. This is no 'marketing gimmick' with the brand, to date, funding over 25,000 vaccines for orphans in need.

Customers are expecting more and more that a company will not just have a great product but demonstrate social responsibility.

11. Santa Barbara attracts a large range of age groups, from college students to retirees, the thrift stores here are truly gold mines for second-hand items.

These two age groups make the stores unique to the area, as they are filled with both in-trend clothing and accessories from the younger generation along with funky and antique things from the older generations.

12. 'It's chic to repeat', is a snappy phrase that carries a semantic equal part playful and meaningful. It is not surprising to see some brands adopting the concept of play to broach sustainability in fashion. This wit and humour laden approach appeals to a target demographic; Millennials. As consumers, Millennials care about a brand's purpose and their approach to the future of our planet.

13. Reformation unlike their peers who resort to a more inspirational and earnest approach of storytelling their sustainability credentials, Reformation instead opted for a well-crafted sassy tone-of-voice.

While the product is still the hero, with its flirty and feminine designs, the brand has found clever ways of inserting a sustainability narrative that is at all times jargon-free, witty and backed up by quantifiable data.

14. Po Zu, Founded by Sven Segal, the brand scores high on comfort with a trademarked coconut-husk foot mattress. Po-Zu promotes the use of biodegradable materials like organic cotton and Pinatex (leather produced from pineapple leaf fibres), hand stitched with a glue-free manufacturing process. In 2017, Po-Zu pulled off a coup by launching the Star Wars Collection of shoes under license from Lucasfilm and Disney. The collection tapped

into a new audience, Star Wars aficionados, who discovered the brand at Comic-Con venues and online, adding to the existing base of ethically-minded customers.

15. Brands advocating transparency have started to organise tours into their facilities. However, one that stands out for its inspirational and memorable experience is Raeburn Studio tours. In partnership with Airbnb, twice in a month, British fashion designer, Christopher Raeburn opens the doors of his REMADE studio in East London.

Recognised for his innovative use of materials ranging from military parachutes and tents to artefacts, the affable designer offers personal insights for over two hours, rounding off with a fun t-shirt making workshop. The studio turns into an experiential destination that makes a fashion consumer rethink their buying habits, perhaps allowing room for mending their lifestyle.

16. Among the brands, Birdsong London has dabbled in meme-making to promote its collection and themes like women's rights. Friend-tagging amps up the virality of memes, spreading the word beyond the ethical community. Combining authenticity and transparency with playfulness is an exciting strategy to restore trust between the consumer and the brand.

17. A pop-up thrift shop, Garb. Self-proclaimed as UC Berkeley's most relatable fashion blog, Garb hosted the event for the second time ever, selling second-hand clothes ranging from three to seven dollars. Low prices and unique vintage finds, attract people who end up unintentionally helping the environment.

8. Trading Post offers gently used clothing, jewelry, furniture, and houseware to consumers at a discounted price. All proceeds from The Trading Post are used to fund Fox Chase Cancer Center's clinical, prevention, and research programs. The store operates from September to June and strives to encourage people to support Fox Chase Cancer Center's mission to prevail over cancer.

CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR ANALYSIS

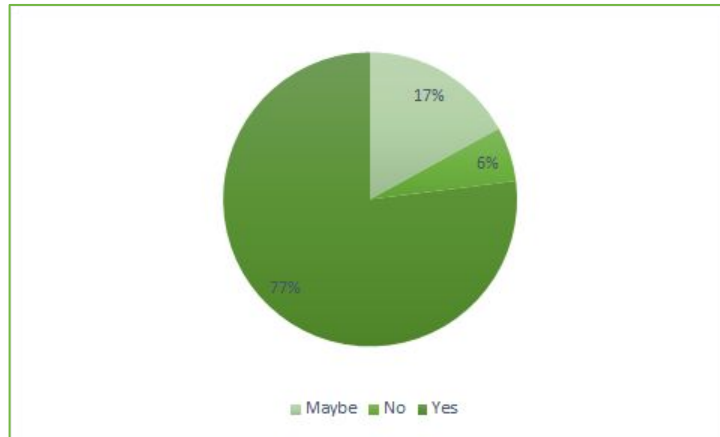


The first intention of our research was to get some general information about the participants' (GenZ and Millennials) attitudes towards consumer behaviour in order to answer the research questions.

The trend of purchasing sustainably manufactured and used products has been rising with time, especially among millennials. However, as we look through other reports and surveys undertaken by established companies and organizations, one might see that not everyone has a positive outlook towards using sustainably made products.

