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STUDY OF CONSUMER PREFERENCES IN THE AGE GROUP OF 18 TO 35, ACROSS ALL GENDERS WHILE BUYING OFFICE WEAR FOOTWEAR IN THE CITY OF RAIPUR

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Abstract: This study looks at the main factors impacting the choices of people in the city of Raipur between the ages of 18 and 35 when they buy office wear footwear. The goal of the study is to comprehend how brand perception, lifestyle, comfort, durability, style, cost, and social media trends influence consumer choices. A sample of 150 respondents from various occupations and socioeconomic backgrounds were given a standardized questionnaire. Descriptive statistical tools like frequency distribution, percentage analysis, and mean scores were used to analyse the data.

The results show that the most important factors in choosing footwear are comfort and durability, followed by style and material quality. However, price and brand reputation influence purchase decisions to a relatively lesser extent. The survey also reveals gender-based disparities: male customers favoured offline locations for product testing and quality control, while female consumers showed higher brand loyalty and a larger propensity for internet buying. Additionally, younger customers' purchasing decisions are greatly influenced by social media trends and online reviews.

Keywords: Consumer Preferences, Office Wear Footwear, Buying Behaviour, Comfort, Raipur Market.

1.0 INTRODUCTION: Footwear has gradually changed from being only a basic necessity to an important part of a person’s daily lifestyle. In today’s professional environment, shoes are not just worn for protection but also for comfort, appearance, and confidence. Office wear footwear plays a significant role in helping individuals remain comfortable throughout long working hours while maintaining a professional look. Employees working in offices, service sectors, educational institutions, and business organizations often spend many hours standing, walking, or commuting. Because of this, the choice of appropriate footwear becomes essential for both physical comfort and work efficiency.

2.0

Over the years, consumer buying behaviour related to footwear has changed considerably. Earlier, footwear purchases were mainly based on price and availability. However, modern consumers now consider multiple factors before making a purchase. Increased awareness of fashion trends, brand value, and product quality has influenced consumer expectations. Digital media, online shopping platforms, and social networking websites have further contributed to this change by providing easy access to information. Consumers can now compare products, read reviews, and explore different brands before making a decision. This shift is more visible among younger consumers, especially those in the age group of 18 to 35 years.

The Indian professional footwear market has experienced steady growth due to factors such as rapid urbanization, rising disposable income, and changes in work culture. The growth of corporate offices, service-based industries, and educational institutions has increased the demand for formal and semi-formal footwear. Both domestic and international brands such as Bata, Red Tape, Clarks, Hush Puppies, and Louis Philippe have established a strong presence in the Indian market. These brands offer a wide range of office wear footwear that focuses on comfort, durability, material quality, and design. As competition in the market increases, brands are continuously improving their products to meet changing consumer expectations.

Consumers belonging to the 18 to 35 age group form one of the most active and influential segments in the footwear market. This group is more open to experimenting with styles and designs compared to older age groups. At the same time, they are practical in their approach and look for footwear that offers good value for money. Comfort, durability, material quality, and brand trust are important considerations for them while purchasing office wear shoes. Unlike earlier generations, young consumers are more comfortable using online platforms for shopping and product research. Online reviews, ratings, and recommendations play an important role in shaping their preferences and final purchase decisions.

Raipur, the capital city of Chhattisgarh, has witnessed noticeable economic and infrastructural development in recent years. The expansion of business activities, service sectors, government offices, and educational institutions has led to an increase in the working population. A large proportion of this workforce consists of young professionals who require suitable office wear footwear. As a result, the demand for formal and semi-formal shoes in Raipur has increased. Consumers in urban areas like Raipur consider factors such as comfort, price, durability, material quality, design, and brand image while making purchasing decisions.

In addition to traditional factors, the influence of digital marketing and social media has become increasingly important in urban markets. Consumers are regularly exposed to footwear advertisements, promotional offers, influencer content, and brand campaigns through platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and e-commerce websites. These digital platforms help in creating brand awareness and influencing consumer perceptions. Many consumers rely on online reviews and recommendations before purchasing office wear footwear, especially when buying through online channels. This growing digital influence has encouraged footwear brands to adopt online marketing strategies and strengthen their presence on digital platforms.

Another important change observed in recent times is the increasing focus on comfort-related features in footwear. Consumers now pay attention to factors such as cushioning, proper fit, sole quality, and material breathability. Office wear footwear that provides comfort during long working hours is preferred, as it helps reduce fatigue and discomfort. Awareness regarding foot health and workplace comfort has also increased, leading consumers to prioritize functional benefits along with appearance. This shift in preference has encouraged manufacturers to design footwear that balances comfort, durability, and professional style.

