ABSTRACT

In emerging markets, given the explosion of new apparel retail formats, companies are looking for ways to develop and secure their positions in the market. Hence, a comprehensive understanding of apparel patronage behaviour will provide insights to retailers to determine why shoppers prefer their store over other competing store categories (Osman 1993). In this study apparel store patronage behaviour is defined as “a store choice behaviour which represents an individual’s preference for a particular store for purchasing apparel products” (Shim and Kotsiopulos 1992a).

The literature is reviewed from store patronization behaviour, store choice behaviour, literature on retail in the Indian context, and a review of previous models of retail patronage behaviour. Extant literature on retail patronage behaviour investigated the effect of antecedents on store patronage behaviour. Some studies concentrated on understanding effect of store attributes on store patronage (Carpenter and Moore 2006). Second stream investigated the effect of store atmospherics on store patronage (Seock 2009). Third stream studied the effect of store image on store patronage (Roy and Tai 2003). Fourth stream investigated the effect of shopping orientation on store patronage (Sinha 2003). Finally, few studies concentrated on the effect of shopping motives on store patronage behaviour (Nguyen et al 2007).

Majority of the studies on patronage behaviour in general and apparel patronage behaviour in specific, are carried out considering single or
few dimensions of antecedents, and across single or few categories of stores. Also there are inconsistencies in the effect of antecedents on patronage behaviour which indicate possible interaction effects with personality and situational variables. Through this study the researcher aims to address these gaps from emerging market perspectives.

The researcher extended the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen 1991) and proposed a model by including shopping orientation, shopping motives, previous shopping experience, store knowledge, self image consciousness, and store image consciousness. Following moderating variables - perceived time pressure, deal proneness, perceived risk, brand loyalty, product, and purchase decision involvement variables, were incorporated to explain the inconsistencies in patronage behaviour across different categories of apparel stores.

The data for the present study was collected from apparel shoppers using multi-stage sampling and structured questionnaire in Bengaluru city. Out of the 750 questionnaire distributed the researcher got responses from 565 people and among them 513 were usable. The questionnaire was designed using pre-validated scales from the literature.

Regression result of model one, where intention to patronage an apparel store was dependent variable and attitude towards shopping, subjective norm, and perceived behaviour control as independent variables, showed that proposed hypotheses were strongly supported across different categories of apparel stores.
Result of regression model two showed that in department stores, brand consciousness, quality consciousness, variety consciousness, utilitarian convenience motive, hedonic entertainment motive, self-image consciousness, store image consciousness, previous shopping experience and store knowledge were significant in influencing attitude towards shopping at department stores. Among the moderating variables product involvement, purchase decision involvement, brand loyalty, and perceived time pressure were significantly influencing store patronage behaviour.

As hypothesized for discount store, brand consciousness, price consciousness, utilitarian money saving motive, previous shopping experience, and store knowledge are significantly influencing attitude towards shopping. Main and interaction effects of brand loyalty, perceived risk, and deal proneness were significantly influencing store patronage behaviour.

In the case of specialty stores, brand consciousness, quality consciousness, hedonic entertainment and exploration motive, self image consciousness, store image consciousness, previous shopping experience, and store knowledge significantly influencing attitude towards shopping. Moderating variables product involvement, purchase decision involvement, brand loyalty, and perceived time pressure were significantly influencing store patronage behaviour.

As hypothesized for stores in the mall, brand consciousness, quality consciousness, variety consciousness, hedonic entertainment and exploration motive, self image consciousness, store image consciousness, and store knowledge significantly influencing attitude towards shopping. Interaction
effects of product involvement, purchase decision involvement, brand loyalty, perceived time pressure, and perceived risk were significantly influencing store patronage behaviour.

Price consciousness, quality consciousness, utilitarian money saving and convenience motives, previous shopping experience, and store knowledge were significantly influencing attitude towards shopping at general cloth merchant stores. The interaction effect of product involvement, purchase decision involvement, perceived risk, and deal proneness significantly influencing store patronage behaviour.

The present study contributes to the literature on apparel store patronage behaviour by developing a comprehensive model and incorporating interaction effects of personality and situational variables across different categories of apparel stores.

Managerially the researcher provides insights in positioning different apparel stores to appeal to different shopping lifestyles of customers. The researcher also provides means to enhance store image in congruity with self-image, and enhance shopping experience by providing appropriate shopping motives across different apparel stores. Overall the present study will help retailers gain a competitive advantage over intra and inter-store competition among retailers by producing a pleasant shopping environment and assortment which match the customer shopping lifestyle and image perspectives.