

A study on the factors influencing the preference of Sri Lankan consumers for the use of denim jeans

KARUNARATNE P.V.M.*; WIJAYAKURUPPU M. B. M. W., WIJAYAPALA U. G. S,
RANATHUNGA G. M

^{1, 2, 3, 4} Department of Textile & Clothing Technology, Faculty of Engineering, University of Moratuwa,
Katubedda, Sri Lanka

Abstract

Aim: This paper analyzes the current demand for denim apparel in Sri Lanka to determine the factors influencing consumer preferences when purchasing denim jeans. Women's denim jeans are trending due to a wide variety of flattering cuts and washes. According to the data, women were more likely to buy denim jeans, and they were increasingly interested in the fashion industry. Although research has been done to assess consumer preference in the Sri Lankan denim fashion apparel market, it has yet to be useful in determining how consumers feel about denim jeans globally.

Method: The researchers used a questionnaire to evaluate factors of preference for buying denim jeans. We received 88 completed surveys from interested consumers.

Findings: When shopping for denim jeans, 85.5% of consumers place a high priority on quality, according to the data. This research lends credence to the idea that consumers' tastes in denim jeans are complex and multifaceted. Results were analyzed, and it was determined that some of the suggestions could be implemented in future product development to improve the quality and aesthetic appeal of denim jeans sold in the Sri Lankan denim apparel fashion market.

Implications/Novel Contribution: Although denim jeans are a staple in Sri Lankan wardrobes, there is a paucity of research into consumer consumers for this ubiquitous product. To improve the future of retail fashion in Sri Lanka, this study reveals some crucial facts about denim apparel brands and factors of preference of such consumers.

Keywords: Denim jeans, Consumer preference, Denim apparel market, Denim detailing, Denim brands

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INTRODUCTION

As one of the economy's most lucrative and dynamic sectors, the apparel industry in Sri Lanka accounts for most of the country's export earnings. Over time, the government has developed into a top-tier manufacturer for some of the world's most influential brands, vastly grateful to its emphasis on design and inexpensive manufacturing (Piyachat, 2017; Rajasekera & Karunasena, 2013). It amounts to about \$3 trillion, and 2% of the GDP (Jayasuriya, Azam, & Ferdous, 2017). The retail value of the apparel industry is currently estimated at \$1.3 trillion, and this number is expected to rise to \$1.5 trillion by (McEachern, Middleton, & Cassidy, 2020). People in Sri Lanka are eager to follow fashion trends and keep up with new styles, making the retail apparel market an essential part of the country's overall apparel industry (Sinclair, 2015). Since the fashion retail sector accounts for such a large share of the industry (39%), it presents a promising area for growth (Jayasuriya et al., 2017).

The demand for denim clothing seems to have no end. Denim is a versatile fabric that can be worn any time of the year thanks to its stylish texture Vijayalakshmi and Ramachandran (2012). Denim fabrics and clothing have proven their ability to transcend age and gender barriers, as evidenced by their meteoric rise to prominence and universal acceptance. Denim manufacturers face the enormous challenge of coming up with new ideas and products to meet the needs of their diverse customer base. The denim market is as dispersed as any other clothing market. Capacity denim is produced by about 60% of the world's manufacturers in Asia. Thousands of companies

* Corresponding author: Karunaratne P. V. M

† Email: virajinik@uom.lk

segment their customer bases to focus on specific people to increase their market share. Because of their durability and versatility, denim jeans have quickly become a modern wardrobe staple. Modern consumers can find jeans in a wide range of styles, washes, and cuts to satisfy their individual preferences. More and more clothing labels are starting to recognize the timeless style that denim reflects. Denim retailers put a premium on fits and washes that reflect the latest in celebrity and street style. Market expansion is being impacted by economic, social, and demographic factors. Identifying the postmodern consumer has been the focus of the few studies looking into Sri Lankans' attitudes toward specific denim brands (Liyanage, 2010). Consumers' taste for casual, laid-back, and stylish denim garments has shifted in recent years. Denim is popular now because consumers believe it is durable enough to withstand the wear and tear of daily life (Anwar & Talib, 2018; Periyasamy & Militky, 2017). Consequently, denim jeans rapidly become one of the most popular garments in established and emerging fashion markets. After increasing from \$56.2 billion in 2014 to a projected \$64.1 billion in 2020, the global denim industry is expected to significantly increase (Fiber 2 Fashion, 2013). The high demand for denim clothing has led to numerous improvements in the manufacturing process. New value-added finishes, such as those that add fragrance or are resistant to mold and mildew, are increasing product worth. These days, you can buy denim that has been woven, knitted, and dyed in a wide variety of styles and colors. The study found that many previous studies on denim jeans had set out to answer questions like, "How do consumers feel about different brands of denim jeans?" or "What factors influence people's purchasing decisions when it comes to denim jeans?" Hwang Shin, Fowler, and Lee (2013), Jin, Park, and Ryu (2010), Manzoor, Baig, Malik, and Shahid (2020), Rahman (2011), Rahman (2012), Wu and DeLong (2006). People have yet to look into why people like denim jeans so much. Given the potential importance of consumer preference in purchasing decisions and further product development, it is important to identify the factors influencing consumers' preference for denim jeans.

