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Consumer perception towards rental clothing

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Abstract

Garment waste is a major issue within the current fashion industry as evidenced by the fact that the fashion industry makes up 7% of landfills globally. It is obvious that the industry needs a major change. Access-based consumption, such as Fashion Rental, enables consumers to reduce the environmental and financial burden of buying new clothing. It focuses on product use or its functions rather than taking ownership of products. When consumers share-used products, it increases the use frequency, and reduces the consumption of virgin resources and clothing waste. Therefore, the main objective of the research is to study the perception of consumers towards rental clothing.

Keywords: Clothing, fashion, rental, sustainability

Introduction

Fashion is defined as an expression that is widely accepted by a group of people over time and has been characterized by several marketing factors such as low predictability, high impulse purchase, shorter life cycle, and high volatility of market demand (Sparks, 1998) [7].

The term "fast fashion" describes a significant portion of the apparel market whose business strategy depends on the quick and inexpensive production of low-quality clothing that enters and exits the market in response to emerging fads. Because people are constantly offered cheap, trendy things to keep in style, this system promotes excessive consumption. Consumers are pressured to buy a constant stream of low-quality objects that soon go out of style, are ignored, or disintegrate after a few uses rather than a few well-made, long-lasting items. Because customers are duped into spending more by making repeated smaller purchases, this business strategy has proven extremely profitable for merchants. Additionally, producers reduce their cost of production (Bhardwaj & Fairhurst, 2010) [1].

Fashion rental is a use-oriented product-service system that adheres to a service logic of consumption as opposed to conventional fashion-sales models, which are product-centered and follow a take-make-waste rationale. Customers can either enroll in a monthly subscription or membership that entitles them to the rental of a set number of fashion items each rental term, or rent clothing items separately for a length of time (often a week or a month), depending on the model's exact logistics. Some versions allow you to purchase preferred things for a discounted price at the end of the rental time (Geissdoerfer, 2018) [3].

To address resource depletion, climate change, and other environmental problems, there is growing global awareness of the need to reduce existing consumption habits. In addition to many other negative impacts, the textile and garment industry, particularly fast fashion, contributes to resource depletion, generates significant amounts of wastewater and solid waste, contributes to chemical and pesticide residues, and is infamous for exploitation of labor (Geissdoerfer, 2018) [3].

According to Corvellec (2017) [2], renting garments through Business Model allows customers to avoid the waste obligations associated with apparel ownership. The value of a PSS offering depends on how much rental is used to replace ownership and production; this amount is known as the replacement rate. Clothing rental is appealing due to lower fashion prices and beneficial effects on discretionary money, which may lead to rebound effects, as it can provide clients with classic or distinctive high-quality fashion items without a commitment to ownership.

According to (Piontek et al., 2020) [6] the environmental advantages change based on the type of clothing and the materials used to make it.

Renting results in a large decrease of the environmental impacts by avoiding the manufacturing of new garments for an item that is only occasionally worn. The added impacts are significant if a garment's lifespan is not increased or no manufacture is prevented by the PSS. The environmental advantage is minimal for frequently worn items like t-shirts.

Methodology

This research was conducted in Delhi, NCR region. In present research, the sample size for consumers is 50 (N = 50). The sampling was done by convenience sampling. In this method, Samples collected by taking those that are conveniently found by researcher. To carry out the present study questionnaire was formulated.

Results and Discussion

Personal profiles of the consumers included their name, age, and gender. An analysis of the results is shown in Table 1. Out of the total sample of 50 respondents, all respondents (100%) were females. The majority of respondents belonged to the 21–30 age group, followed by the 18–20 age group.

Table 1: Personal profile of consumers

Personal Characteristics	Total No of Respondents (n=50)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	0	0
Female	50	100
Age		
Upto 20 years	8	16
21-25 years	35	70
26-30 years	5	10
31-40 years	2	4

Buying preference of the Consumers

In the research, an attempt was made to study the buying preferences of the consumers, and the results are tabulated in Table 2.

