

KEY DETERMINANTS OF FASHION PREFERENCES AMONG YOUNG ADULTS: A CASE OF COLOMBO DISTRICT IN SRI LANKA

Shanahara, K.W.A.^{1*}, and Priyanath, H.M.S.²

^{1,2}*Department of Economics and Statistics, Faculty of Social Sciences & Languages, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka, Belihuloya, Sri Lanka*

*[*ashanahara1@gmail.com](mailto:ashanahara1@gmail.com)*

This study explores fashion preferences among young adults in Sri Lanka, filling a research gap by analyzing how socio-economic, cultural, and psychological factors collectively influence fashion trends in developing South Asian contexts. A concurrent mixed-methods approach was employed, combining a quantitative survey of 105 young adults aged 18-30 and qualitative interviews with 24 participants. The survey data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression. The narrative data gathered through interviews were analyzed employing thematic analysis. The findings reveal significant positive correlations between socio-economic factors, cultural factors, and psychological factors with fashion preferences. Specifically, multiple regression analysis indicated that psychological factors have the strongest correlation with fashion preferences ($\beta = 0.315$, $p = 0.000$), followed by cultural factors ($\beta = 0.263$, $p = 0.003$) and socio-economic factors ($\beta = 0.271$, $p = 0.005$). The qualitative findings highlighted the complex interplay of various factors shaping fashion preferences. Furthermore, brand loyalty and trend-following behavior were identified as key drivers of fashion choices, with many participants expressing a strong attachment to specific brands and a desire to keep up with the latest trends. Psychological factors such as mood and self-expression were also emphasized, with many young adults using fashion as a means to reflect their inner feelings and identity. Fashion marketers should address socio-economic, cultural, and psychological factors in their strategies, creating targeted products and campaigns to build emotional connections. Policymakers should advocate for sustainable fashion and educational programs to foster responsible consumption among youth.

Keywords: Cultural factors, Fashion preferences, Psychological factors, Socio-economic factors, Young adults