



Research Paper

A Study on the Clothing Purchase Intentions of Rural and Urban Adolescent Girls.

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Abstract

The current study was carried out to find out the purchasing intentions of the sample of adolescents and to find the differences in clothing behavior between rural and urban areas. Data was gathered using a self-designed questionnaire from 100 adolescents in the 12–15-year age living in rural areas and 100 in urban areas. Adolescents were chosen from different schools in the Kapurthla district through a purposeful selection process. The results of the survey showed that adolescents are influenced by their peer group and want their clothing to be accepted and comparable to but distinct from that of their peers. This implies that urban adolescents may possess a greater sense of self-confidence and belief in their ability to regulate their behavior in a specific circumstance and influence their friend, family, and other reference groups than rural adolescents. While comfort, style, and brand were more significant to urban adolescents when making apparel purchases. In comparison to rural adolescents, urban adolescents exhibit higher purchasing intentions.

Key Words; Adolescents, Clothing, Rural adolescents, Urban adolescents, Peer group

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I. Introduction

Clothing has a significant impact on both our self-perception and how others see us. It influences initial impressions, and judgements about our personality and attractiveness, and even plays a role in professional decision-making. "Fashion goods or clothing are often described as our second skin, influencing how others perceive and respond to us, as well as shaping our own self-perception." (Behling 1999, p.55) Studies have demonstrated that individuals form their initial impression of you within the first five seconds of meeting you (Hampson, 2001). During those initial minutes, an individual will judge whether they share a resemblance with you and if they desire to establish a bond with you. In this period, individuals will also analyze and comprehend the visual cues provided to them. The hair, cosmetics, and outfits are rapidly processed and scrutinized. A person's attire conveys information about their personality, goals, and level of confidence (Hampson, 2001). When an individual displays discomfort in their attire, it immediately conveys a statement about their state. The objective of this study was to ascertain whether there are disparities in the fashion and purchasing preferences of individuals from rural and urban backgrounds. The purpose of the study was also to look into whether a person's background affects their intention to buy. The research findings may have advantageous ramifications for merchants and marketers. By comprehending the purchasing intentions of rural and urban teens, merchants can initiate the process of collecting valuable data to focus on certain market segments, resulting in more efficient retail fashion marketing. In this study, young individuals were chosen as participants because they are considered the most important in the fashion industry (Gordon et al., 1986, p. 4). The distinctions between rural and urban individuals have not been extensively investigated in the context of personality and apparel preferences. Retailers are increasingly recognising the significance of understanding the distinctions between rural and urban consumers as they expand nationwide. Summers et al. (1992) have projected that rural counties and their adjacent areas will experience the most rapid population growth in the future. Lumpkin et al. (1986) also pointed out the significance of studying rural consumers, as research has demonstrated that they are a substantial influence in certain retail markets, despite having been overlooked by researchers in the past. Thus, rural retailers in geographical regions that are experiencing population growth and require new marketing strategies will be even more reliant on transforming the demographics of customers.

Extensive research has been conducted on adolescents in the field of child development and clothing. However, the purchasing habits of adolescents in the rural and urban regions of the district Kapurthala have not been studied systematically in this specific ecological setting, including the sociocultural factors that influence human behavior in various ways. As stated in the literature young adults are an intriguing demographic to examine due to their transitional period and susceptibility to influence from reference groups. Parents should be concerned about the fashion choices of their children and their identity to protect their innocence by making sure clothes aren't too sexualized. Specifically, this study aimed to find the clothing purchase intentions of teenagers and to find out if there were any living area-based differences in the main factors that affected these choices.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the Clothing purchase intentions of rural and urban adolescents.
2. To compare the Clothing purchase intentions of rural and urban adolescents.

Hypothesis

H1: There is no significant difference in the Attitude towards the product or service (Dimension 1 of clothing purchase intentions) of rural and urban adolescents.

H2: There is no significant difference in the Subjective norms (Dimension 2 of clothing purchase intentions) of rural and urban adolescents.