Table 2: Buying Preference of the Consumers

Buying Preference	Total No of Respondents (n=50)	Percentage (%)
Buying Behaviors		
Occasionally	32	64
Rarely	11	22
Always	7	14
Never	0	0
Pricing Preferences		
0-2,000 Rs	18	36
2,000-5,000 Rs	28	56
5,000-10,000 Rs	4	8

Buying preferences of the respondents were studied under following heads;

- Buying Behavior of Consumers
- Pricing Preferences
- Buying Behavior of Consumers

Buying preferences of the respondents included their buying behavior of the respondents like buying new outfits for every occasion and events shown in (Fig 1). The result shows that

64% of the respondents bought an outfit occasionally, 22% of the respondents bought an outfit rarely, and 14% of the respondents bought an outfit always for every event and occasion.

Wang (2010) [9] claims that customers impulsively purchase clothing to follow trends, rather than wearing the same ensembles repeatedly, and to flaunt on social media. They want a fresh look for every occasion and event. According to the current study, the majority of consumers purchase clothing for all occasions and activities.

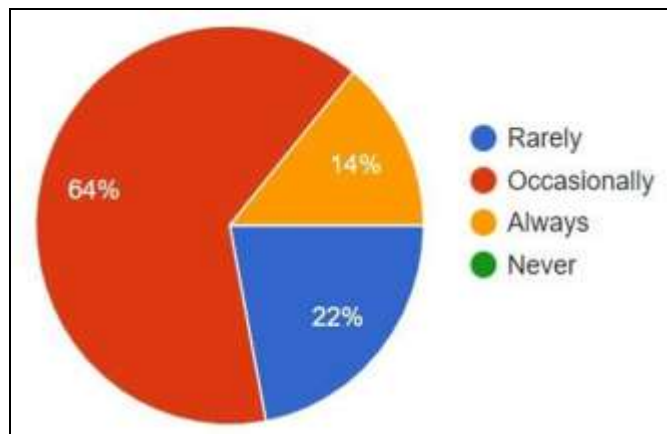


Fig 1: Buying Behavior

Pricing Preferences

In the present study pricing preference of consumers to buy an outfit for an event and occasion shown in following (Fig 2). Out of the total sample of 50 respondents, the majority of consumers preferred the 0–2000 (56%), followed by 2000–5000 (36%), and only 8% preferred to the 5000–10000 Rs range.

Awareness of Consumers about the Impact of Fashion Industry on Environment

In the present research, an attempt was made to study the awareness of the respondents towards the impact of the fashion industry on the environment and society. The results are tabulated in Table 3.

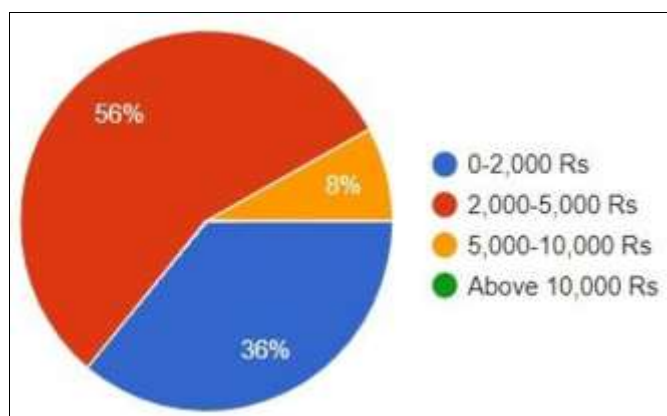


Fig 2: Pricing Preferences

Awareness about the impact of the fashion industry on the environment was studied under the following heads;

- Wear It Once or Twice Culture
- Awareness about the Impact of Fashion on Environment
- Collaborative Consumption Usage

Table 3: Awareness of Consumers about the Impact of Fashion Industry on Environment

Awareness of Consumers towards Environment	Total No of Respondents (n=50)	Percentage (%)
Follow wear it once or twice culture		
Yes	40	80
No	10	20
Awareness about the Impact of Fashion on Environment		
Yes	41	82
No	9	18
Collaborative Consumption Usage		
Yes	45	90
No	5	10

Wear It Once or Twice Culture

‘Wear it once or twice’ culture means wear an outfit for once or twice only and then refuse to wear it again and put them back in the wardrobe. According to the result of the study 80% of respondents wear an outfit once or twice and then never wear it again, while 10% of respondents wear an outfit again and again shown in (Fig. 3).