The goal of this research is to fill a void in the existing literature by investigating the elements that influence consumer preference for denim jeans and pinpointing the factors that would lead to an uptick in demand for these garments in terms of cost, style, and wearability. This research aims to contribute to the literature by analyzing the connections between four prominent brands and their associated social attitudes. For this reason, we set out to investigate the tastes of Sri Lankan consumers and the unique challenges they face when shopping for denim jeans.

Significance of the Study

Despite the widespread popularity of denim jeans in Sri Lanka, more research needs to examine how shoppers feel about the material. This research sheds light on the brands of denim clothing that consumers in Sri Lanka prefer and the factors influencing their purchasing decisions, which should improve the country's retail fashion industry in the long run.

LITERATURE REVIEW

History of Denim, Denim Fabric and Denim Market

"Denim" is a French word goes back to 16th Century and derived from the word serge de Nimes and popularity started in 1873 (Manzoor et al., 2020). During 17th Century Levi Strauss migrated to North America and designed a pair of trousers incorporating pockets for gold miners by using denim material and named it as "jeans". The word 'jean' is derived from the word 'Genoa', which refers to the material that sailors from Genoa used for their pants (Choudhury, 2017). Denim had political and cultural importance during the development of jeans. From workers' pants to rebelliousness, the image changed: it was a symbol of protest, liberty and individuality. A choice for a typical brand or style defined by the cultural group to which you belonged during the years. Fashion trends began moving faster in the sixties, and this was the start of massive textile mills in developing countries (Choudhury, 2017). Fast fashion emerged rapidly in the nineties; shops expanded exponentially into large fast-fashion chains. The jeans have become a popular item in the mainstream and it is available for anyone who seeks costly good quality but also cheap fast fashion jeans are on the market nowadays. The slow movements have begun with consumers concerned about sustainable and acceptable production (Vijayalakshmi & Ramachandran, 2012).

Denim fabrics are generally made of staple-fiber yarns where two or more warp fibers pass under the weft, producing the familiar diagonal ribbing identifiable on the fabric's reverse. Indigo is the most common denim, while the weft thread is left white, where the warp thread is dyed. The blue warp threads dominate one side of the denim

fabric because of the warp-faced twill weaving, and the other side is white weft threads (Telli & Babaarslan, 2016). It has been noticed that through the ages denim jeans evolved from casual wear to functional wear. Today consumers of all social and economic classes were attracted denim jeans and apparently manufacturers and designers seek innovative products for mass market and the niche market to meet consumer needs (Periyasamy & Militky, 2017). Traditionally blue denim with "Indigo dye" jeans denoted a different, heavy blue Jeans textile-cotton. It has become a material of inspiration in clothes with a good appeal in historians' hearts, designers, teens, stars of the internet, reporters and authors. Indeed the drastic rise in the production of denim textiles and the consumption of fashion is reflected in the emergence of fast fashion, a business model based on offering in the form of low-priced, trend-led products consumers frequently experience innovation (Niinimäki et al., 2020). As a consequence, when the fast-fashion phenomena began and the overall increase in denim clothing production demand is estimated to be 2 percent annually, brands now produce almost twice the number of clothing collections compared to pre-2000 (Eckman, Damhorst, & Kadolph, 1990; Fletcher, 2016; Remy, Speelman, & Swartz, 2016). In turn, the increase in consumption and efficiency in the production of fashion products has caused the cost of clothing to be meager (Remy et al., 2016).

Consumer Behavior

In the context of marketing, understanding consumer behavior is important, particularly in the current dynamic marketplace. Some of the desires of customers can be defined as the outcomes of their consumer behavioral features, which have changed over time (Karunaratna, 2015; De Silva & Herath, 2019) explains that 'consumer behavior that can be defined as consumer thinking, feeling and behavior and the impacts that determine the exchange on them. Dinesha explained that "the consumer purchasing process involves five steps: recognition of needs, search for information, alternative evaluation, purchase decision and post-purchase evaluation. This process, moreover is influenced by social factors, marketing and situational variables. Depending on the color, brand, fashion, and product, the choice of clothes and interests can differ from person to person. Studies show that Sri Lankan consumers are price-conscious; it can be seen as relatively high price-conscious among the low-income group or when income declines are experienced by people. In general, most Sri Lankans are looking for value-for-price," but at low prices, these individuals are not prepared to accept any quality (De Silva & Herath, 2019).

The Factors of Consumer Demand: Consumer Attitudes towards Apparel Selection

The selection process involves touching the fabric of the garment and trying on clothes when shopping for clothes. A complicated multi-sensory, emotional and cognitive experience takes place in this process. A feeling of emotion is stirred by a memory, and association is evoked and a decision is made, an impression is embossed in the mind. Choices and motivations are therefore based on the expected reality of preference, personality, emotion, and moods (Ozlu & Sevinir, 2019). The spectrum of function, durability, cost, and user experience is determined by product materials. Material aspects can for the most part, be categorized into two groups, namely the technical aspects and the user-interaction aspects. While the technical aspects of materials describe how the item is going to be the aspects of user interaction that are produced and how it will work are those that affect the usability and personality of a product (Blijlevens et al., 2017). In modern society, the focus has entered the times of cultural and spiritual consumption, paying more attention to emotional value, i.e., the times of emotional consumption. Several studies show that the intangible side of product design is growing in interest and recognition, which has led researchers and professionals to put more emphasis on issues such as product pleasure, product semantics, emotions, etc (Sinclair, 2015).

