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A STUDY ON IMPACT OF PEER GROUP AND SOCIAL MEDIA ON WOMEN SHOPPERS OF ATHLEISURE PRODUCTS

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ABSTRACT:

The Athleisure movement captured so much attention that Merriam Webster officially added the term to the dictionary in November 2015. Athleisure is defined as the 'casual clothing' like yoga pants, sweat pants and hoodies designed to be worn both for exercising and doing almost everything else. Athleisure is becoming more than just a term defining Athleisure. With people taking to active lifestyle to remain fit, active wear segment in India is on a growth track. Big sports brands like Adidas, Puma, Nike and Reebok have taken note of this change and turned to be sports lifestyle brands in India. While the segment's focus has been more on men's category, the women's category is seeing rapid growth. With increasing brand play, many Indian labels are making inroads into this lucrative market. The active wear segment is expected to reach total value of around \$1.3 billion growing at CAGR of 19 % between 2013-2017. ("Milind Soman Launches Women Athleisure Brand - ET Retail"). In this context, this paper aims at studying the influence of social media, price and peer group on millennial women demographics for Athleisure.

KEYWORDS: Social media, millennial, Athleisure

1. INTRODUCTION

India witnessed a growing trend towards daily exercise, group exercise or simply people taking part in sporting activities. This trend continued in 2016, with more local sports and exercise groups emerging in urban areas and helping to drive sales of sportswear. Sportswear is expected to continue to grow over the forecast period. The rising sporting culture, growing number of sports clubs across India's regions and an increased emphasis on fitness are all expected to benefit the category. The Indian population is generally young, with youths expected to show a greater interest in fitness and sport. Sportswear players are thus likely to introduce more fashionable products over the forecast period to target the youth demographic.

Taking above information into account, the consumer research survey on "A Study on Impact of Peer Group and Social Media on Women Shoppers of Athleisure" was conducted to analyse how millennials purchase decisions vary from gen X and baby boomers. Gen X customers are attributed to people born during the 1960s and 1970s. Members of Generation X are often described as cynical or disaffected, though this reputation obviously does not apply to all people born during this era.

A key trend spanning all over India, is that about 64% of the population in India will be millennials, (the term Millennials is usually considered to apply to individuals who reached adulthood around the turn of the 21st century). The millennial generation is different from its predecessor in more than one fundamental ways. For one, they are more focused on the experience aspect of consumption. In this report we also look into distinct behavior patterns of the coming generation and the future customers for the brands.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

An online questionnaire was administered manually to all the young and old millennials and Gen X and baby boomers in all the gyms and U.S Polo Assn. stores in Bengaluru. The questionnaire consisted of 14

questions with 4 demographic questions which aimed at analyzing how millennials differ from Gen X and baby boomers when shopping for Athleisure. The total sample size was identified based on certain demographic variables such as age groups, family/individual income levels, frequency of shopping, top and bottom wear preferences, peer impact and social media impact on millennials. As a result, the total number of respondents were 250 (sample size $N = 250$). Following hypotheses were proposed to test

H_1 : There may be significant association existing between peer group and millennials while buying Athleisure.

H_2 : There may be significant association existing between social media and millennials who buy Athleisure.

3. DATA ANALYSIS

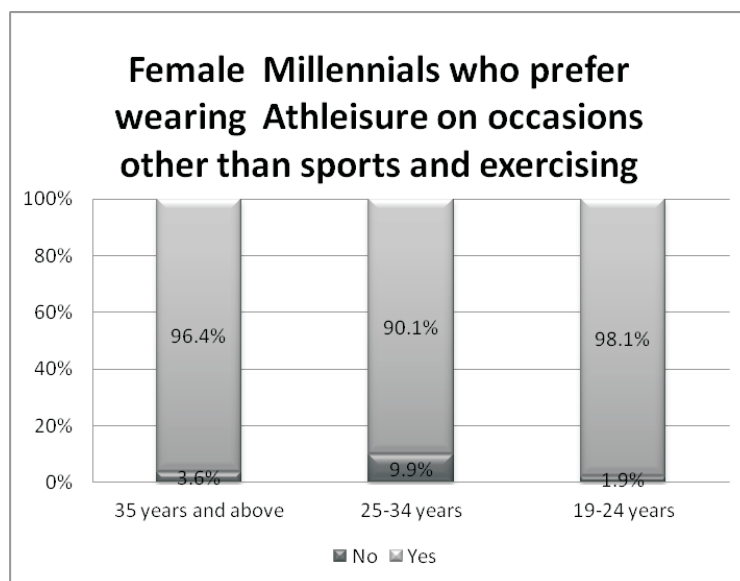
3.1. Demographic Details of the Respondents

The following table 1 shows the demographic details of the respondents

Table 1: Demographic Details of the Respondents	
Age	
19-24 Years	42%
25-34 Years	36%
35 and above	22%
Annual Income (in Rs.)	
0-5 Lac	15%
5-10 Lac	60%
10-20 Lac	21%
Above 20 Lac	4%

3.2. Acceptance of Athleisure

The following table shows the acceptance of Athleisure outside the gym and exercising by the respondents.



From the above graph, it was found that female millennials as well as the gen X and baby boomers like to wear Athleisure outside of the gym or for purposes except exercising and sports. It is important for a brand to know if the category that they are planning to introduce will be accepted by the target group or not.

3.3. Results of Hypothesis Testing: Peer Impact

H_0 : There is no significant association existing between peer group and millennials while buying Athleisure.

H_1 : There is a significant association existing between peer group and millennials while buying Athleisure.

A one-way analysis of variance was conducted to evaluate the null hypothesis that there is no difference in peer impact based on age groups of female respondents (N=250). The independent variable, age groups included 3 groups; Group 1 (M = 2.462; Sd = 0.43554; N = 104) and Group 2 (M = 2.1275; Sd = 0.49488; N = 91) and Group 3 (M = 2.2182; Sd = 0.422123; N = 55).

The ANOVA was significant, $F(2, 250) = 1.727; 0.180 = >0.05$.

Thus, there is significant evidence to reject alternate hypothesis and conclude there is no significant difference in peer impact based on age groups of female respondents.

3.4. Results of Hypothesis Testing: Social Media Impact

H_0 : There is no significant association existing between social media influence and millennials while buying Athleisure.

H_1 : There is a significant association existing between social media influence and millennials while buying Athleisure.

A one-way analysis of variance was conducted to evaluate the null hypothesis that there is a difference in social media impact based on age groups of female respondents (N=250). The independent variable, age groups included 3 groups; Group 1 (M = 2.9865; Sd = 0.74587; N = 104) and Group 2 (M = 2.4703; Sd = 0.70828; N = 91) and Group 3 (M = 2.57092; Sd = 0.69433; N = 55).

The ANOVA was significant, $F(2, 250) = 13.690; 0.00 = <0.05$.

Thus there is significant evidence to reject null hypothesis and accept alternate hypothesis. Thus, concluding there is a significant difference in peer impact based on age groups of female respondents.

3.5. Conclusion

The women's Athleisure category in India is showing signs of accelerated growth with international brands also entering the market with Athleisure segment dedicated to women. The target market for Athleisure is clearly the younger millennials because those are the people spending their incomes on experiences and fashion significantly. There has also been a greater interest in sports among the urban population. This has combined with the need of today's consumers to be aspirational and quality conscious, thus leading to the category increasing in both value and volume, and brands continuing to remain important. Brands like Nike and Adidas who have large marketing budgets are still perceived better. However, due to increase in the number of choices, consumers are increasingly shopping for other brands. While peer have no impact on millennials while shopping for Athleisure, social media plays an important role.

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