Varghese (2020) [8] asserts that consumers only wear an outfit once since the main motivation is to avoid having it posted more than once on social media. They will only wear a particular clothing once in order to spare their friends' feelings of criticism. Also, they only wear a given clothing once in order to appear fashionable and to demonstrate their financial flexibility.

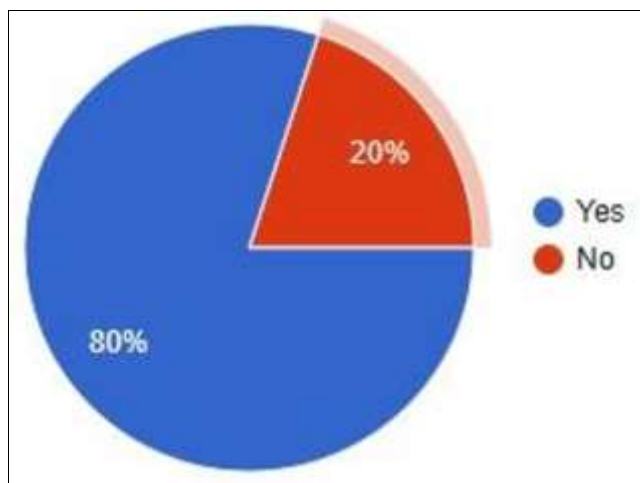


Fig 3: Wear It Once or Twice Culture

Awareness about the Impact of Fashion on Environment

The environmental impact of the fashion industry is still substantial despite growing awareness of its significance. Although consumers purchase more goods than they can need, they have begun making environmentally responsible decisions like wearing sustainable clothing and starting to change the attitude of consumers towards sustainable apparel, footwear, and accessories (Niinimäki, 2020) [5].

Consumers become aware about sustainable choices. To study awareness in consumers about the environmental, social, and ethical impact of the fashion industry, it was found that 82% of the respondents were aware about the environmental, social, and ethical impact of the fashion industry, while 18% were not aware about the impact of the fashion industry, as shown in (Fig. 4).

According to a study on consumer attitudes towards fast fashion and garment rentals in the context of sustainability issues, participants who were unaware of the crisis clearly did not see the importance in cutting back on their clothes

purchases before learning the truth about the situation. Participants did not believe that they needed to make any changes to their clothing in order to help reduce the landfill and ocean waste crisis (Varghese, 2020) [8].

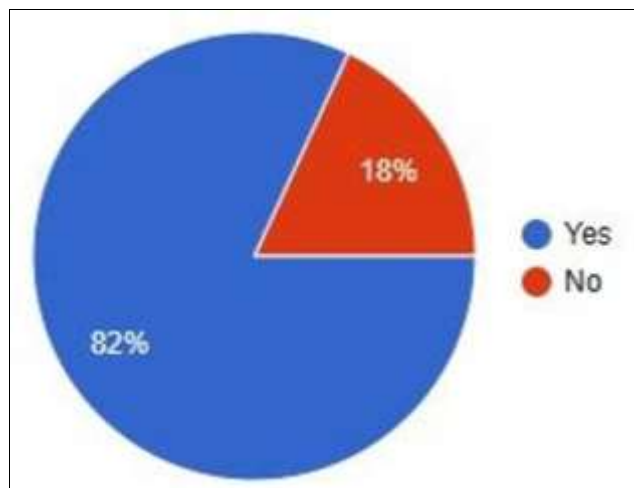


Fig 4: Awareness about the Social, Environmental, and Ethical Impacts of the Fashion Industry

Collaborative Consumption Usage

To reduce the repetition of outfits, people share their outfits among their friends and family. Reasons behind this behavior were to save their money to invest in outfits and also choose a sustainable choice of wearing a new outfit or look for an occasion. Result of the present study shows that the majority of the respondents 90% share their outfits with their friends, family and relatives which showed in (Fig 5) which indicates that most of the respondents are aware of the sharing of goods concepts and believe in collaborative consumption.

