

## The Rise of App-Based Shopping: Insights into Young Consumers and Digital Disruption in Chennai's Textile Industry

S. Uma Maheshwari\*  
P.Sunantha\*\*

### Abstract

*The rapid rise of app-based shopping has significantly reshaped textile retailing in Chennai, driven largely by young consumers aged 18–35 who actively use mobile applications for apparel purchases. This study explores the shopping motivations, behavioral patterns, and satisfaction levels of these digitally engaged consumers, while also analyzing the impact of this shift on traditional textile retailers in the city. A descriptive research design was adopted, and primary data were collected from 50 respondents comprising college students, young professionals, and frequent online shoppers using a structured Google Form. Secondary data from academic and industry sources supplemented the analysis. The findings show that convenience, attractive discounts, wide product variety, and trust in online reviews are the key drivers of app-based textile shopping. Although overall satisfaction is high among respondents, issues such as size inaccuracies and product quality inconsistencies remain challenges. The study also reveals that traditional textile shops are losing appeal due to limited digital engagement, emphasizing the need for modernization and hybrid business models. Overall, the research highlights that app-based shopping is a long-term behavioral shift among young consumers, reshaping Chennai's textile market and compelling retailers to adapt for future sustainability.*

**Keywords:** App-based shopping - Digital disruption - Mobile commerce - Traditional retailers - Digital engagement - Hybrid retail model - Online apparel shopping

### Introduction:

The rapid expansion of app-based shopping has transformed the retail landscape in India, with Chennai emerging as a significant hub of digital consumer activity. Young consumers, in particular, are at the forefront of this shift, embracing mobile applications for their convenience, diverse product choices, competitive pricing, and seamless payment options. As digital literacy and smartphone penetration rise, these shoppers increasingly prefer online platforms to traditional retail outlets, especially for clothing and textile products. This behavioral transformation has created both opportunities and disruptions within Chennai's textile industry. While online platforms enable wider market reach and data-driven engagement, they also challenge long-established brick-and-mortar textile shops that rely on personal interaction and sensory product evaluation. The resulting digital disruption is reshaping business strategies, supply chains, and customer expectations. Understanding this shift is essential for textile retailers, policymakers, and marketers seeking to adapt to a rapidly evolving retail ecosystem driven by young, digitally empowered consumers.

### Objectives:

1. To examine the shopping preferences and motivations of young consumers in Chennai who increasingly rely on mobile applications for textile and apparel purchases.
2. To analyze how app-based shopping platforms are influencing buying behavior, decision-making patterns, and satisfaction levels among young shoppers.

\*Research Scholar, Department Of Commerce, Vels Institute Of Science, Technology And Advanced Studies (Vistas), Pallavaram, Chennai

\*\*Assistant Professor & Research Supervisor, Department Of Commerce, Vels Institute Of Sciences, Technology And Advanced Studies (Vistas), Pallavaram, Chennai

3. To assess the extent to which digital retail channels are disrupting traditional textile businesses in Chennai, particularly small and medium brick-and-mortar stores.
4. To identify the challenges and opportunities faced by textile retailers in adapting to digital transformation, including marketing strategies, technology adoption, and customer engagement.
5. To evaluate the broader impact of app-driven retail on Chennai's textile supply chain, market competition, and future business sustainability.

### **Research Methodology:**

This study adopts a descriptive research design to examine the shopping behavior of young consumers and the digital disruption affecting Chennai's textile industry. A sample of 50 respondents between the ages of 18 and 35 is selected, as this demographic represents the most active users of app-based shopping platforms. Convenience sampling is used to reach college students, young professionals, and frequent online shoppers within the city. Primary data is collected through a structured Google Form consisting of demographic items and behavioral statements related to app-based textile shopping, while secondary data is sourced from academic articles, industry reports, theses, and digital retail studies. Percentage analysis, mean score analysis, and simple charts are employed to interpret the collected data, supported by descriptive explanations of observed patterns. The study is conducted in urban and semi-urban areas of Chennai, and respondents are required to be residents of the city who have purchased textile or apparel items through a mobile application within the past six months.