H3: There is no significant difference in the Perceived Behaviour Control (Dimension 3 of clothing purchase intentions) of rural and urban adolescents.

H4: There is no significant difference in the clothing purchase intentions of rural and urban adolescents.

II. Review of Literature

Inderpreet Singh, Kanika Gupta, and Sumit Kumar (2021), examined the purchasing patterns of teenagers at shopping malls in Delhi. The study considered many factors like personality traits, beliefs, expectations, emotions, and mental well-being showing significant differences across individuals, especially adolescents.

Rokhima Rostiani and Jessica Kuron (2020) discovered that attitude was the primary determinant of the intention to purchase. It was followed by physical vanity, subjective norms, and the perception of self-control over one's actions. The purchasing behaviour of younger individuals is mostly influenced by their own motivation to acquire fast fashion, rather than being driven by external societal factors.

N. Valaei and S.R. Nikhashemi (2017) found that the factors with the greatest impact on Gen-Y shoppers' views on fashion items are brand and self-identity. Gen-Y customers prioritize name, style, price, and social identity while purchasing fashionable clothing. The findings also indicate that factors such as style, price, country of origin, and social identity have no impact on the fashion clothes preferences of Gen-Y customers.

Nurnnobi, R. K. Prasad, M. Arifuzzaman (2016) stated that the fast fashion phenomenon has had a significant impact on the global fashion industry. This has resulted in a shorter life cycle for fashion products and has also changed the buying behaviour of younger consumers.

Pooja Kansra (2015) examined the determinants that influence the preference of young consumers for branded items. She identified product design, dependability, trustworthiness, social impact, brand recognition, fashion ability, status representation, and distinctiveness as critical factors. The purchase of branded clothing is influenced by age, marital status, occupation, education, and money, although gender and education do not have a substantial impact.

Mohanram, A.S., and Mahavi, C., (2007) assessed the influence of various factors on adolescents' decision-making regarding goods. These factors included their awareness of the goods' pricing, technological characteristics, peer pressure, and the persuasive techniques employed by salesmen. They employ two separate strategies, emotional and logical, to convince their parents..

Ruchi Bhatnagar (2006) Most respondents were only somewhat satisfied with their wardrobe, primarily because they had less variety of outfits. The majority of respondents in both rural and urban areas purchased clothing based on the price and the latest design. In terms of fashion awareness and adoption, television was the most influential medium, followed by newspapers and periodicals.

III. Material and Method

The study on the Clothing purchase intentions of rural and urban adolescents consumers was conducted on adolescent girls studying in different schools of district Kapurthala. The study targeted 200 girls studying in classes 10+1 and 10+2 in rural and urban schools from 4 blocks of Kapurthala-1, Kapurthala-2, Kapurthala-3, and Kapurthala-4. The sample was selected using the purposive sampling technique. 25 students each from classes 10+1 and 10+2 were chosen from rural and urban schools in four blocks of Kapurthala. Schools from both urban and rural areas were purposively chosen based on their level of accessibility. The purchase intention

scale was employed to assess the purchasing intention of the participants. The purchasing intention scale was administered by the researcher. The scale comprises three primary dimensions that impact purchasing intention, namely:

1. **Attitude towards the product or service,**
2. **Subjective norms,**
3. **Perceived Behaviour Control**

The questionnaire contained 21 statements 7 items in each of the three dimensions: firstly Attitude towards the product contained statements regarding the product's features, and benefits, Secondly, Subjective Norms involve statements to assess the influence of friends, family, and other reference groups on the purchase of a product and thirdly, Perceived Behaviour Control to assess the product or service's perceived ease of purchase, financial constraints, and availability.

Scoring was conducted using the Likert Scale, where responses were assigned scores ranging from 1 to 5. (1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly agree)

The reliability of the test was assessed using the test and retest approach during the pretesting phase..