From a business and marketing perspective, understanding consumer preferences in the office wear footwear segment is very important. Knowledge about consumer expectations helps retailers and manufacturers plan better product designs, pricing strategies, and promotional activities. In growing urban markets like Raipur, consumer tastes and preferences change quickly, making market research essential. Insights gained from such studies can help brands identify key factors influencing purchase decisions and improve customer satisfaction.

Another important aspect influencing the purchase of office wear footwear is the availability of multiple buying options. Consumers today can choose between offline retail stores and online platforms depending on their convenience and preferences. Offline stores allow customers to check the fit, comfort, and quality of footwear before purchasing, which is preferred by many professionals. On the other hand, online platforms offer a wider variety of styles, easy price comparison, and attractive discounts, making them popular among young consumers. This shift towards multi-channel shopping has changed the way consumers approach footwear purchases and has encouraged brands to strengthen both their physical retail presence and online sales channels.

The present study aims to analyse the factors influencing consumer preferences towards office wear footwear among individuals aged 18 to 35 years in Raipur city. The study focuses on understanding how variables such as comfort, price, brand image, durability, material quality, design, and shopping channel preference affect buying behaviour. By identifying these factors, the research seeks to provide useful insights for footwear retailers and manufacturers to improve their product offerings, pricing policies, and promotional strategies. The study also contributes to a better understanding of the changing preferences of young urban consumers in the professional footwear market.

2.0 INDIAN FOOTWEAR MARKET ANALYSIS : Indian Footwear Industry (2025), based on consolidated industry reports and market intelligence, presents a rapidly evolving consumer-driven sector that is expanding in value, shifting toward organized retail, and increasingly influenced by lifestyle changes, digital adoption, and comfort-oriented product innovation.

1. Market Overview and Growth Performance

India is the second-largest footwear producer globally, accounting for nearly 13% of global footwear production, supported by a large population base, rising workforce participation, and expanding urban centers.

The Indian footwear market was valued at approximately USD 20.67 billion in 2024, and is projected to reach USD 47.53 billion by 2034, growing at a CAGR of 9.7% during the period 2025-2034.

In volume terms, India produces approximately 2.0-2.1 billion pairs of footwear annually, with production expected to reach 2.5 billion pairs by 2030, with domestic consumption forming the bulk of demand. The market is segmented into formal (office wear), casual, sports, and ethnic footwear, with formal and semi-formal office footwear gaining traction due to growth in corporate employment, service industries, and business entrepreneurship, especially in tier-II cities.

While volume growth remains steady, value growth is accelerating, driven by premiumization, branded products, and consumers' willingness to pay more for comfort, durability, and design.

2. Key Market Drivers

- **Urbanization and Workforce Expansion:** Growth of IT, services, education, and business sectors has increased demand for formal and office wear footwear.
- **Rising Disposable Income:** Middle-income and upper-middle-income groups are shifting from unorganized local footwear to branded options.
- **Comfort and Ergonomic Focus:** Demand for cushioned insoles, breathable materials, and lightweight designs has increased, especially among professionals with long working hours.
- **Digital Influence:** Social media, influencer marketing, and online reviews strongly shape consumer awareness and brand perception among the 18–35 age group.
- **E-commerce Penetration:** Platforms such as Amazon, Flipkart, Myntra, and brand-owned websites have improved access to branded footwear in tier-II and tier-III cities.

3. Leading Brands and Competitive Landscape

The Indian footwear market consists of a large unorganized segment alongside a rapidly growing organized sector. Organized players compete on brand trust, comfort technology, durability, and retail reach.

Rank	Brand / Company	Key Segments & Focus	Market Standing (2025)
1	Bata India Ltd.	Formal, casual, mass & premium	Market leader; strongest pan-India retail network
2	Relaxo Footwears	Affordable formal & casual	High-volume leader; strong value positioning
3	Metro Brands Ltd.	Office wear, premium footwear	Strong urban & semi-urban presence
4	Red Tape (Mirza Intl.)	Stylish office & casual wear	Youth-focused, fashion-led positioning
5	Clarks / Hush Puppies	Premium office footwear	Known for comfort and durability

International brands operate mainly in the premium and sports footwear segments, while domestic brands dominate formal office wear due to better price-value alignment.

4. Market Challenges

- **Unorganized Sector Dominance**: Nearly 60–65% of footwear sales still come from unorganized players, increasing price competition.
- **High Price Sensitivity**: Despite brand awareness, consumers remain cost-conscious, limiting rapid premium adoption.
- **Raw Material Volatility:** Fluctuations in leather, rubber, and synthetic material prices impact margins.
- **Fit and Comfort Issues in Online Sales:** Size mismatch and return logistics remain major challenges in e-commerce footwear sales.