### **Statement of the Problem:**

The rapid rise of app-based shopping has reshaped textile retailing in Chennai, especially among young consumers who increasingly prefer mobile platforms for convenience, variety, and competitive pricing. This shift poses serious challenges to traditional textile stores that depend on personal interactions and physical product experience. Many brick-and-mortar shops struggle to adopt digital tools or compete with the marketing power of online platforms, resulting in loss of footfall and declining customer loyalty. At the same time, there is limited academic research that specifically examines how young Chennai consumers influence this digital transformation and how textile retailers are coping with it. Understanding this behavioral change and its industry-wide impact is crucial for retailers, policymakers, and marketers. This study therefore investigates the role of youth-driven app-based shopping in disrupting Chennai's textile industry and explores the strategic responses required for sustainability.

### **Research Questions:**

1. What factors motivate young consumers in Chennai to use app-based platforms for textile shopping?
2. How frequently do young shoppers rely on apps compared to physical textile stores?
3. What challenges do traditional textile retailers face due to the growth of app-based shopping?
4. How does app-based shopping influence customer satisfaction and purchase decisions among young consumers?
5. What technological or marketing strategies can help textile retailers adapt to digital disruption?

### **Scope of the Study:**

1. The study is limited to young consumers aged 18–35 in Chennai who actively use mobile apps for purchasing textile and apparel products.
2. It focuses on understanding their shopping preferences, motivations, and buying patterns related specifically to app-based platforms.
3. The study examines how this shift in consumer behavior affects traditional textile retailers in Chennai.
4. It is restricted to mobile app-based shopping and does not cover desktop e-commerce or purchases of non-textile items.
5. The findings mainly represent Chennai's urban consumer segment and may not fully apply to rural areas or older age groups.

### **Review of Literature:**

1. **Bharath et al. (2022)** highlighted that online marketing and app-based platforms have significantly transformed textile retailing in Chennai. Their study revealed that young consumers increasingly prefer mobile applications due to convenience, ease of browsing, and attractive promotional benefits. They emphasized that traditional retailers struggle to match the discounts and personalization offered by digital platforms, which has resulted in declining footfall in physical textile stores.
2. **Prasad et al. (2015)** found that consumer behavior in Chennai is strongly shaped by factors such as time-saving features, ease of use, and instant access to product information. Their research showed that app-based shopping appeals especially to the younger population, who value quick purchasing processes and transparency in pricing and product reviews. These behavioral traits make mobile shopping far more appealing than conventional retail visits.
3. **Sultana et al. (2025)** noted that modern digital marketing strategies—such as personalized ads, influencer marketing, push notifications and in-app recommendations—play a major role in influencing apparel purchases. Their study particularly emphasized that young women in Chennai respond positively to curated suggestions and social-media-driven promotions, which significantly increase app engagement and online textile purchases.
4. **Ramasamy et al. (2025)** identified several key determinants of customer satisfaction in India's online clothing sector, including competitive pricing, wide product variety, and fast delivery services. However, they also pointed out recurring issues such as incorrect sizing, colour mismatch, and product quality variations. These challenges affect consumer trust and lead to higher return rates, influencing the overall shopping experience.
5. **Narayanan et al. (2025)** observed that the rapid rise of app-driven shopping platforms has disrupted traditional textile retail models across major Indian metros, including Chennai. They noted that physical textile shops face increasing competition from digital platforms offering convenience and higher product visibility. As a result, many retailers are being forced to adopt hybrid models—combining online presence with in-store services—to remain competitive.
6. **Kannan et al. (2025)** stated that although digital transformation is advancing in India's textile supply chain, its adoption remains uneven. Smaller textile retailers often lack the financial resources, technical expertise, and digital infrastructure needed to compete with large app-based marketplaces. This technological gap limits their ability to participate in online retail ecosystems and reduces their competitive strength.

7. **Sharma et al. (2023)** discussed how rising smartphone penetration, widespread internet access, and youth-driven digital culture are accelerating the adoption of online clothing shopping in urban India. Their findings show that young consumers are increasingly comfortable with digital payments, virtual trials, and app-based browsing, contributing to a steady shift away from traditional retail formats and reshaping textile retail dynamics at the national level.

### Analysis and Interpretations:

**Table 1: Preference for Mobile Apps for Textile Shopping**

| Response          | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|-------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 28                 | 56%        |
| Agree             | 15                 | 30%        |
| Neutral           | 5                  | 10%        |
| Disagree          | 2                  | 4%         |
| Strongly Disagree | 0                  | 0%         |

**SOURCE: PRIMARY**

A combined 86% of respondents prefer app-based shopping for convenience, showing that **ease of access and timesaving are major motivators** for young consumers in Chennai. This directly aligns with Objective 1, confirming that mobile apps meet the lifestyle needs of youth who value quick and hassle-free shopping.