Studies proved that consumers use different parameters to evaluate apparels either intrinsic and or extrinsic qualities (Forsythe, Presley, & Caton, 1996). Both qualities are known as concrete attributes. Intrinsic qualities are inherited from the products like design, style, fabric type and construction details that cannot change without changing the entire physical characteristics of the product. Furthermore, various product features, the consumer's decision-making process is primarily affected by key features, such as fit, comfort, style, workmanship, and color (Yadav, Khandai, & Singh, 2019). Concrete attributes of the product influence buying habits of consumers (Swinker & Hines, 2006; Olson & Jacoby, 1972). Consumers value, differentiate and form impressions on products based

on product extrinsic cues such as brand, image of the store and price. Most consumers think that brands stand for product features and are useful in positioning the brand in a product attribute space. In studies on consumer evaluation of new products, most consumer characteristics are addressed (Abbasi, 2017). Excitement as a consumer feature provides a thorough understanding of buying intentions and may be the primary driver of purchasing intentions.

Study also revealed that fashion conscious consumers perception on quality is based on product brand but not general consumers do so (Forsythe et al., 1996). Consumers of fashion apparel seem more likely to make "trade-offs "between various attributes of clothing, such as longevity, comfort and quality (i.e., practical attributes) and color, fashion and style (i.e., hedonistic attributes) (Sondhi & Singhvi, 2006). A study shows that intrinsic characteristics were important to consumers more often than were extrinsic factors when all studies buying apparel (Eckman et al., 1990). The intrinsic cues are tangible qualities and may be considered as aesthetic expectations of consumers as they concern design types and style details. In the fashion industry, by using visual merchandising, the similarity of products and competition in the market forces each segment to enhance the desirability of products. In order to be competitive, it's time for retailers to shift their attitude to compete effectively and keep up with global rivals in terms of visual merchandising (Banerjee, Datta, & Daga, 2018).

Consumer Demand for Denim Apparel

Apparel produced by using denim is popular in the fashion world. Denim jeans, trousers, and jackets are well known fashion products consumed by contemporary consumers. Denim apparel is famous because of its light and washing fastness and numerous shades and hues. Consumers embraced denim apparel because of its thermo-physiological comfort factor felt when consumers wear it (Mangat & Hes, 2015). Considering the quality of the jeans is one of the primary attributes of consumers in their purchasing process (Forsythe et al., 1996). They also stated that compared to other apparel categories, the quality of denim jeans is often based on its brand. The colour is one of the most recurring visual evaluative factors influences on visual and tactile inputs on denim Jeans evaluation followed by fabric, stitch and style (Ahmad, Ali, Malik, Humayun, & Ahmad, 2019; Rahman, 2012) stated that the intention to buy is an effective use of the tool in predicting the process of buying. It ensures that consumers will be driven by their intention when in a specific store, they decide to purchase the product.

Current Denim Brands in Sri Lankan Fashion Apparel Market

Denim apparel is a fast-moving dress in Sri Lankan fashion market. The fashion industry is becoming essential to the market's economic growth. This can be one of the tools for industry players (channel members) to fulfill the purchasing needs of the consumer in the market (Yadav et al., 2019). Designers play a pivotal role throughout all product categories, and increase the social value of jeans, so that the retail price no longer represents the cost of manufacturing labor and materials (Brooks, 2015). Increasing the market for denim is decided by customer preference and the producer stability. Producer stability is based on consumer preference too. Therefore, a consumer is the main target of the garment. The enhancement of the demand of the product is in par with the availability for a variety of choices to consumers. Denim apparel incorporates washes, trims, details, and composition in the production stage. The washes are varied and are mainly dark wash, mid-wash and light wash. Types of washes are the impact on the appearance and the price of the garment. Denim apparel also incorporates numbers of attached trims and some are used for aesthetic aspect and technical aspect. Except for utilizing zippers, the buttoning is easier and comfortable. The styling detailing in denim garments impacts the price. The composition of the material gives comfort and cotton composition creates much comfort for the consumer. Cotton mixed types of denim are higher in price than spandex. Sri Lankan consumers prefer to wear denim jeans at day to day life as it is an all-time accepting garment. They try to choose the best. There are 6 denim brands studied which are available in fashion outlets in Colombo suburb. They are brand L, K, H, D, M and DW. A key trend identified in the market is the shifting inclination of consumers towards distressed, cropped, and patched jeans. Trending jeans, including those with cropped hems, as well as boyfriend jeans, two-tone jeans, and skinny jeans, are increasingly focused on consumers around Sri Lanka and the world. Due to their casual appearance and media promotions, these styles are gaining enormous momentum among customers, especially the younger population. In addition, decorative denims

with details like patches, laces, and details.