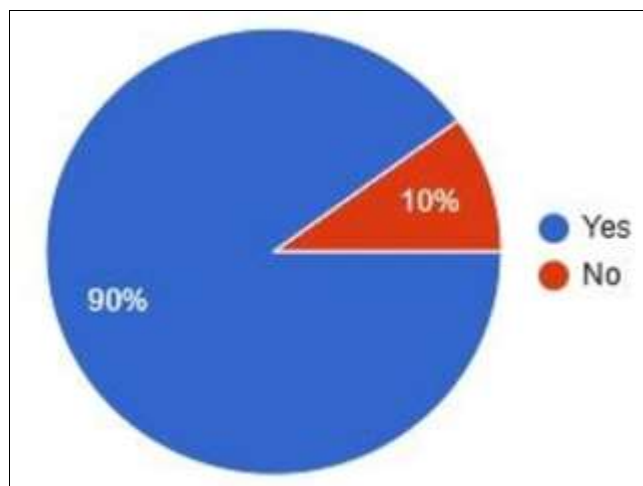


Fig 5: Collaborative Consumption Usage

Attitude of Consumers towards Rental Clothing

The researches have shown that consumers were showing positive behavior towards the cloth renting business model, though most of the participants raised concerns about the uncertainties and confusions arising due to the early stage and lack of the clarity. Although the concerns were pushing back the participants, they seemed excited in trying the new business model in their support of innovation and sustainability (Varghese, 2020) [8].

The present study identifies the attitude of consumers towards rental clothing, and perceived enjoyment and behavioral intention toward the rental clothing. Analysis of results is tabulated in following Table 4.

Table 4: Attitude of Consumers towards Rental Clothing

Attitude Towards Rental Clothing	Total No of Respondents (n=50)	Percentage (%)
Awareness about Rental Clothing		
Yes	43	86
No	7	14
Source of Information About Rental Clothing		
Media Marketing	17	35.4
Mouth Marketing	15	31.3
Commercial Ads	7	14.6
Any Other	6	12.5
All above	3	6.3
Type of Outfit Consider		
Wedding lehengas	28	58.3
Gowns	16	33.3
Bollywood replicas	3	6.3
Outfits for pre-wedding shoots	1	2.1
Kind of Clothing Prefer You Rental Clothing		
Party wear	22	46.8
Wedding wear	25	53.2
Casual wear	0	0
Formal wear	0	0
Environmental issue	1	2.0
To access high price expensive outfits	1	2.0
Save wardrobe space	3	6.1
Save money	4	8.2
To be seen in a new outfit for an event	5	10.2

Attitude Towards Rental Clothing	Total No of Respondents (n=50)	Percentage (%)
All above	35	71.4
Frequency of Renting a Outfit		
Every 2-3 months	0	0
2-3 times per year	1	2
Once every two weeks	0	0
Only for special occasions	16	32
Once a month	0	0
Never	33	66
Important Factor While Choosing Rental Clothing Service		
Hygiene/ dry-cleaning	22	45.8
Convenience of retrieval and returns of rentals	12	25
Insurance and protection of garments in the occasion of damages/loss of garments	5	10.4
Ensuring garments are returned/ delivered on time	7	14.6
Affordable pricing and fees	15	31.3
Flexible rental periods	9	18.8
All above	31	64.6
Concern Related to Hygiene		
Yes	48	96
No	2	4

The study determines the level of consumer awareness with rental clothing services and popularity of renting clothing among customers. The current study indicated that 86% of respondents were aware of the rental apparel business, 14% of

the consumers were unaware of the clothes rental services. The finding in (Fig. 6), indicates that rentals were popular among consumers.