It can also be seen that a mind boggling 77% of the demographic wants to know more about Sustainable Fashion. Even though one might expect a large figure, 77% is a humongous percentage. This depicts the lack of consumer awareness as the concept is still brand new and people are not yet familiar with it. 17% are unsure about whether they'd like to know more and have chosen 'Maybe'. This conveys the rigidity of people's mindset and how they may not want to progress even if it is for the better. A negligible 6% do not want to know more, this may mean that they already know enough or that they are disinterested.

Readiness among people to learn about Thrift



Moreover, there are various facets that might affect the decision of the consumers to use these kinds of products. In consumer behaviour, there can be internal as well as external factors influencing consumers in their decision making. As the pandemic worsened, more consumers shifted their attention towards sustainable fashion.

Amid the pandemic, most consumers state that it becomes very important to take steps towards climate change and limit the impact of consumers towards the same, thus limiting their impact on the environment. Consequently, a lot of consumers have also shifted their focus towards reducing pollution and looking out for ways to recycle and purchase products in environmentally friendly packaging.

Moreover, a similar case that is being seen in the automobile sector from ICE's to Electric Vehicle can be seen in the fashion industry as Shifting to Sustainability is a choice. All of us as shoppers are bound to have certain parameters while purchasing an article, especially in clothing. However, assuming style, comfort and quality are the same, only 23.4% of people are willing to buy sustainable clothing if it costs more than what they would normally pay. 22.4% of the respondents believe they won't purchase sustainable clothing at any cost higher than their normal spending whereas, 54.1% people are reluctant for the same and responded 'Maybe' referring their choice of cost of spending on sustainable clothing is not clearly preferred in their mind.

Considering style, comfort and quality are the same, would you purchase sustainable clothing if it costs more than what you would normally pay?

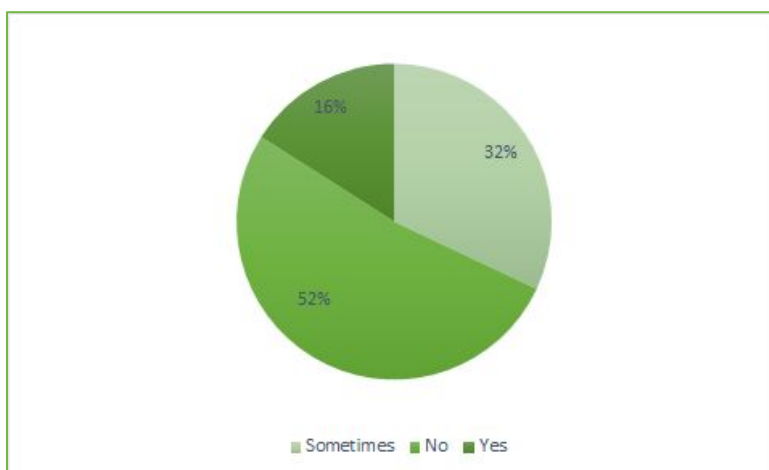


As per a survey by McKinsey&Company, consumers have made a significant shift towards environmentally friendly products.

Moreover, consumers have also started to look out for the environmental impacts of various brands when they make purchases. Mostly, consumers trust bigger brands that showcase a wider range of environmental and social responsibilities. However, millennials are more likely to trust and make purchases from smaller and less renowned brands due to the Covid-19 pandemic (and a consequent cash-crunch for many).

It is also a fact that a lot of customers buy clothes as a style statement or status symbol, in the survey, over 52% of the consumers do not feel status conscious while buying clothes from a thrift store. Contrary to what people often believe, 'status' is not the only factor due to which one might avoid thrifting. Almost 33% of the respondents sometimes feel status conscious which is a significant figure. The mentality that thrifting may undermine a person's financial capabilities is a major reason as to why people may feel conscious. 16% do not feel status conscious which is not as major as one might believe.

Status Conscious Quotient among people



Apart from the companies from which consumers make their purchases, they have also changed the way they spend. In that sphere, the younger consumers are more likely to buy cheaper versions of products they normally buy.

Next, there has also been an increase seen in the online purchases made by consumers especially since the pandemic began. In order to avoid physical contact, maximum consumers shifted to online platforms to make all sorts of fashion purchases.