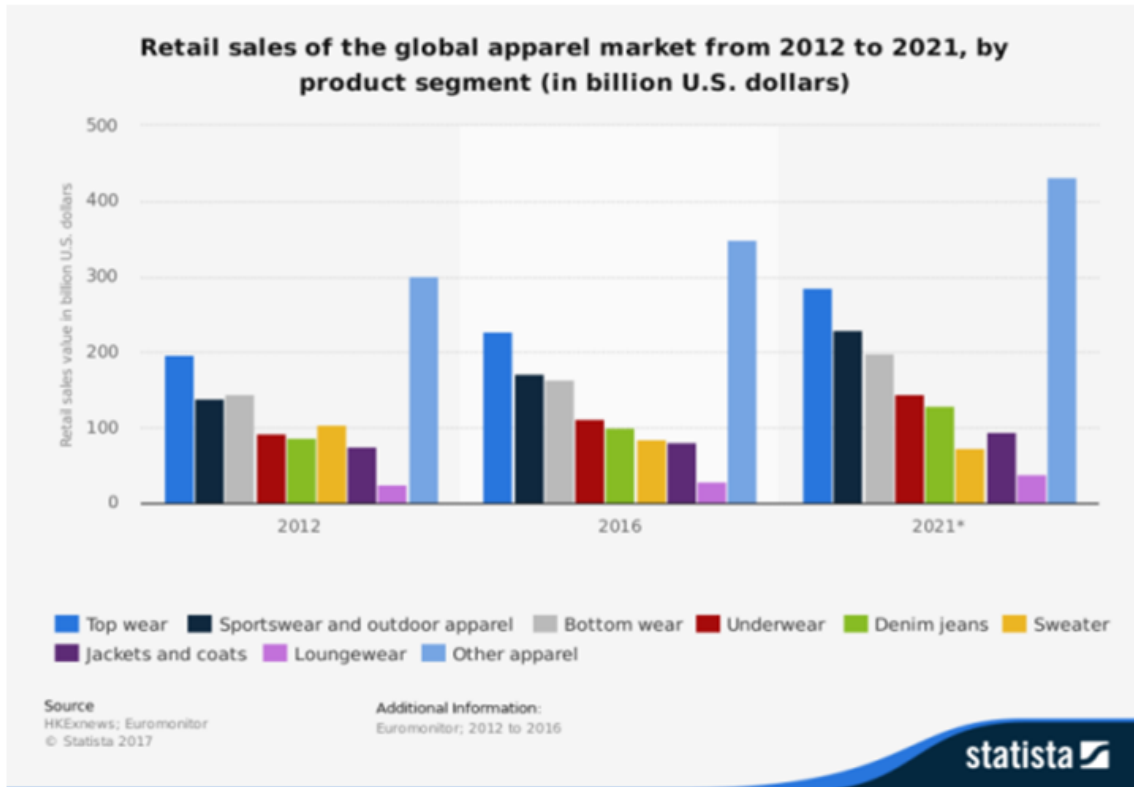


Figure 1. Retail sales of the global apparel market: 2012-2022 <https://bit.ly/3o7rO5d>

Figure 1 depicts the retail sale of the global market from 2012-2021 by capturing the product segment in billion US dollars. The statistics proved that the value of the denim market worldwide has increased in 2021 and may have a global market value of approximately 150 billion U.S. dollars.

Details of Denim Jeans available in Sri Lankan Fashion Apparel Market



Figure 2. Dark wash tool grind denim



Figure 3. Mid wash chino pocket denim



Figure 4. Elastic waistband



Figure 5. Coded waist



Figure 6. Tapes



Figure 7. Shank

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The Study Context

Sri Lanka is a multi-ethnic country that has 4 ethnic categories which is Sinhalese (74%), Sri Lankan Tamils (11%), Indian Tamils (4%), Moors (9%), and Others (1%). The religious composition is made up of Buddhists (70%), Hindus (13%), Christians (7%) and Muslims (10%). Sri Lanka has a population of about 20 million, with 15-54 age categories (62%) and secondary categories. 0-14 (26%) is the largest age group in Sri Lanka ([Report of Central Bank of Sri Lanka, 2012](#)). This study adapted both qualitative and quantitative research methods, as this approach

provides greater insight into the problem and enhances the integrity of findings. Original data were gathered by Truth Initiative based on 10 leading fashion stores in the vicinity of Colombo via expert interviews and focus groups.

Methods

In this study, there were 3 data collection methods utilized to collect the primary data, from the market observation, questionnaire survey and interviews. To identify the view of consumers on the fashion market for denim apparel, a closed-ended questionnaire survey was conducted. Semi-structured interviews with fashion designers who work for selected fashion brands in Sri Lanka, in order to gain an understanding of the current denim fashion industry from the point of view of the garment manufacturer and to learn about the current demand in the industry, the denim market was catered for.

Expert Interviews

Expert interviews were conducted with denim apparel industry experts, fashion designers, apparel producers and merchandisers who work in the industry to gain insight into how the denim product is developed, accessorized and manufactured to meet customer needs. These experts have been chosen to ensure an academic and a marketing view points on buying denim apparel and performance of selling denim apparels which produced customer orientation. Questions asked via a structured discussion guide encouraged experts to explain their understanding of how the consumption pattern and attitudes of behavior over certain product categories of the contemporary denim consumers of Sri Lanka.