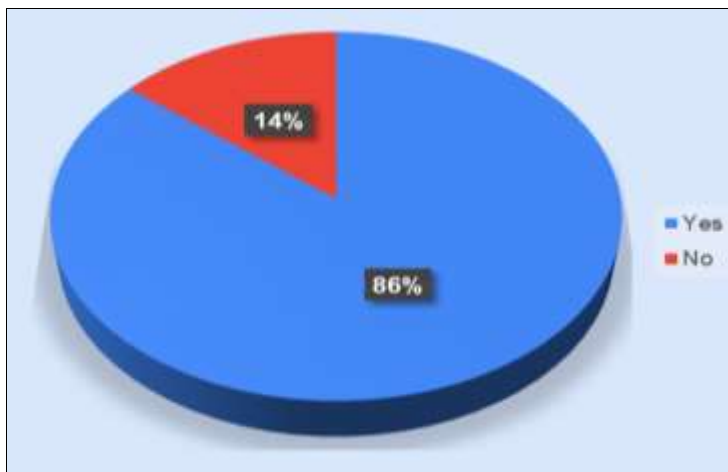


Fig 6: Awareness about Rental Clothing

In the present research to find out the source of information about the garment rental services available to customers. The findings showed in (Fig 7) that, on average, 35% of respondents got their information about clothes rental services from media marketing, followed by 31% from word-of-mouth 15% were informed about the rental clothing via commercial advertisements, and 6% were informed through all of the aforementioned channels. Only 13% of those surveyed were aware of the clothes rental services from other sources.

the rental apparel industry does not solely rely on attire for weddings and parties, such as lehengas and gowns.

Types of Garments for Rental

According to the study's findings shown in (Fig 8), consumers only preferred dresses or outfits for parties and weddings. 53.2% of consumers preferred wedding attire, while 46.8% preferred party dressy clothes, according to the analysis, none of the consumers stated a preference for formal or informal attire, indicating that the rental clothes business is entirely dependent on wedding and party attire rather than casual and formal attire. The conclusion drawn from the results is that

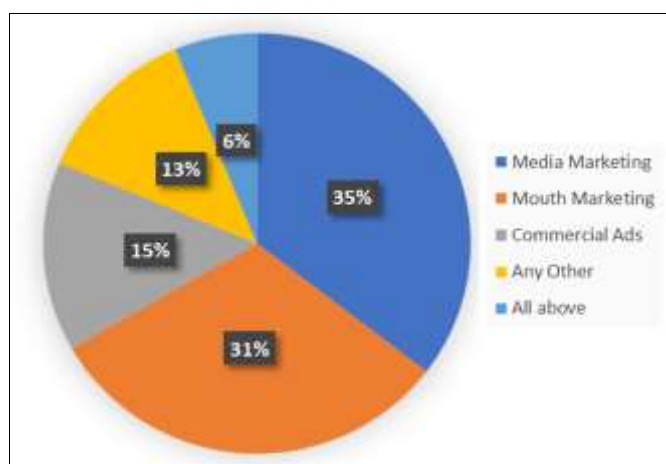


Fig 7: Source of Information about Rental Clothing

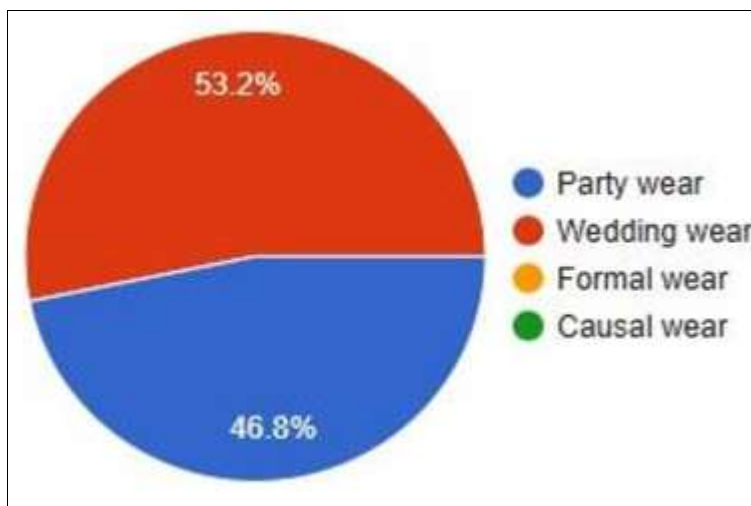


Fig 8: Types of Garments for Rental

The study reveals consumer preferences on the type of clothing they would rather rent than buy. The outcome reveals that 59% of respondents choose to rent wedding lehengas rather than buy them; 33% of respondents, or 16 out of the 50 total respondents, pick gown dresses as their preferred type of

attire following wedding lehengas. Pre-wedding dresses are rented by 2% of respondents and Bollywood reproductions are rented by 6% of respondents. The outcomes are represented in the following (Fig 9).