With the pandemic, several thrift businesses have also inaugurated. Thus, there has been an increased interest in purchasing secondhand fashion items following the COVID-19 crisis. However, being second hand products, various consumers also pose their concerns regarding the quality of the products taking into consideration the prices these products have been put at.

Although, studies suggest that consumers would likely shift to eco-friendly apparels if it comes from their trusted brand or outlet. So, the doubts pertaining to quality would be put to rest. Although this would be beneficial, if we also consider the prices to increase for these eco-friendly apparels considering the comfort, quality and style are kept intact, they would probably not spend an increased amount and continue making the same purchases as they did before.

Moreover, even though these thrift stores are placed online, they don't always have the availability of the products in terms of sizes. Thus, they often lose their customer base and consumers continue running away from alternatives supporting sustainable fashion.

Even after making the purchases, the actual locations of the owners of such thrift stores become difficult to access for the consumers and they end up rethinking about their decision to make any sort of further purchases from these thrift stores.

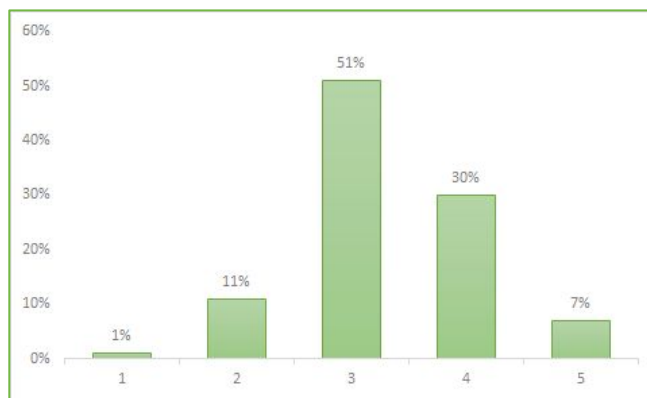
Consumers also tend to show a negative response towards thrift stores because they get status conscious and often feel undermined in front of people who prefer to continue wearing branded apparels and footwear. This is one of the biggest reasons for people to not consider thrift stores as their first option for purchases.

Also, during the Primary Research it was seen that consumers had different opinions about thrift stores which can be seen below-

While making a purchase, an informed consumer keeps in mind several parameters for his/her purchase and while purchasing an in-use item, such as clothes, they become even more vigilant about what to shop and what not to shop. Sustainability is a lifestyle change and therefore depends on the person's choice of assessing various attributes to that purchase.

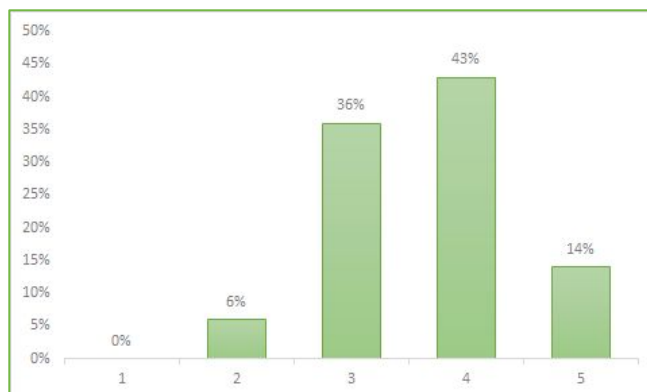
Quality of thrift-

It was noticed that more than half of the respondents (52.8%) have given a range of 3/5 for the quality of thrift. 23.4% and 16.7% have responded with 4/5 and 2/5 respectively. However, the extreme values i.e. 5/5 and 1/5 have got 4.5% and 2.6% respectively. This shows that the middle rating of 3 has been the maximum.



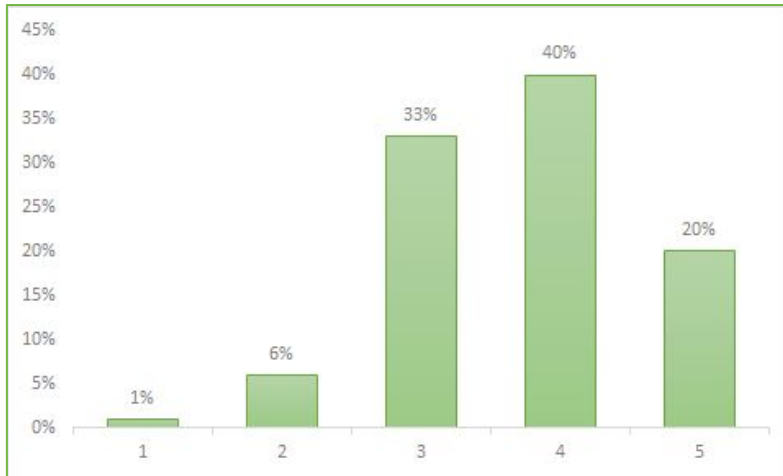
Feasibility of thrift-

41.4% of the people have rated 3/5 for feasibility whereas, 36.9% have rated 4/5. 9.3% people have rated 5/5 for feasibility while 10.4% and 9.4% have rated 2/5 and 1/5, respectively.