Focus Groups

The sequence of shop visits was made to fashion outlets offering denim fashion apparel in the Colombo area during the month of August and October 2019. The purpose of the visits were to observe the available denim garments and to compare them from each outlet according consumer preferences under three main factors: price, outlook and comfortability. Moreover, buying behavior of consumers was observed at each outlet. The findings were recorded in a sheet. The next, conducted a closed-ended questionnaire survey focused on identifying the perception of the consumers on denim fashion apparel in the market. The questionnaire consisted of demographic information and day- to-day shopping behavior. Under them their personal preferences for denim jeans on different factors and categories were analyzed. Colombo (capital of SL) and its vicinity were considered ideal settings for capturing denim apparel fashion trend followers. It was assumed that the total population of women aged between 13 and 60 is 6,534,466 (Department of Census and Statistics, 2014). Accordingly, 120 female consumers were given the questionnaire and nearly 100 respondents were answered. It is important to note that the sample size used in this analysis is consistent with the sample sizes previously used in other related studies (Upadhyay & Ambavale, 2015). According to the results regarding the preference for denim jeans brands and fashion outlets in Sri Lanka, carried out the shop visit and evaluation. There were 8 fashion brands observed. Based on the data gathered identified the reasons why these consumers prefer to visit these outlets and choose such denim brands. The reason is that these outlets sell denim jeans according to the consumer preferences. There were planned interviews to understand the current denim fashion apparel industry from the garment manufacturers point of view and to learn more about the prevailing construction and finishing techniques employed in the industry. Interviews were held in the month of October and November 2019 with selected merchandisers of denim fashion apparel market targeting to obtain an idea about the costing related factors for washes and trims of denim jeans. However, the focus was limited to 8 fashion brands in view of the small market size and prevailing restrictions of ability to collect the required data for the research. The research was done under considering 8 Sri Lankan denim brands, namely brand A, B, C, D, E, F, G, and brand H. Among them brand A acquired the highest preference of consumer through the survey while brand B was selected as the second most preferred brand and respectively other brands acquired C, D, E, F, G and H respective places for preference in order.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The questions are aligned according to buying behavior of consumers based on economic, social, aesthetic awareness and product development factors that would affect the demand on denim apparel. Consumer research

was focused on 12 questions that targeted denim preference consumers. The questions are line with buying interest for denims, age limits, occupation, preferable garment type, spending power for denim apparel, preference for types of washes, preference for incorporating trims on denims, detailing on denim jeans and preferred Sri Lankan denim jeans brands that retail in vicinities of Colombo. The questionnaire survey proved that three brands (brand A, B, and C) were very popular in retail outlets in Colombo.

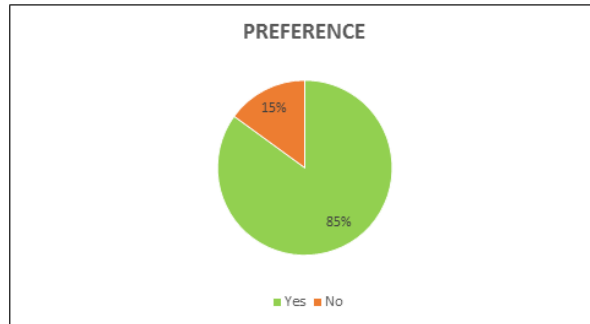


Figure 8. Buying preference of denim garments

The survey also proved that 85.2% of female consumers were interested in denim apparel while 14.8% of females are not interested in denim apparel.

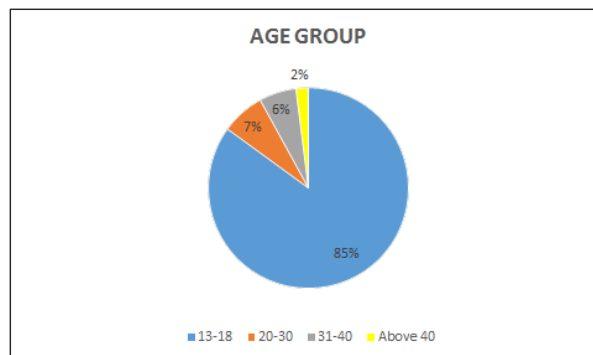


Figure 9. Age limits and denim consumers

Figure 9 shows the responses of different age groups that participated in the study. Age limit of consumers between 20-30, 31-40 and 40 above responded. It was proved that ages between 20-30 females are the most interesting group that consume denim apparel.

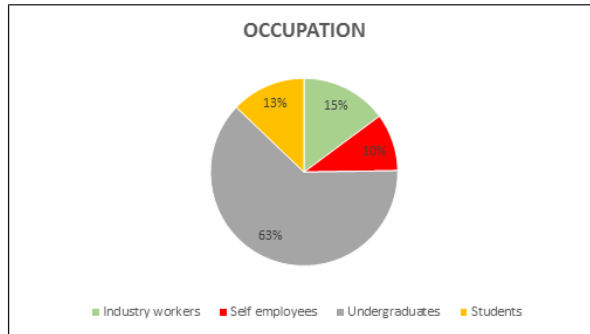


Figure 10. Occupation

According to the occupation parameter there were 62.5% of female undergraduates, 14.5% of industry workers, 12.5% of students and 10.2% of self-employees preferred denim apparel.