IV. Results and Discussions

The study findings have been analyzed and organized into three factors of purchasing intention: attitude toward the product, subjective norms, and perceived behaviour control. The study's sample group consisted of an equal distribution of respondents, with 50% being rural girls and the other 50% being girls from urban areas.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics for Purchasing Intention (Itemwise)

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Attitude towards the product	P1	200	3.41	1.10	-0.66	-0.37
	P2	200	2.27	0.77	0.47	0.38
	P3	200	3.43	1.25	-0.69	-0.63
	P4	200	2.71	1.29	0.17	-1.27
	P5	200	3.05	1.26	-0.17	-1.15
	P6	200	2.87	1.30	0.19	-1.24
	P7	200	2.60	1.25	0.33	-1.07
Subjective norms	P8	200	3.52	1.36	-0.57	-0.93
	P9	200	3.51	1.34	-0.56	-0.92
	P10	200	3.56	1.32	-0.63	-0.81
	P11	200	2.55	1.16	0.27	-0.95
	P12	200	3.69	1.20	-0.69	-0.56
	P13	200	3.63	1.30	-0.70	-0.68
	P14	200	3.56	1.37	-0.65	-0.85
Perceived Behaviour Control	P15	200	3.08	1.19	0.05	-0.86
	P16	200	2.49	0.95	-0.06	-0.91
	P17	200	3.56	1.37	-0.65	-0.85
	P18	200	3.56	1.37	-0.65	-0.85
	P19	200	3.56	1.37	-0.65	-0.85
	P20	200	3.56	1.37	-0.65	-0.85
	P21	200	3.56	1.37	-0.65	-0.85

Descriptive Table 1 describes the characteristics of the data. The first column in the table depicts the item number of the scale. The second column is N i.e. the number of respondents. The Third column is of mean which represents the average response values of the respondents whereas the fourth column highlights the standard deviation from the mean. The next two columns are for skewness and kurtosis. Hair et al. (2010) and Bryne (2010) concluded that data is considered to be normal if Skewness is between - 2 to +2 and Kurtosis is between - 7 and +7. Hence the data in the above table shows skeweness and kurtosis within the range so data is normally distributed. The standard deviation values of Purchasing intention ranged from 0.77 to 1.37. This specifies that the deviation of the responses from the mean was low. The skewness of all items in purchasing intention ranges from -0.7 to 0.47 and kurtosis ranges from -1.27 to 0.38. The values of skewness and kurtosis as mentioned in the table 1 of descriptive for different items were within the acceptable limits. This helped to conclude that the data was fit for further analysis.

Table 2
Group Statistics for Purchasing Intension

	Attitude towards the product	Subjective norms	Perceived Behaviour Control	Purchasing Intention
N	200	200	200	200
Mean	20.34	24	23.8	68.13
Standard deviation	4.04	7.11	6.81	13.06

Table 2 shows a summary of descriptive statistics of Purchasing Intention. The mean of the Attitude towards product is 20.34 and the standard deviation is 4.04. The mean of the Subjective norms is 24 and the standard deviation is 7.11. The mean of the Perceived Behaviour Control is 23.8 and the standard deviation is 6.81.