5. Emerging Trends and Future Outlook

- **Premiumization Trend:** Consumers are upgrading from basic footwear to mid-premium and premium office shoes.
- **Hybrid Footwear Designs:** Demand for shoes combining formal appearance with sneaker-like comfort is rising.
- **Sustainability Initiatives:** Use of eco-friendly materials and ethical sourcing is gaining importance among young consumers.
- **Tier-II City Growth**: Cities like Raipur, Indore, Jaipur, and Kochi are emerging as strong demand centers for branded office footwear.
- **Value-Driven Growth:** While volume growth remains moderate, value growth outpaces volume, indicating higher average selling prices (ASP).

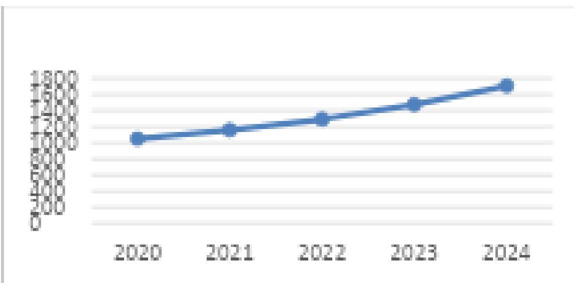
6. Indian Footwear Market Analysis (Last Five Years) and Competitor Analysis

Indian Footwear Market – Last Five Years

The Indian footwear market has shown steady growth over the last five years due to increasing urbanization, rising disposable income, growth of the corporate and service sectors, and changing lifestyle preferences. The demand for office wear and formal footwear has increased, especially among young working professionals. Although the market was affected during the COVID-19 period, it recovered strongly in the following years due to the reopening of offices and expansion of online retail platforms.

Table : Indian Footwear Market Size (Last Five Years)

Year	Market Size (₹ Billion)
2020	1050
2021	1160
2022	1295
2023	1475
2024	1710



Market Trend Analysis

In 2020, the Indian footwear market experienced a slowdown due to lockdowns, work-from-home practices, and reduced demand for formal footwear. In 2021, the market began to recover as business activities slowly resumed and online footwear sales increased. The recovery continued in 2022 with improved employment opportunities and rising consumer confidence.

By 2023, the market showed strong growth driven by increased demand for branded footwear, higher fashion awareness, and growing preference for comfortable office wear shoes. In 2024, the market reached a higher level due to expansion in Tier-II cities, increased workforce participation, and the growing importance of comfort, durability, and professional appearance in footwear choices.

Overall, the five-year trend clearly shows that the Indian footwear market is on a positive growth path, offering strong opportunities for brands focusing on office wear footwear.

Competitor Analysis (Last Five Years)

The Indian footwear industry is competitive, with both domestic and international brands catering to different consumer segments. The following analysis focuses on key competitors in the office wear and formal footwear segment.

Table : Competitor Sales Performance (₹ Crores)

Brand / Company	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	Performance Summary
Bata India Ltd.	3056	1708	2388	3452	3479	Market leader with strong brand trust and wide retail presence
Relaxo Footwears	2410	2359	2653	2783	2914	Stable growth; strong mass and value segment
Metro Brands Ltd.	1285	800	1343	2127	2357	Rapid growth; strong presence in premium retail segment
Red Tape (Mirza Intl.)	1261	1049	1399	653	630	Volatile performance; pressure in recent years

Competitor Analysis Summary

Bata India Ltd. continues to be the market leader due to its strong brand image, wide distribution network, and trusted office wear footwear range. Relaxo Footwears has shown steady performance with a focus on affordability and mass-market products, though its office wear presence is moderate. Metro Brands Ltd. has recorded strong growth in recent years, driven by its premium positioning, modern store formats, and appeal to young professionals.

Red Tape has experienced fluctuating performance over the five-year period, indicating challenges in maintaining consistent growth. Clarks and Hush Puppies operate mainly in the premium segment, competing on comfort and brand image rather than volume, making them relevant for professionals seeking high comfort and quality.