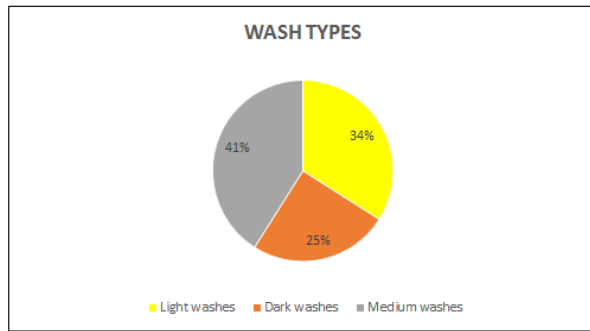


Figure 11. Wash types

Figure 11 showcases the available wash types of denim jeans and consumer demands. 40.9% of the consumers preferred dark washes as well as 34.1% of consumers prefer light washes denim jeans and only 25% were interested in denim jeans or medium washes. The results proved that the majority preferred dark washes and the industry proved that it requires the lowest costing process; hence it is recommended that the production could be increased for denim jeans of dark washes.

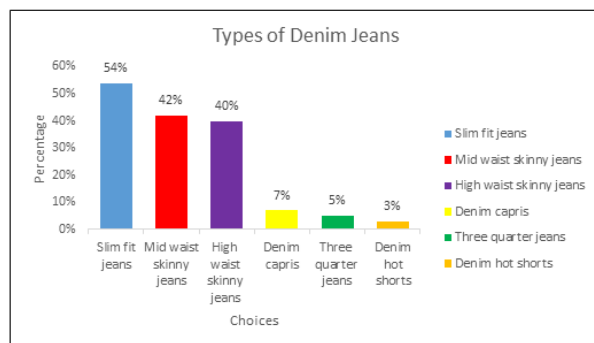


Figure 12. Types of denim jeans

Figure 12 represent the types of denim jeans that are available in the current apparel market. According to the statistics, 54% of consumers like slim fit jeans while 42% consumers choose second choice as mid waist skinny jeans. 40% of consumers consume high waist skinny jeans and 7% of consumers paid less consideration for denim capris. A few consumers preferred three quarter jeans that are 5% and very few 3% of consumers like denim hot

shorts. These results show that denim jeans acquired a high popularity of female consumers.

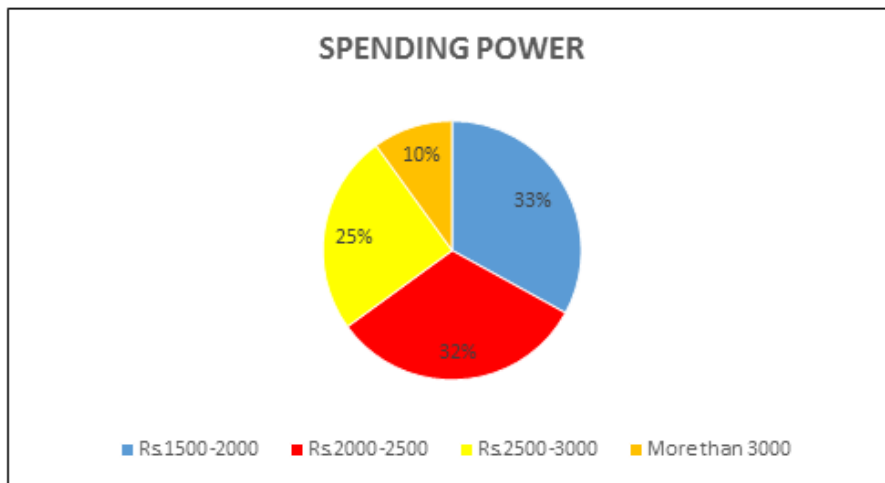


Figure 13. Spending power

Figure 13 brings to the consideration of spending power of consumers for denim jeans. Considering on consumer spending power showed that 33% of respondents spent Sri Lankan rupees 2000-2500 (USD 10.82-13.53) for a denim jean while 31.8% of consumers spent rupees 1500-2000(USD 8.12-10.82) for denim jeans. Furthermore 25% of consumers spent rupees 2500-3000 (USD 13.53-16.23) for denim jeans while least numbers of consumers which were 10% from the sample population spent rupees 3000 (USD16.23) for denim jeans. These results show that the price range of rupees 2000-2500 is a more convenient price range for denim jeans that a consumer could afford .