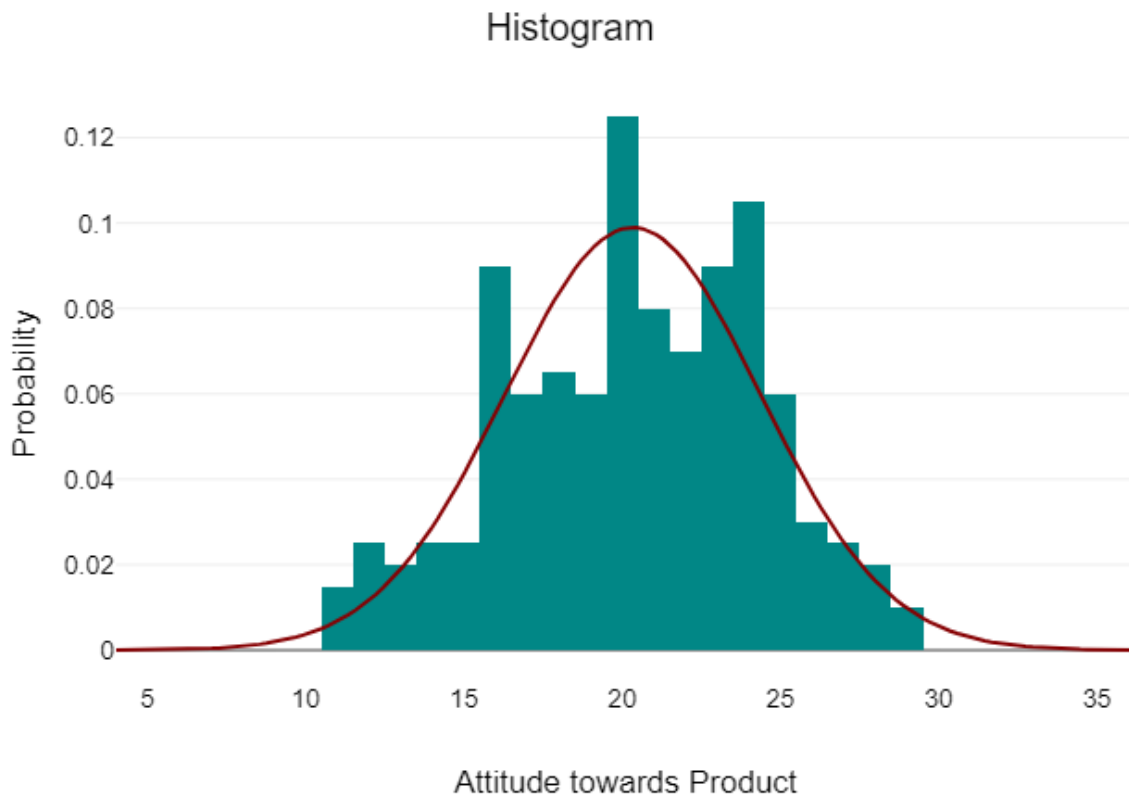


Fig 1 : Normality Curve and Histogram of Attitude towards Product

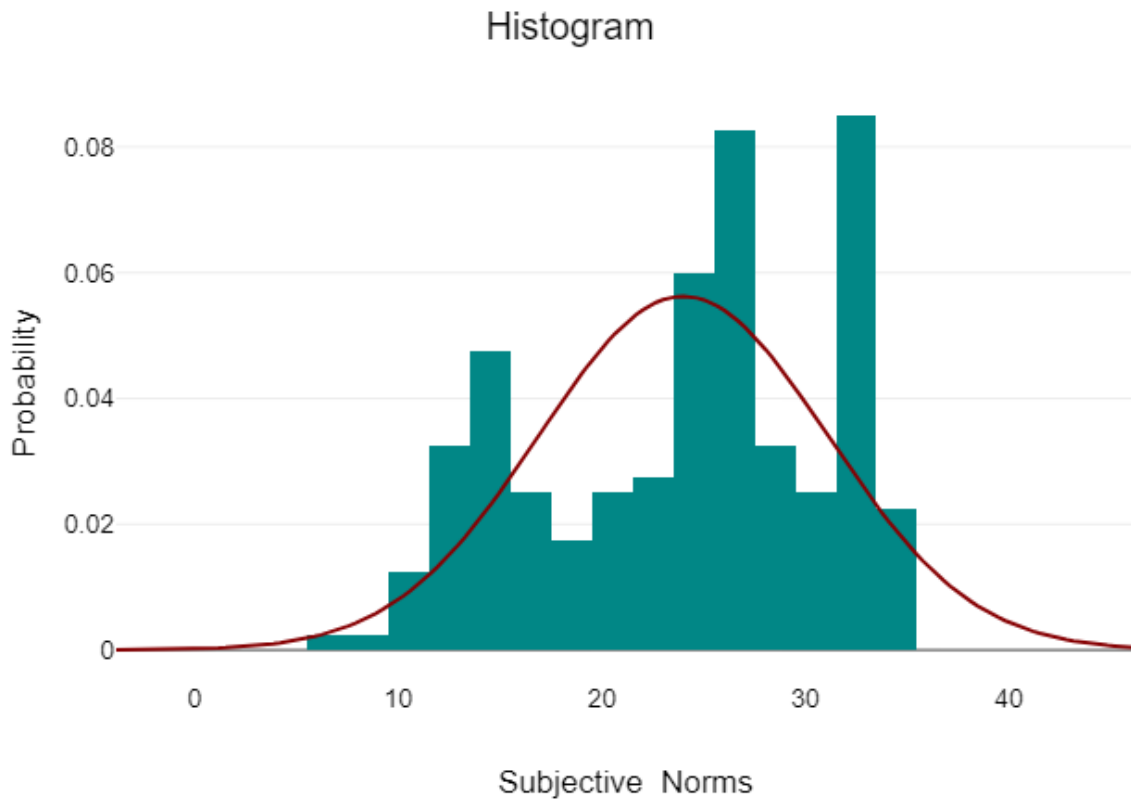


Fig 2 : Normality Curve and Histogram of Subjective Norms

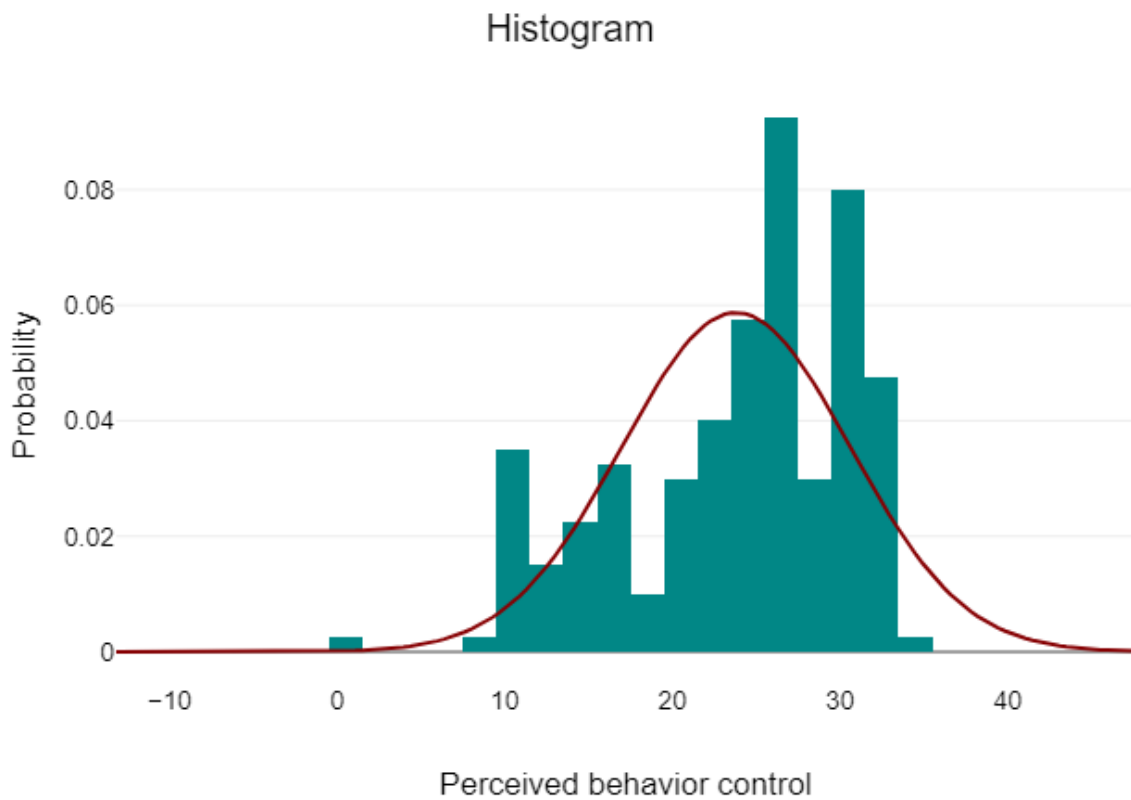


Fig 3 : Normality Curve and Histogram of Perceived behaviour control

The normality curves in Fig 1, 2,3 ,4 and the histogram of scores of attitude towards a product, subjective norms, perceived behaviour control and overall purchasing intention show that the data on these variables was near normal.