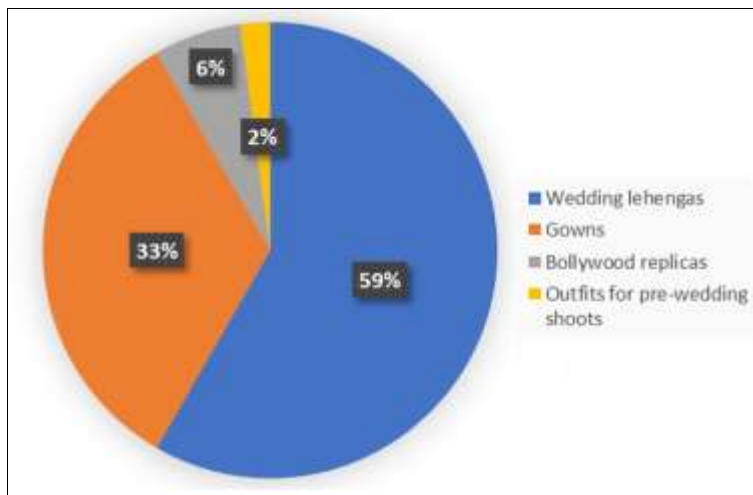


Fig 9: Types of Outfit Consider for Rent

Satisfaction from Rental Clothing Service

According to the findings in (Fig. 10) 79.6% of respondents believe that renting clothes satisfies their need for temporary

clothing, while 20.4% of respondents disagree and say that renting clothes does not satisfy their needs.

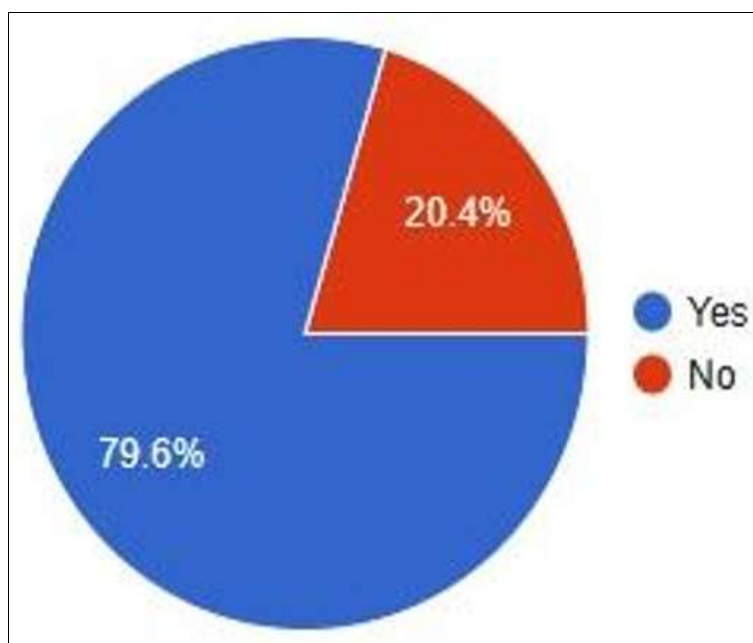


Fig 10: Satisfaction from Rental Clothing Services

Factors that Influence for Rental Clothing

Results from this study shown in (Fig 11) what motivates people to use clothes rental services. The driving forces are to lessen the harm done to the environment, access expensive clothing, conserve closet space, save money, and be seen in a fresh attire for every occasion. According to the results, the majority of respondents, or 72%, are motivated to purchase rental fashion by all four rental-based sales factors: trendy, "in fashion" clothing, a price that is less expensive than the average consumer's budget, fashion items from designer brands and clothing that is suitable for a specific occasion. Fewer respondents 10% for wanting to be seen in new outfits, 8% to save their money, 3% to save wardrobe space, 2% to

access high price expensive outfits and 2% to reduce environmental issues- identify each of these characteristics individually as a motivating factor for renting apparel. It was found that as customers frequently use fashion items to show their social status, fashion rental provides them with the opportunity to have access to luxury fashion items that they could not otherwise afford. Moreover, by engaging in fashion rental, customers can experiment with multiple different styles or meet a specific dress code for a special occasion, without having to buy new items. Thus, fashion rental makes it possible to make more efficient use of personal resources such as money and space (Mukendi and Henninger, 2020) [4].