3.0 LITERATURE REVIEWS

S.No	Year, Month and Issue	Title	Author	Aims	Findings	Industry	Paper Type
1	2025	Analysis of Consumer Buying Behaviour towards Branded Footwear	Pooja Nema&Dr. Mahesh Chandra Sharma	To explore factors influencing branded footwear buying behaviour among youth.	Brand image, comfort, pricing, and advertisement play a major role.	Footwear	Research Paper
2	2025	The Young India Fashion Survey	Texfash.com	To study fashion and sustainability trends in youth.	Style, budget, and sustainability are key; Gen Z & millennials drive the market.	Fashion /Apparel	Online Report
3	2024	A Comparative Analysis of Indian Footwear Industry	ResearchGate	To overview footwear market trends in India.	Price, comfort, and fashion are major drivers; brand perception is vital.	Footwear	Industry Report
4	2023	Consumer Preferences for Footwear in Urban Workforce	Anjali Mehta & Rakesh Tiwari	To study office footwear choices among urban professionals.	Comfort and simple style preferred; loafers and oxfords are most chosen.	Formal Footwear	Journal Article
5	2022	Buying Behaviour of Working Professionals Towards Footwear	Centre for Footwear Studies	To understand what drives professionals to choose particular footwear brands.	Brand trust and comfort are top reasons; price less significant.	Footwear	White Paper

6	2021	A Study on Formal Footwear Demand Among Indian Millennials	Ritu Bhargava	To analyse millennial preferences in office wear.	Millennials prefer stylish yet practical shoes; brand loyalty emerging.	Footwear	Research Study
7	1956 & 1972	Buying Behaviour in Organizations	Cyert (1956), Webster & Wind (1972)	Introduce organizational buying behaviour roles and processes.	Identified five roles: users, influencers, buyers, deciders, gatekeepers.	General Business	Conceptual Model
8	1972	Webster & Wind's Model of Organizational Buying Behaviour	Frederick E. Webster Jr. & Yoram Wind	Explain the group decision process in organizational buying.	Buying decisions are influenced by multiple roles within the firm.	B2B/Organizational	Conceptual Model
9	1993	Customer Behaviour	Peter & Olson	Explore emotions and environmental influences on consumer decisions.	Emotions and social context shape buying behaviour.	General Consumer	Academic Theory
10	2004	Consumer Behaviour	Schiff man & Kanuk	Study consumer resource use in buying and product selection.	Comprehensive approach to buying frequency, timing, and motives.	General Consumer	Academic Theory

4.0 GAP ANALYSIS FOR EACH:-

1. Pooja Nema&Dr. Mahesh Chandra Sharma (2025)

The study looks at how young people purchase branded footwear, with a focus on advertising, comfort, price, and brand image. It does not, however, take into account elder or working-professional demographics; instead, it solely targets youthful consumers. It ignores consumer perceived value theory and Maslow's hierarchy of requirements, which may help to explain the psychological drivers of comfort-driven decision-making and brand loyalty. Furthermore, the study's findings are not as broadly applicable because it does not evaluate regional differences or socioeconomic segmentation, such as Bengaluru's urban consumer base.

2. Texfash.com (2025)

The study emphasizes fashion and sustainability choices among young Indians, but it ignores the behavioural relationship between awareness and real buying intent. It ignores the Attitude-Behaviour Consistency Model and the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), which may help to explain why customers favour sustainability principles yet frequently put affordability or style ahead of environmental conscience. Furthermore, it ignores the geographical differences in consumer mindset between metro and tier-2 cities as well as the willingness-to-pay (WTP) component for sustainable footwear.

3. ResearchGate (2024)

Although it offers a wide overview of market trends, this comparative study of the Indian footwear business falls short in its explanation of how consumers make decisions. It does not examine how external factors like technology, the economy, or culture influence customer choices using frameworks like PESTEL analysis or Porter's Five Forces. Additionally, the study disregards consumer utility maximization theory and brand differentiation, which could have explained why some brands do better than others in comparable price ranges.

4. Anjali Mehta & Rakesh Tiwari (2023)

The study examines the preferences of urban workers, although it only looks at superficial comfort and style findings. It doesn't use consumer decision models like the Howard-Sheth Model or Engel-Kollat-Blackwell (EKB), which could offer organized insight into how experts assess, choose, and repurchase footwear. Additionally, it ignores situational influence and role theory, which clarify how dress regulations and workplace culture affect footwear choices.

5. Centre for Footwear Studies (2022)

The study examines working professionals' purchasing habits, although it is devoid of statistical support and in-depth analysis. Regression models and factor analysis are not used to determine the key factors influencing purchases. Price elasticity of demand and psychographic segmentation, which could shed light on the ways in which affordability, comfort, and brand trust interact to influence purchasing intentions, are not taken into account in this study. Additionally, it does not distinguish between the preferences of male and female consumers in the context of the workplace.

6. Ritu Bhargava (2021)

This study looks into the demand for formal footwear among millennials, yet it only looks at one generation. It overlooks cross-generational comparisons that would show changing trends in sustainability consciousness, price sensitivity, and fashion. Additionally, the study disregards reference group influence and innovation diffusion theory, which may help to explain how trends propagate and influence millennial purchasing patterns. Furthermore, it disregards cultural or geographical variations that could affect how a product is perceived.