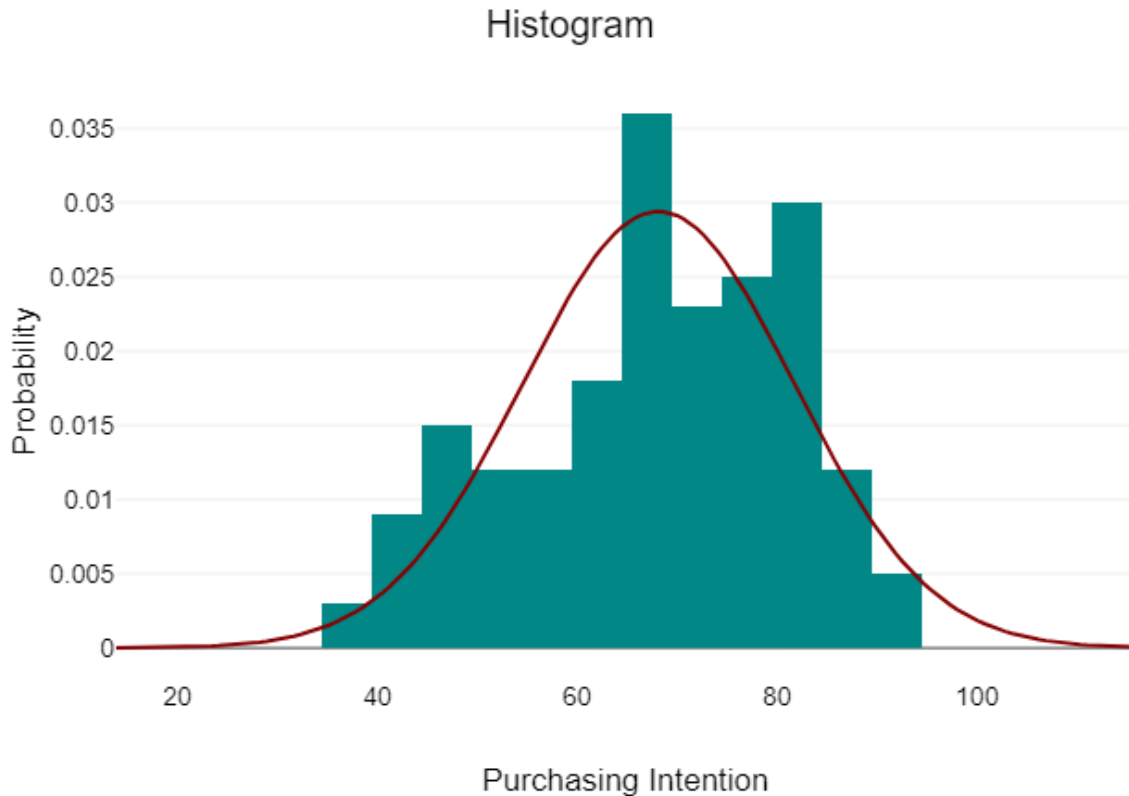


Fig 4 : Normality Curve and Histogram of Purchasing Intention

Table 3: Descriptive statistics for purchasing Intention and its dimensions for rural and urban Adolescents

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Attitude towards the product	Urban	100	21.00	3.911
	Rural	100	19.67	4.080
Subjective Norms	Urban	100	24.52	7.148
	Rural	100	23.48	7.070
Perceived Behaviour Control	Urban	100	24.82	6.099
	Rural	100	22.77	7.344
Purchasing Intention	Urban	100	70.34	13.061
	Rural	100	65.92	13.837