**Table 2: Discounts and Offers on App-Based Shopping**

| Response          | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|-------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 20                 | 40%        |
| Agree             | 18                 | 36%        |
| Neutral           | 7                  | 14%        |
| Disagree          | 5                  | 10%        |
| Strongly Disagree | 0                  | 0%         |

**SOURCE: PRIMARY**

The table shows that, 76% of respondents agree that app-based shopping offers better deals than traditional stores. This shows that **promotional benefits and price competitiveness are key factors influencing purchase decisions.**

**Table 3: Influence of Online Reviews**

| Response       | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|----------------|--------------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 15                 | 30%        |
| Agree          | 22                 | 44%        |
| Neutral        | 8                  | 16%        |
| Disagree       | 5                  | 10%        |

| Response          | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|-------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 0                  | 0%         |

SOURCE: PRIMARY

As 74% of respondents, rely on online reviews. This indicates that **peer feedback and social validation are important in shaping buying behavior**, helping retailers understand the significance of digital reputation in influencing young consumers.

Table 4: Product Variety Influence

| Response          | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|-------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 18                 | 36%        |
| Agree             | 20                 | 40%        |
| Neutral           | 7                  | 14%        |
| Disagree          | 5                  | 10%        |
| Strongly Disagree | 0                  | 0%         |

SOURCE: PRIMARY

Table shows 76% of respondents are influenced by the variety offered on apps. This demonstrates that **wide product selection is a competitive advantage for app-based shopping**, encouraging retailers to offer diverse collections online to capture young consumers.

Table 5: Issues with Online Shopping

| Response          | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|-------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 5                  | 10%        |
| Agree             | 15                 | 30%        |
| Neutral           | 10                 | 20%        |
| Disagree          | 15                 | 30%        |
| Strongly Disagree | 5                  | 10%        |

SOURCE: PRIMARY

Table shows 40% of respondents experience problems with product quality or size. This highlights **existing challenges in app-based textile retail**. Retailers must focus on accurate descriptions, size charts, and quality assurance to maintain customer satisfaction, addressing Objective 4.

Table 6: Perception of Traditional Textile Shops

| Response          | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|-------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 12                 | 24%        |
| Agree             | 20                 | 40%        |
| Neutral           | 10                 | 20%        |
| Disagree          | 6                  | 12%        |
| Strongly Disagree | 2                  | 4%         |

SOURCE: PRIMARY

As per the table 64% perceive traditional stores as less digitally active. This confirms the **disruptive impact of app-based platforms on Chennai's textile market**, pushing retailers to adopt online strategies.

Table 7: Overall Satisfaction with App-Based Shopping

| Response          | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|-------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Strongly Agree    | 20                 | 40%        |
| Agree             | 18                 | 36%        |
| Neutral           | 7                  | 14%        |
| Disagree          | 5                  | 10%        |
| Strongly Disagree | 0                  | 0%         |

**SOURCE: PRIMARY**

From the table, 76% of respondents are satisfied with app-based textile shopping. High satisfaction levels indicate **positive perception and potential loyalty among young consumers**, which also suggests a strong future growth trend for digital retail in Chennai, supporting Objectives 2 and 5.

#### Findings:

1. **High preference for app-based shopping:** 86% of young consumers prefer mobile apps due to convenience, highlighting that ease and speed are major motivators for digital adoption.
2. **Discounts and promotions drive purchases:** 76% of respondents agree that app-based platforms offer better deals than traditional stores, emphasizing the importance of competitive pricing.
3. **Peer influence is significant:** 74% trust online reviews and ratings, indicating that digital reputation strongly affects purchase decisions.
4. **Product variety matters:** 76% of respondents consider a wide range of products a key factor in their shopping choices.
5. **Challenges in online shopping persist:** 40% face issues with size, fit, or product quality, revealing areas where app-based retailers need improvement.
6. **Traditional stores losing appeal:** 64% feel that conventional textile shops are less attractive due to limited digital engagement, demonstrating digital disruption in the retail landscape.
7. **Overall satisfaction is high:** 76% of respondents are satisfied with app-based shopping experiences, reflecting strong adoption and potential long-term loyalty among young consumers.