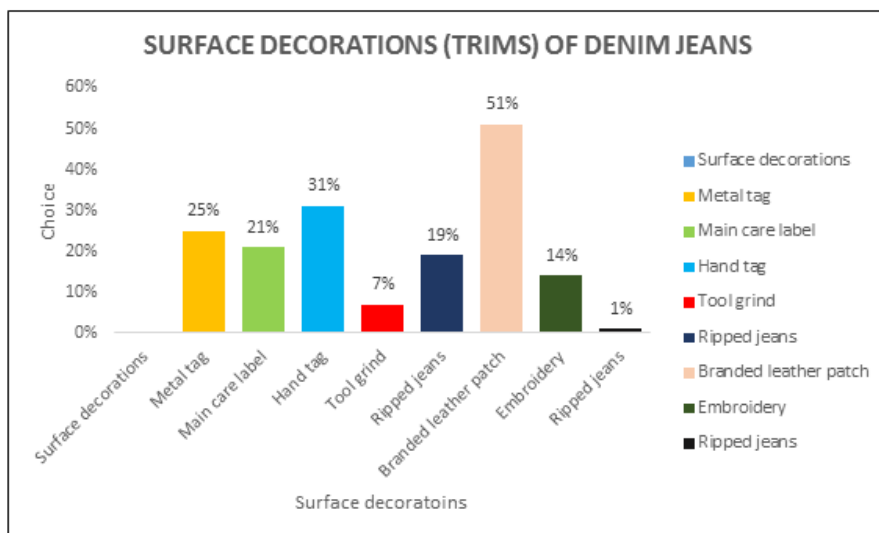


Figure 14. Surface decorations (trims) of denim jeans

Figure 14 highlighted consumer preference for surface decorations on denim jeans. By considering the surface details attached on denim jeans, 58% of consumers chose branded leather patches and responded that it was more comfortable. 28.4% preferred the metal tag and responded that it was not comfortable. 35.2% of consumers interested in hand tag jeans and that was a low price. There were 21.6% of consumers interested in ripped jeans and 14.8% of consumers were not interested in surface decorations. The production cost for ripped jeans took a low price and that had been given a better look for denim jeans than surface decorations. Other than surface decorations,

there were 23.9% of consumers interested in the main care label and the least numbers of consumers that were 8% of them preferred surface look of tool grinded.

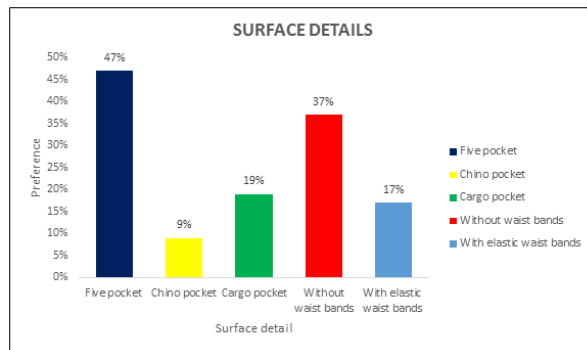


Figure 15. Surface details

Figure 15 showcases 8 types of detail attachments that are available in Sri Lankan fashion outlets. Among the total numbers of consumers 53.4% preferred five pocket denim jeans and 21.6% of consumers interested in cargo pocketed denim jeans while 10.2% of consumers interested to have chino pocketed jeans. 48.9% preferred in buttons on jeans while 35.2% is preferred to have attached zippers. There were consumers of 42% who preferred jeans without a waistband. At the same time some of the 19.3% of consumers were interested in a waist which had an elastic waistband. Only 21.6% of consumers preferred to have a waist without belt loops while 31.8% interested to have a waist with belt loops. Mostly the women are not interested with contrasted stitches and 13.6% consumers preferred to contrast stitches on denim jeans.

Table 1: Costing details of trims and washes

Item	Description	Price	Remark
ZIPPER	#3.0 WATER PROOF	\$0.28	8' LENGTH (BASIC)
	#3.0 INVISIBLE	\$0.12	8' LENGTH
	#3.0 REVERSR COIL	\$0.12	8 LENGTH
	#5.0 OPEN ENDED	\$0.65	18', 20' JKT ZIP
	#4.5 ZIP	\$0.25	FOR FLY
TRIMS	SHANK	\$0.42	28L & 27L
	BUTTINS	\$0.02	28L & 27L.
	BUTTONS	\$0.01	18L & 14L.
	ELASTIC PRE 1 YDS	\$0.14	PRE 1 YDS SIZE (1 1/2' -2')
	DROW CORD	\$0.35	60' LENGTH WITH METEAL TIP
WASH	SNAP	\$0.06	24L & 27L
	SOFTNER WASH	\$ 0.40	PRE 1 SAMPLE (PANT)
	ENZYME * SOFTNER WASH	\$0.50	PER 1 SAMPLE (PANT)
	LIGHT WASH	\$1.00	PER I SAMPLE (PANT)
	MID WASH	\$0.85	PRE 1 SAMPLE (PANT)
	DARK WASH	\$0.65	PRE 1 SAMPLE (PANT)
	REACTIVE DYE	\$1.20	PRE 1 SAMPLE (PANT)
	PIGMENT DYE	\$1.60	PER 1 SAMPLE (PANT)
	DOUBLE DYE	\$1.80	PER I SAMPLE (PANT)
	DIP DYE	\$3.20	PRE 1 SMPLE (PANT) REACTIVE BACE
	DIP DYE	\$3.60	PRE 1 SAMPLE (PAN1)2 COLOR
TIE DYE	\$3.80	PER 1 SAMPLE (PANT)3 COLOR	

Table 1 shows the details of costing for surface decorations (trimmings) and washes. This shows that for denim jeans is required a low cost. Costing for shank is \$0.42, for button \$0.01- \$0.02, a snap is \$0.06, a draw cord

is \$0.35, an elastic per one yard is \$0.14, a waterproof zipper is \$0.28, an invisible zipper is \$0.12, a reverse coil is \$0.65, an open ended zip is about \$0.65. Costing for washes required a low price such as for the dark wash is about \$0.65, for the light wash is about \$1.00 and for the mid wash is cost of \$0.85. These facts show that detailing and washing types required a low cost and it could be beneficial for both parties that producers and consumers of denim jeans.