Table 4: t-test on the scores of purchasing intention and its dimensions among rural and urban students

	t	Df	Sig.(2 tailed)	Mean Difference
Attitude towards the product	2.35	198	.02	1.21
Subjective Norms	1.03	198	.302	.860
Perceived Behaviour Control	2.15	191.54	.033	.457
Purchasing Intention	2.32	198	.021	2.53

A two-tailed t-test for independent samples as in Table (equal variances assumed) showed that the difference between urban adolescents and rural adolescents concerning the dependent variable Attitude towards the Product was statistically significant, $t(198) = 2.35$, $p = .02$, 95% confidence.

Thus, the null hypothesis H1 viz There is no significant difference in the Attitude toward the product or service (Dimension 1 of clothing purchase intentions) of rural and urban adolescents was rejected.

The results of the descriptive statistics as in Table 3 showed that the Urban adolescents had higher values for the dependent variable Attitude towards the Product ($M = 21$, $SD = 3.91$) than the Rural adolescents ($M = 19$, $SD = 4.08$).

A two-tailed t-test for independent samples as in Table 4 (equal variances assumed) showed that the difference between Urban and Rural adolescents concerning the dependent variable Subjective norms was not statistically significant, $t(198) = 1.03$, $p = .302$, 95% confidence interval.

Thus, the null hypothesis H2 viz There is no significant difference in the Subjective norms (Dimension 2 of clothing purchase intentions) of rural and urban adolescents was not rejected.

A two-tailed t-test for independent samples (equal variances not assumed) showed that the difference between urban adolescents and rural adolescents concerning the dependent variable Perceived behavior control was statistically significant, $t(191.54) = 2.15$, $p = .033$, 95% confidence interval.

Thus, the null hypothesis H3 viz There is no significant difference in the Perceived Behaviour Control (Dimension 3 of clothing purchase intentions) of rural and urban adolescents was rejected.

The results of the descriptive statistics as in Table 3 showed that the Urban adolescents had higher values for the dependent variable Perceived behavior control ($M = 24.82$, $SD = 6.1$) than the Rural adolescents ($M = 22.77$, $SD = 7.34$).

A two-tailed t-test for independent samples as in Table 4 (equal variances assumed) showed that the difference between urban adolescents and rural adolescents concerning the dependent variable Purchasing Intention was statistically significant, $t(198) = 2.32$, $p = .021$, 95% confidence interval. Thus, the null hypothesis H4 viz There is no significant difference in the clothing purchase intentions of rural and urban adolescents was rejected.

The results of the descriptive statistics as in Table 3 showed that the Urban adolescents had higher values for the dependent variable Purchasing Intention ($M = 70.34$, $SD = 13.06$) than the rural adolescents ($M = 65.92$, $SD = 13.84$).

V. Conclusion

The study reveals that the purchasing choice of adolescent customers is not exclusively determined by a single aspect, but rather by a combination of their perception of quality, their familiarity with brands, and their emotional attachment to particular enterprises.

In conclusion, the descriptive statistics analysis reveals that urban adolescents have higher scores for the dependent variable, attitude products, compared to their rural counterparts. These findings suggest that residing in an urban environment may play a significant role in shaping and influencing the attitudes of adolescents toward various products or consumer goods.

Moreover, compared to rural adolescents, urban adolescents possess a higher level of perceived behavior control. This implies that urban adolescents may possess a greater sense of self-confidence and belief in their ability to regulate their behavior in a specific circumstance and influence their friends, family, and other reference groups than rural adolescents. By prioritizing individual priorities such as quality and comfort, these findings can improve communication strategies.

Finally, In comparison to rural adolescents, urban adolescents exhibit higher purchasing intentions. This suggests that urban adolescents may be more likely to participate in purchasing activities and have a stronger desire to assess the product or service's perceived ease of purchase, financial constraints, and availability than rural adolescents.

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