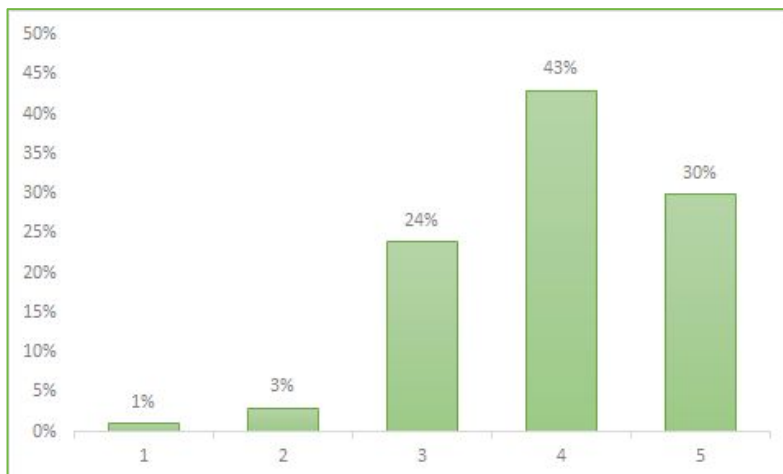
Price of thrift-

Under this, it was observed that a good percentage of 40.1% believe that thrifted goods are adequately priced therefore they accessed 4/5 for price. Also, 22.3% believe that the prices are very well justified giving them 5/5. 29.4% have rated 3/5 whereas 5.6% and 2.6% have penned 2/5 and 1/5, respectively.



Accessibility of thrift-

Only 14.1% people believe that thrifting is greatly accessible, giving a rating of 5/5. 34.6% and 37.9% of people have rated for 4/5 and 3/5 whereas 10.4% and 3% of people have rated accessibility as 2/5 and 1/5, respectively, implying that it is not accessible to them.



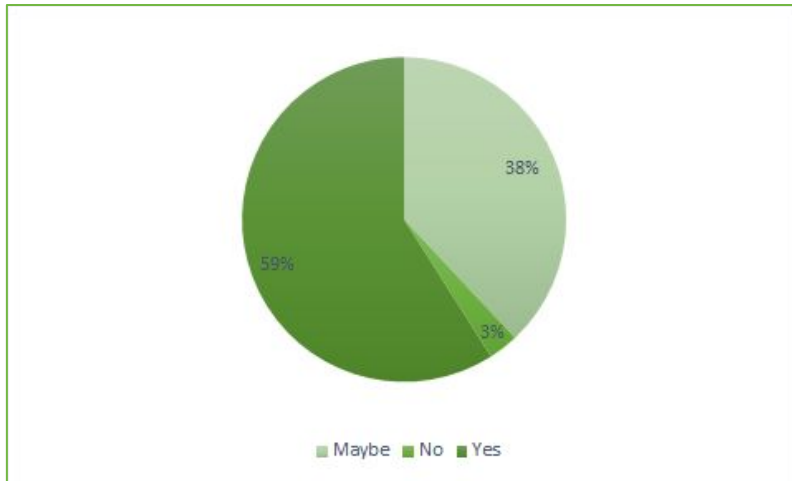
Apparently, this change in consumer sentiments suggests that post the COVID-19 pandemic as well, this could serve as an opportunity for apparel and footwear for the upcoming generation to strengthen their sustainability commitments. However, there are pitfalls which would have to be taken in certain arenas of sustainable fashion.

In the end, conclusions that could be drawn from the study would be that the participants knew about sustainability. The participants were critical towards sustainability within the fashion industry due to overproduction and environmentally hazardous materials that the industry uses, making consumers question the fashion industry's real intentions.