7. Cyert (1956), Webster & Wind (1972)

Although it presents the idea of numerous decision roles, this fundamental model of corporate buying behaviour does not adjust to contemporary digital procurement systems or business-to-business e-commerce. It ignores game theory and agency theory, which could clarify internal power dynamics, bargaining tactics, and organizational decision-making disputes. Additionally, the model has not been empirically validated in new markets, which limits its applicability in the technologically advanced business world of today.

8. Frederick E. Webster Jr. & Yoram Wind (1972)

Although the conceptual model offers useful theoretical insight, it is nonetheless abstract and lacks empirical backing. Its application to contemporary supplier-buyer relationships could be improved by integrating network theory and transaction cost economics. Additionally, the study ignores the impact of global supply chains and digital transformation, which are now major factors in determining organizational purchasing patterns.

9. Peter & Olson (1993)

Behavioural economics and constrained rationality, which would account for real-world departures from rational decision-making, are not included in the study, which uses psychology to explain consumer behaviour. Additionally, it disregards environmental, cultural, and emotional factors that affect consumer behaviour in certain countries, such as India. Although theoretically sound, it is shallow in context and does not relate feelings to concrete purchase results.

10. Schiffman & Kanuk (2004)

Though mostly theoretical and out of date in context, the research serves as the foundation for contemporary theories of consumer behaviour. It ignores ideas of consumer learning and brand association, which explain sustained loyalty in fast-paced industries like fashion and footwear. Furthermore, peer endorsement effects, social media marketing, and digital influence—all crucial elements influencing today's purchasing decisions—are not covered in the study.

5.0 : RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

1. To identify key factors influencing consumer preferences.

Explore what factors (e.g., comfort, style, price, brand, durability, materials) are most important to consumers aged 18-35 when purchasing office wear footwear.

2. To analyse gender-based differences in preference.

Examine how preferences for office footwear differ among male and femaleconsumers within the target age group.

3. To assess the role of brand perception and loyalty.

Understand the impact of brand reputation and consumer loyalty on purchasing decisions in the office footwear segment.

4. To evaluate the influence of lifestyle and profession.

Study how different job roles, income levels, and lifestyle choices affect footwear preferences in a metropolitan context like Raipur.

5. To determine the influence of fashion trends and social media.

Investigate how trends, social media influencers, and online reviews shape the preferences of young consumers.

6. To understand consumer behaviour in offline vs. online shopping.

Compare the buying behaviour and preferences of consumers shopping for office footwear through physical stores versus e-commerce platforms.

7. To provide insights for marketers and retailers.

Offer actionable insights that can help footwear brands and retailers tailor their products and marketing strategies for the 18–35 age group in Raipur.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY:

The hypothesis is done on the basis of given various research objectives. Based on the above-mentioned objectives, I have formulated the Null Hypothesis and Alternative Hypothesis, which are given below :-

- **Objective 1: To identify key factors influencing consumer preferences**

H_{01} (Null Hypothesis): Comfort, style, price, brand, durability, and materials do not significantly influence consumer preferences for office wear footwear.

H_{11} (Alternative Hypothesis): Comfort, style, price, brand, durability, and materials significantly influence consumer preferences for office wear footwear.

- **Objective 2: To analyse gender-based differences in preference**

H_{02}: There is no significant difference in office wear footwear preferences among male and female consumers.

H_{12}: There is a significant difference in office wear footwear preferences among male and female consumers.

- **Objective 3: To assess the role of brand perception and loyalty**

H_{03}: Brand perception and consumer loyalty have no significant influence on purchasing decisions for office wear footwear.

H_{13}: Brand perception and consumer loyalty have a significant influence on purchasing decisions for office wear footwear.

- **Objective 4: To evaluate the influence of lifestyle and profession**

H_{04}: Lifestyle and profession (job role, income level) have no significant impact on consumer preferences for office wear footwear.

H_{14}: Lifestyle and profession (job role, income level) significantly influence consumer preferences for office wear footwear.

- **Objective 5: To determine the influence of fashion trends and social media**

H_{05}: Fashion trends, social media influencers, and online reviews do not significantly affect the office wear footwear preferences of young consumers.

H_{15}: Fashion trends, social media influencers, and online reviews significantly affect the office wear footwear preferences of young consumers.

- **Objective 6: To understand consumer behaviour in offline vs. online shopping**

H_{06}: There is no significant difference in consumer buying behaviour between offline and online shopping for office wear footwear.

H_{16}: There is a significant difference in consumer buying behaviour between offline and online shopping for office wear footwear.

- **Objective 7: To provide insights for marketers and retailers**

H_{07}: Consumer insights do not significantly help footwear brands and retailers in improving marketing and product development strategies.