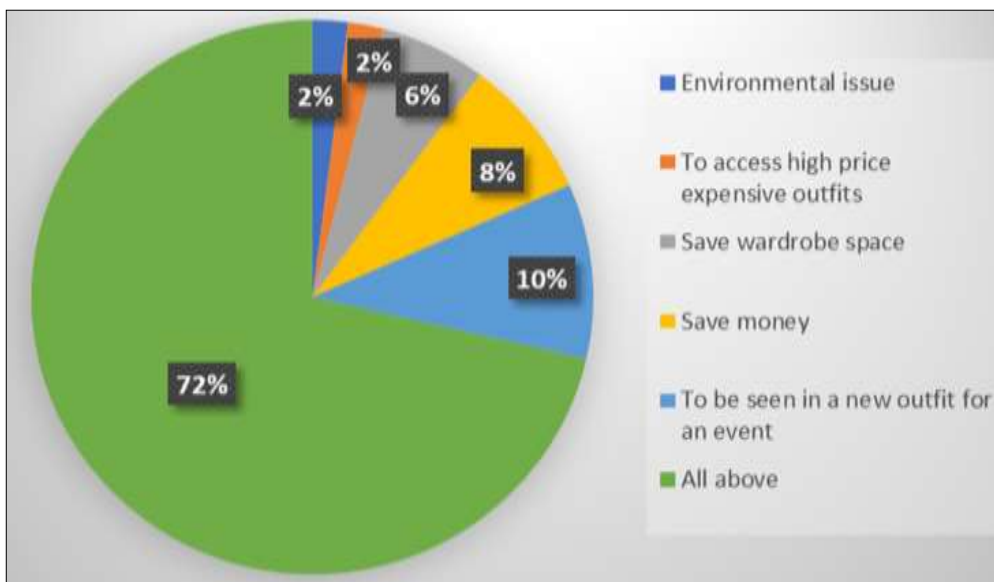


Fig 11: Factors that Influence for Rental Clothing

Frequency of Renting an Outfit

The findings revealed in (Fig. 12) how frequently respondents rented clothing. In accordance with the results, the majority of respondents 66% don't rent an outfit, indicating that they are aware of the rental clothes service but choose not to use it. Just 32% of respondents, 16 out of 50 rent an outfit only occasionally, and only 2% rent 2-3 times per year. The findings indicate that respondents only occasionally and not often rent the clothing.

It was concluded from the previous study that the more a consumer gives importance to possession or owning a

product, the less he/she looks forward to rental services and the same is evident in garment rental services. The reasons were cautious about what if product damages while consuming negative attitude towards rental products in general & specific to sharing garment used by others relating personal identity with the products consumed. The results of the current survey also suggest that the majority of customers are not interested in using clothing rental services, although the majority of respondents have indicated an interest in doing so, and over time, they prefer renting clothing.

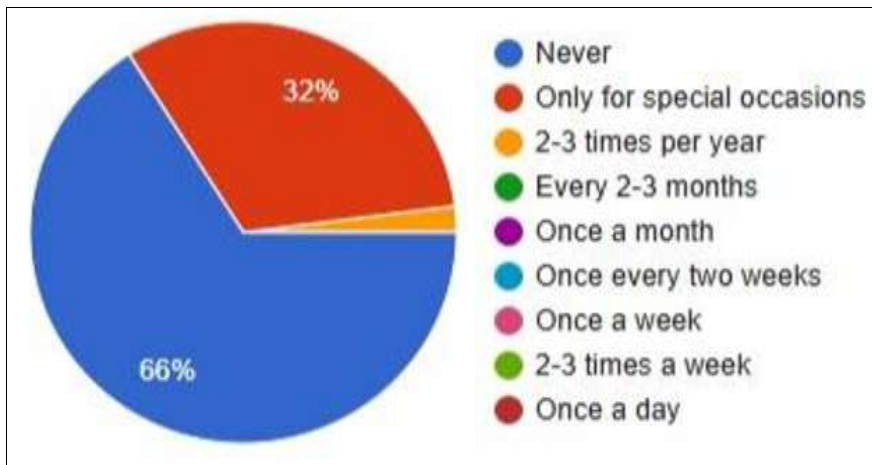


Fig 12: Frequency of Renting an Outfit

Factors while Choosing Rental Clothing Services

When choosing clothing rental services, customers should consider things including hygiene and dry cleaning, ease of rental pickup and return, insurance to cover damages or loss, ensuring that rentals are returned or delivered on time, a flexible rental duration, and affordable price and charges. After evaluating the data, it was found that 64.6% of respondents considered all of the aforementioned elements to be relevant when utilizing the clothes rental services.