During the survey, it can be witnessed that a major portion of the people (58%) would be willing to purchase the Sustainable line from their favourite stores. This simply depicts that customers don't mind paying for a bit of environmental mindfulness given the condition that the clothing is similar (in quality, design, etc.) to what they usually wear. A considerably large portion of the consumers, that is, nearly 40% would hesitate while buying Sustainable Clothing from their favourite stores. This shows that consumers may still not be aware of what the term 'Sustainable' means and would not want to invest into apparel they don't know about. An insignificant portion (3%) would refrain from purchasing sustainable apparel.

However, some respondents' opinions are also shaped along with how pricing goes, that is as follows-

Willingness among people to pay for thrift



We observe that 72.8% of the people are willing to buy sustainable fashion only if the price is the same as normal fashion. However, 14.1% people have agreed to pay even higher for sustainable fashion as compared to their normal spending on fashion believing its environmentally friendly nature, whereas 10% of the people are willing to shift to sustainable clothing only if it is cheaper than the normal clothing. 4% of the people are rigid and are not willing to buy sustainable clothing at all. Some believe they'd buy sustainable fashion if it has more life span and is more practical than normal clothing, and some believe that it basically depends on the item of clothing; if the price is justified, they might be willing to make the purchase.

IMPLICATIONS OF COVID-19 AND FUTURE PRESUMPTIONS

Fast fashion has been defined as the economical imitation of runway couture and has managed to feed the fashion frenzy of the upwardly mobile middle class. However, it comes to us at a cost so steep that it is saddening that the world didn't wake up to its detrimental results a tad bit earlier. It is famously known that the production of a pair of jeans requires anywhere upwards of 2,000 litres of water and the industry produces around 10 percent of global CO2 emissions (4-5 billion tonnes annually)

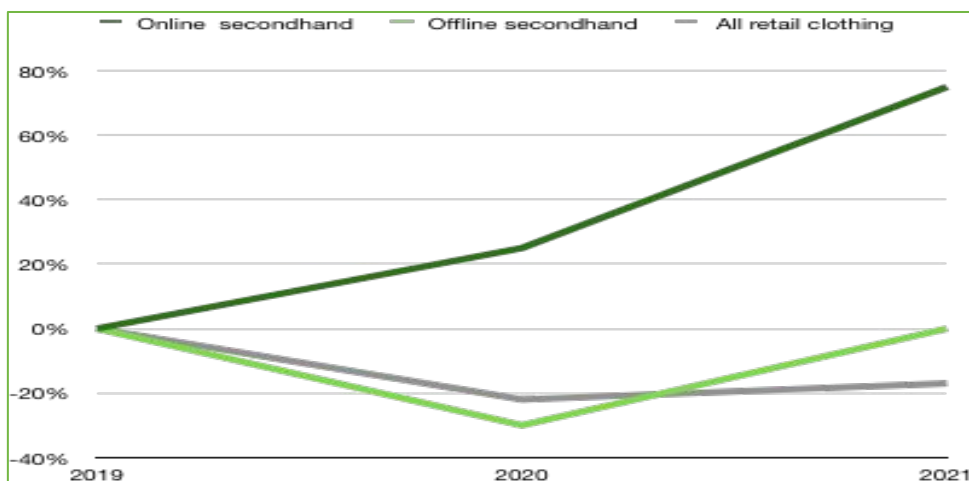
Thrifting, an age-old concept is now finding resonance and appeal amongst Gen Z and millennials. Sustainable younger shoppers and bargain-hunting consumers who are feeling the economic pinch of the COVID-19 pandemic are increasingly giving up their clothes for resale which are in a good condition.



Online shoppers in India are familiar with brands like Myntra, Ajo, Flipkart and Limeroad, but since last year, many have noticed stores like Posh Past, Thrift Fiction, Nush Thrifts and other stores surfacing on Instagram. These are a few of the online thrift stores offering an array of unique pre-loved fashion pieces at affordable prices.

Though it's been a trend in western countries for a few years now, India too has been witnessing the rise of slow fashion in these past years. As opposed to fast fashion, which keeps pace with seasonal fashion trends, slow fashion calls for a sustainable model which depends on reusing pre-used clothes and accessories. The emergence of these online thrift stores is a stand towards sustainable fashion in order to eliminate the consequences of fast-fashion industries like dumping clothes which are rejected and unsold, into landfills.

Trends to Slow Fashion



It was in the second half of 2020 that consumers began to see an increase in Indian-based online thrift stores on Instagram. The pandemic forced everyone to 'go online' —which is a key reason behind the success of online thrift stores.