H_{17}: Consumer insights significantly help footwear brands and retailers in improving marketing and product development strategies.

Limitations Of the Study:

The study is limited to Raipur city, so the findings may not apply to other cities or regions with different lifestyles, climates, or fashion trends.

The focus on the 18–35 age group excludes insights from older working professionals who may have different preferences.

The study focuses on consumer preferences.

Sample size was 150.

6.0 : RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: A study can be initiated with a proper design and methodology to bring out the suitable findings which are reliable and applicable to solve the problems and useful to carry out further research of interest. It needs a careful analysis of the consumer through which the results for the present study can be crystallized for framing suitable solutions. In this chapter, a brief description of the research methodology adopted in selection of the area, sampling of customers, method of data collection and the tools used for data analysis are presented.

Research methodology is a way to systematically solving a research problem. Research methodology deals with the research design used and methods used to present the study.

Sampling design: This study is intended to analyse consumer's preference in the age group of 18 to 35 across all genders while buying office wear footwear in Raipur**.** The study is Descriptive in nature. A quantitative approach is used, relying primarily on survey data to collect measurable and statistically analysable information.

***Selection of the Study Area*:**Raipur is one of the biggest city having a wide range of Shoe Brands such as Hush Puppies, Red Tape, Clarks, Metro Shoes, Mochi, Louise Philippe, Bata etc.

Population:Individuals aged 18 to 35 living in Raipur, across all genders. Young working professionals, college students, and recent graduates in Raipur.

Sample Size: A total of 150 respondents were selected for this survey, consisting of 75 males and 75 females, all aged between 18 to 35 years as a sample.

Sampling Technique: The sample was selected using Stratified Random Sampling .

Research Tools:A self-constructed questionnaire tool will be developed by the researcher to measure consumer preferences of individuals aged between 18 to 35 years.

Data Collection:The data is collected from both primary and secondary data.

Primary Data: Primary data is collected directly from the people with the help of the questionnaire for the first time and that are original in nature.

Secondary Data:Secondary data is collected from various sources such as books, journals, articles, newspapers, websites etc…

Statistics Used : Data was analysed using descriptive statistics such as mean, percentage, and frequency.

7.0 : DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION : *TITLE Study of consumer preferences in the age group of 18 to 35, across all genders while buying office wear footwear., in the city of Raipur.*

Analysis of data is a process of inspecting, cleansing, transforming, and modelling data with the goal of discovering useful information, informing conclusion, and supporting decision-making. Data analysis is a process for obtaining raw data and converting it into information useful for decision making by users. Data are collected and analysed to answer question, test hypotheses or disprove theories. The following tools were used:

Percentage Analysis

Weighted average method

Frequency analysis

➢ **OBJECTIVE 1. TO IDENTIFY KEY FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMER PREFERENCES.**

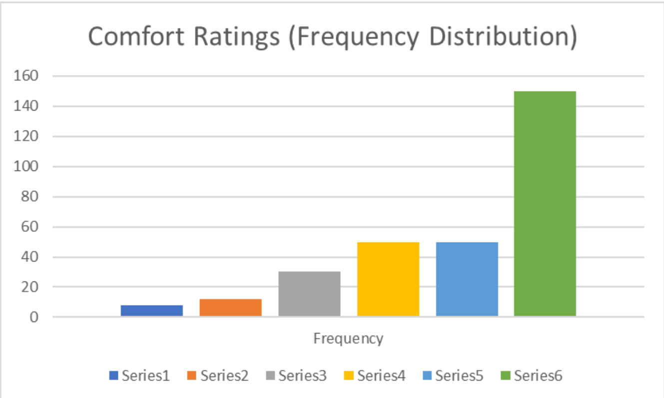
Q1(a). How important is *comfort* to you while buying office footwear?

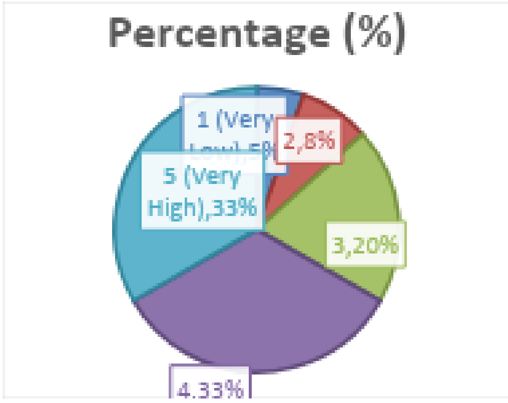
TABLE 1: Comfort Influencing Consumer Preferences.