#### Suggestions:

1. **Enhance digital engagement:** Traditional textile stores should establish an online presence and actively promote products via apps and social media.
2. **Focus on product accuracy:** Online retailers should provide detailed size guides, high-quality images, and accurate product descriptions to reduce customer dissatisfaction.
3. **Offer personalized promotions:** App-based platforms can use data analytics to provide tailored discounts and recommendations, enhancing consumer loyalty.

4. **Improve customer support:** Prompt grievance handling and return/exchange policies will increase trust and satisfaction among young shoppers.
5. **Increase product variety:** Expanding textile collections on apps can attract more young consumers and influence purchase decisions.
6. **Adopt hybrid strategies:** Traditional retailers can combine in-store experience with online services to remain competitive in the digital era.
7. **Leverage reviews and ratings:** Retailers should encourage satisfied customers to post reviews and ratings to build credibility and influence potential buyers.

### **Conclusions:**

1. App-based shopping is rapidly becoming the preferred choice for young consumers in Chennai due to convenience, discounts, and variety.
2. Young consumers' buying behavior is highly influenced by app features, including online reviews, product recommendations, and digital marketing strategies.
3. Traditional textile retailers face significant disruption and must adapt to digital trends to maintain competitiveness.
4. While apps are convenient, challenges such as size, fit, and product quality can affect trust and customer satisfaction.
5. The high satisfaction rate indicates that mobile platforms are successfully meeting the needs of young, digitally-savvy consumers.
6. Digital disruption is reshaping Chennai's textile industry, creating opportunities for retailers to adopt hybrid online-offline business models.
7. The study highlights that mobile commerce is not just a short-term trend but also a structural shift in urban consumer behavior.

### **Reference**

- A Study On Consumer Attitude Towards The Online Shopping With Reference To AJIO Online Shopping At Chennai City (2025)
- A Study on Consumer Purchasing Decision in Online Shopping with Regards to Chennai City: Impact of Brand Experience over Brand Love in Online Shopping (2025)
- Consumer's Perception towards Online Shopping: A Special Reference to Chennai (2019)
- A Study on Factors Affecting Online Shopping Behavior of Consumers in Chennai (R. Ganapati, 2025)
- Deciphering the Customer Satisfaction of Indian Online Clothing Stores (2025)
- Linkages Between Brand Experience, Shopping Styles and Purchase Decision Involvement: An Empirical Investigation in Retail Indian Apparel (2022)



# The Indian Economic Journal

JOURNAL OF THE INDIAN ECONOMIC ASSOCIATION

Volume - 3-A • Special Issue • December 2025

**INDUSTRIAL SECTOR  
AND MANUFACTURING  
GROWTH**



## Editor's Message

Dear Readers,

I am truly honoured to edit the special issues of the Indian Economic Journal.

It is with great pleasure that I present this special edition of the Indian Economic Journal for the 108th Annual Conference of the Indian Economic Association, which is hosted by VELS University in Chennai from December 27 to 29, 2025. The theme for this year, "Indian Economy – Navigating Domestic Realities and Global Shifts," encapsulates the dynamic crossroads at which our nation currently stands. As India progresses towards becoming a resilient and globally competitive economy, the necessity for informed dialogue, evidence-based policy formulation, and collaborative scholarship becomes increasingly crucial.

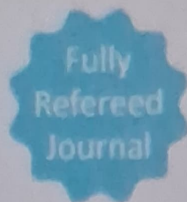
The sub-themes of this conference provide significant opportunities for such discussions. Macroeconomic stability, growth prospects, and the changing financial landscape are central to comprehending India's medium-term trajectory. Agriculture and rural transformation continue to influence livelihoods and promote inclusive development, while the industrial and manufacturing sectors promise productivity enhancements and global competitiveness. In a rapidly evolving geopolitical and trade context, India's strategic positioning demands both caution and innovation. Equally significant are the issues of social inclusion, employment, and human development, which constitute the moral and economic foundation for sustainable progress. The emphasis on contemporary development challenges in Tamil Nadu adds a valuable regional perspective to this year's discussions.