According to the results, 45.8% of respondents consider hygiene/dry-cleaning to be the most essential of these variables, followed by 31.3% who think an affordable rental price is a key component in renting the clothes (Fig. 13). Only 14.6% of respondents believe that ensuring that clothing is

returned or delivered on time is an important factor, and only 25% of respondents believe that convenience of retrieval and returns of rentals is another important factor. A few of respondents said that insurance and protection of clothing in the event of damages or loss of clothing is an important factor for renting apparel.

Customers' concerns about fashion rental often involved a lack of trust towards other participants, doubts about the hygiene of rented items and fears of damaging them, as well as issues related to the need to give back the chosen garment when it was felt to be their garment (Mukendi and Henninger, 2020) [4].

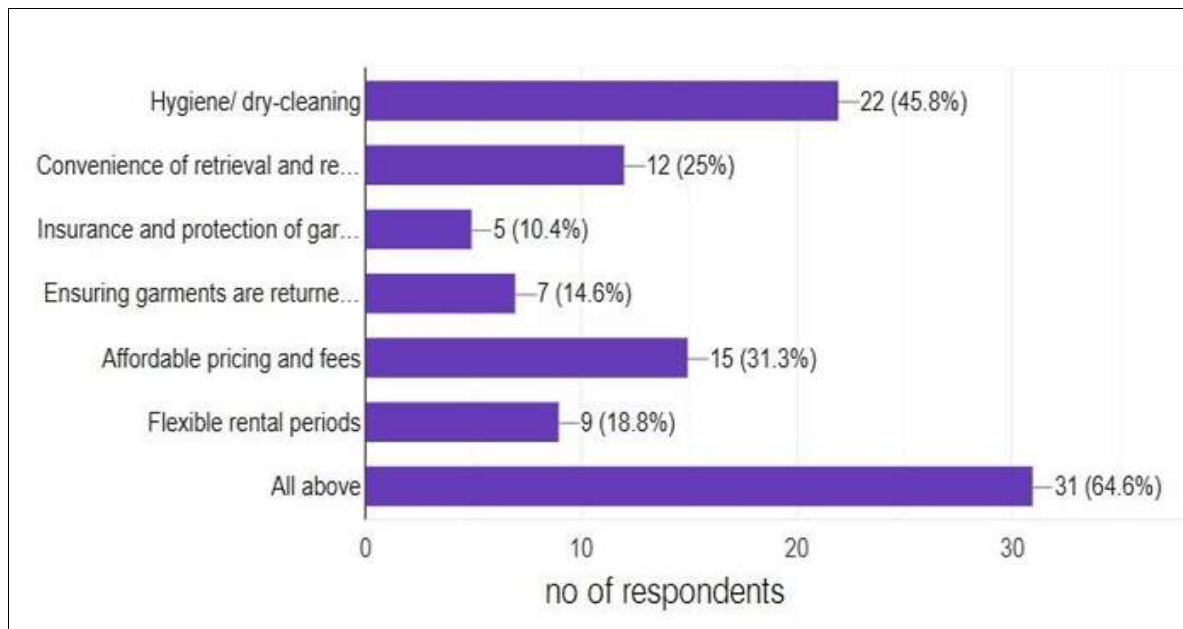


Fig 13: Factors while Choosing Rental Clothing Services

Conclusion

Circular fashion comprising second hand clothing and rentals, seems to be offering a way out of excessive production needs. Each time a garment is rented, it reduces a person's carbon, water, and waste footprint by 8 percent.

Rental clothing services are a sustainable choice for consuming garments. In Indian society, where the business of weddings overburdens families, these alternatives are being hailed as the perfect solution for excessive consumption and further reduces the economic strain.

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