COVID-19 Impact On Sales

Online thrift stores did not face any major issues with sales during the lockdown and in fact there was an increase in sales for many brands since people were spending more time on online shopping. There were some minor issues in operations which the thrift stores owners still had to bear like utilising private courier services which are slightly more costly than the Indian postal system which they usually rely on, lack of access to vendors etc.

How much did the COVID-19 induced lockdown affect the sales and day-to-day working of your business?

FOLKPANTS- “We had no issues with sales during the lockdown and in fact there was more business since people were spending more time on online shopping. It did affect our sourcing for a while since we could not access our vendors so we had to invest in procuring more products whenever there was an opportunity to get hold of them.”

EVERGREEN THRIFT INDIA- “The initial lockdown in 2020 led to a boost in sales. The recent 2021 definitely saw a decline.”

With the pandemic kicking in and business shops shutting down, people were forced to shift their businesses online. Customers who were not in the favour of purchasing online were also compelled to familiarise themselves with e-commerce.

Along with the old ones, New startups also emerged on various social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook.

Thrift stores got a common platform to boost their sales and create an identity for themselves. People started recognising these stores due to their widespread presence on Instagram.

A report by thredUp, one of world's largest fashion resale platforms, published in 2020, valued the resale market at \$28 billion (around ₹2 trillion) in 2019. This is expected to grow to \$64 billion by 2024. Though there are no official figures for India, a search for '#thriftindia' on Instagram throws up over 6.25 lakh posts and over 60 handles that deal with thrifting.

People saw these as an alternative for expensive branded clothes and some saw it as an environment friendly solution to the harms of Fast fashion.

Great opportunities come with several threats in the future. Although the pandemic gave a major boost to the thrift stores, it has also exposed them to the competition of the fashion industry in general. Not only this, the future of the thrift stores post pandemic seems to be very uncertain and strategies need to be formulated to maintain their existence and help them flourish their businesses.

These can include a good marketing team. Since, these social media stores rely heavily on people gravitating toward their platform, they should spend time on conceptualising the look and feel of their page. Many stores say they spend most of their time in planning photoshoots, since pictures are the primary medium through which purchases are made. This is because building a community is essential to having a thrift store, with many thriving off repeat orders. According to data shared by The Thrift Shop, over 40 percent of people who shop with them are repeat customers.

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Apart from sanitisation being a major challenge, every other business depends on logistics, dispatching parcels which has been a challenge during the lockdown. However, the progress that the new and the old brands have seen in terms of sales numbers within the short time that they have been in business definitely speaks volumes about this segment's growth in the upcoming years.

After Shein, a popular Chinese affordable shopping site, was banned in India last year, consumers were forced to search for other sources of pocket-friendly fashion.

According to many thrift store owners, the *quality, longevity and affordability* of fashion in thrift stores is yet another reason people have opted to thrift instead of shopping from stores like Zara and H&M.

A recent innovation, ReThought is a unique platform which has been developed to bring together the thrifting culture closer to the consumer in just one click. The founders are keen on spreading awareness on thrifting in India and want to make this a culture, a practice, and most importantly, a conscious choice for the Indian audience.

It offers a platform to thrift brands and is one of the first in India to bring together many thrift clothing brands under one roof. They take a very small commission from the brands, and in turn they offer a virtual shop front to the thrift stores. On the other hand, the price tag on which they sell is highly affordable and makes it a win-win for the seller and the buyer.

CONCLUSION



The purpose for this report was to delve deeper into what future holds for Sustainable Fashion in India for which Primary and Secondary research work were conducted

As the survey suggests, a lot of people have a perception that sustainable fashion is overpriced, made of biodegradable materials, Ethical and fair labour practices are followed and no hazardous substances like chemicals are used for production. To display the right picture of sustainable fashion the companies will have to work on their brand image and scale up with the awareness programmes on how these products are made, their pricing etc. So that transparency is created.

The survey also shows the understanding of Thrift stores by the respondents as a cost effective tool for shopping, but respondents assume Thrift stores are providing products/Styles that are out of fashion and unhygienic, therefore brands need to pay more emphasis on how to portray their products and win the trust of the buyers.

When asked if they are interested to learn more about Sustainable Fashion, an enormous amount of respondents (77.2%) gave answers as Yes, which can also mean there is a lack of knowledge amongst the population and Brands have to work a lot on this front.

The research report is well equipped with as many as 15+ such Branding Strategies which can be fruitful for brands to grow and create an impact on the consumers.

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