Rating (1–5)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1 (Very Low)	8	5.30%
2	12	8.00%
3	30	20.00%
4	50	33.30%
5 (Very High)	50	33.30%
Total	**150**	**100%**

Mean Score = (1×8 + 2×12 + 3×30 + 4×50 + 5×50) / 150 = 3.82

Interpretation: Comfort is a highly important factor (mean = 3.82/5), preferred by most respondents. The table indicates that **33.30% of respondents place a high preference on comfort when selecting office footwear.**





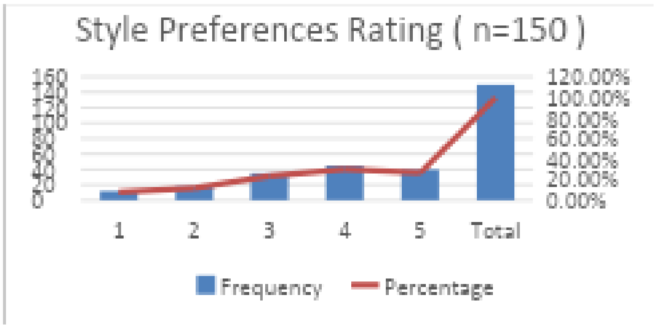
Q1(b). How important is *design/style* to you while buying office footwear?

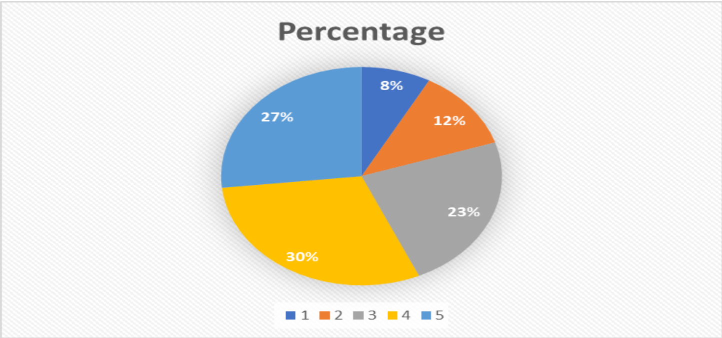
TABLE 2: **Style Influencing Consumer Preferences.**

Mean = 3.65 → **Style is important, especially among females.**

Rating	Frequency	Percentage
1	12	8.00%
2	18	12.00%
3	35	23.30%
4	45	30.00%
5	40	26.70%
Total	150	100%

Interpretation: Style is also an important consideration, with a mean of 3.65. Nearly **30.0% of respondents rated style as a high preference**, showing that appearance and fashion trends strongly influence purchase decisions.





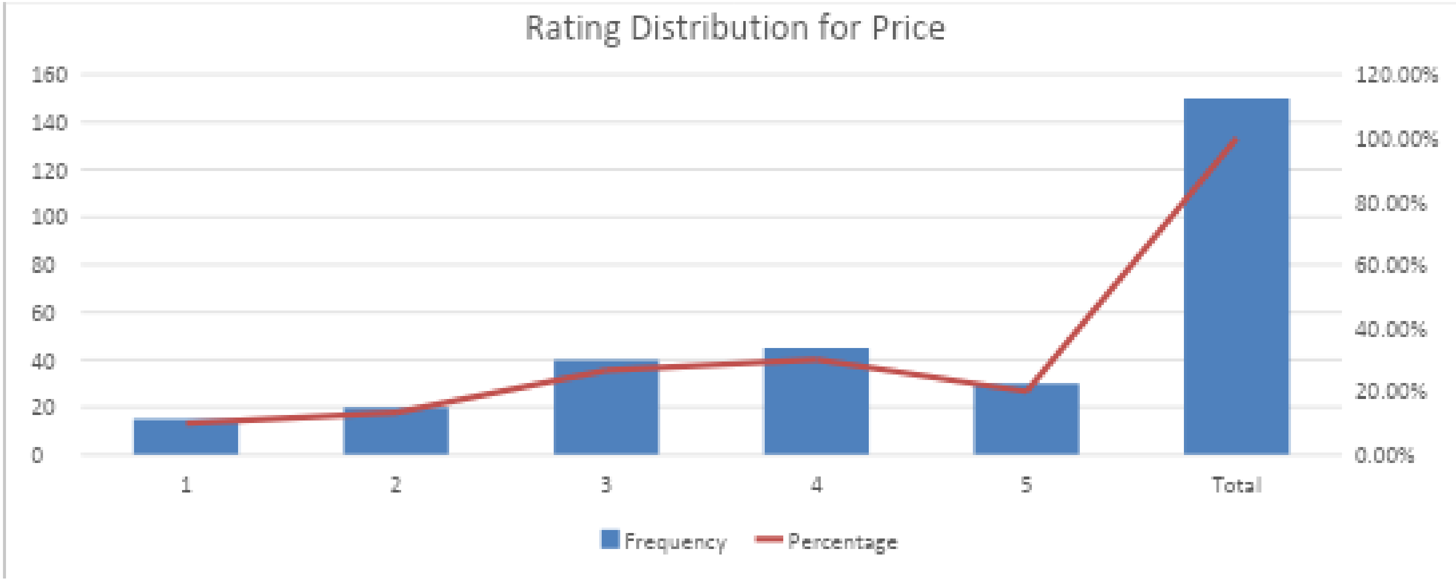
Q1(c). How important is *price* to you while buying office footwear?