The Indian Economic Journal (IEJ) is an important organ of the Indian Economic Association (IEA) that provides support and services to professionals and researchers both in India and overseas. For over a century the IEA has been one of the largest and the oldest body of teachers, researchers, academicians, and policy makers drawn from the background of Economics and affiliate discipline. Founded in 1917, the IEA is a, "not-for-profit, non-political, and scholarly" voluntary professional association with membership open to those who fulfil the eligibility criteria laid by the constitution of IEA. Through regular outreach programs like, "Conferences, Courses, Publications and Seminars"

CONTENTS

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| 1. Mapping Shopfloor Intelligence: Operationalising Tacit Knowledge in Micro- and Small-Scale Manufacturing<br>SUBRAMANIAN RAMACHANDRAN<br>B.P. CHANDRAMOHAN<br>SHALINI B.....                              | 01  |
| 2. From Shopfloor to Innovation Stronghold: Mapping India's Regional Manufacturing Renaissance<br>KIRTI AWASTHI DUBEY.....  | 14  |
| 3. Do Performance of Medium and Small Scale Firms Depend on Financial Literacy in India?<br>GIRIJASANKAR MALLIK<br>ANSHIKA<br>ANJU SINGLA<br>CHAMELI MANDAL PANDIT.....                                     | 21  |
| 4. Industrial Policy and Structural Reforms: Drivers of Economic Growth and Competitiveness in India<br>GHANSHYAM SINGH.....  | 28  |
| 5. Assessing the Role of E-Sports Industry in Skill Development and Sustainable Livelihoods for Maharashtra's Youth<br>RAHUL S. MHOPARE<br>PRATHAMESH SURYAWANSHI<br>KADAMBARI KADAM.....                   | 36  |
| 6. Examining the Influence of Electric Vehicle Adoption in Enhancing Urban Mobility Efficiency and Green Mobility Behaviour among Millennial Consumers in Chennai<br>C.V. HEMAMALINI<br>C. SARASWATHY.....  | 42  |
| 7. Sustainable Finance for Sustainable Development: ESG's Role in Advancing SDGs<br>HARSHAD LAXMAN JADHAV.....  | 57  |
| 8. Integrating Generative AI for Personalized Banking Service Automation<br>R. ANITHADEVI<br>A. MEENAKSHI.....  | 69  |
| 9. The Rise Of App-Based Shopping: Insights into Young Consumers and Digital Disruption in Chennai's Textile Industry<br>S. UMA MAHESHWARI<br>P.SUNANTHA.....   | 78  |
| 10. Sustainable E-Commerce and Fabric Recycling in India<br>SAPNA.....  | 85  |
| 11. Effect of Innovation on Firm Competitiveness: The Case of Manufacturing SMEs in Tamil Nadu, India<br>J. SIVASHANKAR<br>M. SHAHUL HAMEED.....  | 99  |
| 12. Operational Efficiency and Trust as Drivers of Sector Growth: A Study of Service Failures and Recovery in India's Quick Commerce Industry<br>KRISHNA KHANDELWAL<br>TARIT KUMAR PAUL.....                | 106 |
| 13. Amul's Blue Ocean Distribution Strategy- Leveraging Technology and Innovation as Growth Drivers for Niche Product Expansion in the Indian FMCG Sector<br>ARUP JYOTI KALITA<br>AJIT PRADIP DHOTE.....    | 115 |
| 14. Manufacturing Competitiveness and Brand Positioning in India: Industrial Policy, Market Strategy, and Global Competitive Positioning Across Sectors<br>LIPSY YADAV.....                                 | 123 |
| 15. Economic Factors Influencing Retailers' FMCG Brand Selection and Discontinuation Decisions<br>SAUMYA SINHA<br>AKASH GUPTA.....  | 132 |
| 16. Millennials and Organic Personal Care Products: Study of the Influence of Social Norms and Consumer Values on Purchase Intention using Exploratory Data Analysis<br>V DEEPALAKSHMI<br>K. VINAYAGAM..... | 143 |

The Indian Economic Journal  
(Under UGC CARE List - Group I)



REGISTERED WITH THE REGISTRAR  
OF NEWSPAPER FOR INDIA  
RNI Regn.No. 46913/87

SUPPORTED BY :

Indian Economic  
Association Trust  
for Research &  
Development



ISSN 0019-4662



9 770019 466005 >