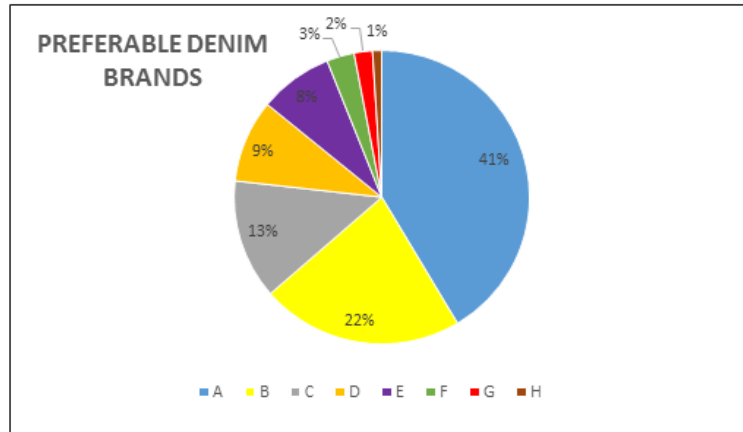


Figure 16. Preferable denim brands

Figure 16 illustrates consumer preference for Sri Lankan 8 denim jeans local brands which are available at present in fashion outlets. There were 41.4% of consumers like brand A, and 21.8% of the consumers like brand B and 12.6% like brand C, 9% like brand D, 8% like brand E, 3% prefer brand F and the least preference acquired by brand H that means 1.2%.

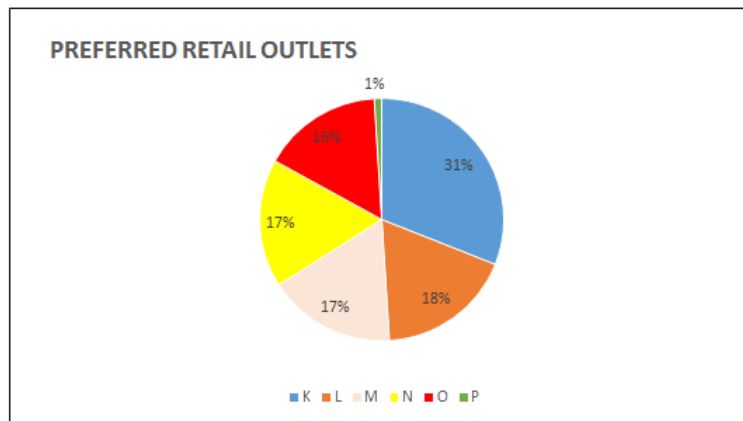


Figure 17. Preferred retail outlets

Figure 17 visualizes consumer preference on retail outlets in Colombo. This indicates that there were 31% of consumers would love to shop at outlet K, next to have a fashion destiny as outlet L that is about 18% and consumers love to do shop at outlet M, and N both acquired the same percentage as 17%, then would love to shop at outlet O is 16% and least preferred outlet as selected P that means of about 1%.

ANALYSIS

Results proved that consumers preference for denim jeans is high. It was realized that there are many variables that affect women's buying behavior are 3 factors that consumers follow when buying a product, price, look and comfortability (Yadav et al., 2019). The study revealed that those 3 factors depend on 4 major components washes, trims, details and comfortability. The results show that depending on the 4 components consumer

preferences change. In their perspective on denim fashion apparels, particularly denim jeans and thus local brands, Sri Lankan customers are becoming more willing to respond and exploratory. Thus, local brands have received a positive reception from consumers in Sri Lanka (Ahmad et al., 2019). It is recommended that apparel product developers update their product development process by incorporating new techniques that could be beneficial for producing low cost denim jeans with the help of merchandisers who merchandize accessories for denim jeans. The retailers also put into practice the consumer demand for denim jeans from time to time by providing good quality denim apparel products while providing a pleasant shopping experience for denim jeans consumers in Sri Lanka.

CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The findings highlighted that Sri Lankan denim apparel brands acquire good reputation by the female consumers. The findings will be useful to both Sri Lankan denim jeans apparel producers and retailers for them to be competitive in the local denim fashion apparel market. It is also realized that there is a possibility to expand the denim apparel market into a niche market and to develop marketing strategies to cater to a wide consumer group. Denim jeans apparel producers and retailers will have a better understanding of not only the price level but also the overall preferences of denim jeans consume women. This study helps them to develop marketing strategies to cater to this Sri Lankan fashion apparel segment, at present there is no documented information on female consumers of denim jeans apparel preferences. It can be recommended that the study data can be used as a secondary data source for future research opportunities in the denim jeans fashion apparel sector as well as academia, as currently no academic research focusing on female consumer demand for pret-a-porter (ready-to-wear) on denim jeans apparel in Sri Lanka. To consider the following remarks, future works are recommended. It is recommended that a similar study could be carried out in other major cities in Sri Lanka, because outcomes will be different according to the consumer culture may change. It is also recommended to evaluate the impact of buying tendencies on to explain its behavioral affect on individuals and purchasing satisfaction. It is recommended to ensure respondents' privacy in order to minimize effects on societal inequalities. Furthermore some psychological explanations that could be considered in consumer behaviour is avoided in this study.

There were two limitations identified in the research. During the data gathering there was an absence of extensive public participation as the research focused only on Colombo and its suburbs. This caused the limiting of generalization of the findings of the study. Therefore, the study does not represent the entire gamut of female consumer demand for denim jeans in the Sri Lankan female population.

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