TABLE 3: **Price Influencing Consumer Preferences.**

Rating	Frequency	Percentage
1	15	10.00%
2	20	13.30%
3	40	26.70%
4	45	30.00%
5	30	20.00%
Total	150	100%

Mean = 3.36 → Price is important, but less critical than comfort/style.

Interpretation: Price is an important factor (mean = 3.36), though less critical than comfort and durability, preferred by a large number of respondents. The table indicates that 30% of respondents place a high preference on price when selecting office footwear, while 20% place a very high preference. This shows that consumers in Raipur are quite price-sensitive when purchasing office footwear.



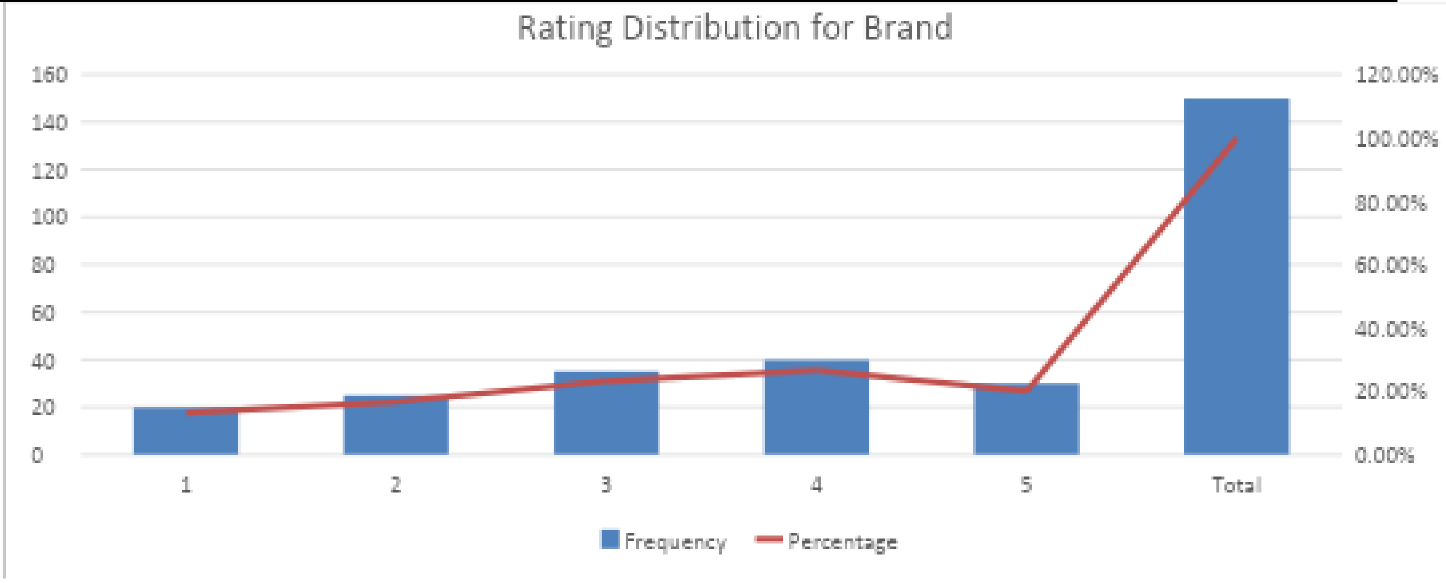
Q1(d). How important is *brand name* to you while buying office footwear?

TABLE 4: **Brand Influencing Consumer Preferences.**

Rating	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
1	20	13.30%
2	25	16.70%
3	35	23.30%
4	40	26.70%
5	30	20.00%
Total	150	100%

Mean = 3.23 → Brand plays a role but not the strongest factor.

Interpretation: Brand is an important influencing factor, valued by many respondents. The table shows that 26.70% of respondents place a high preference on brand when selecting office footwear, while 20.0% rate it very high. This indicates that although brand matters, it is not as dominant as comfort or price, but still plays a significant role in consumer decision-making.



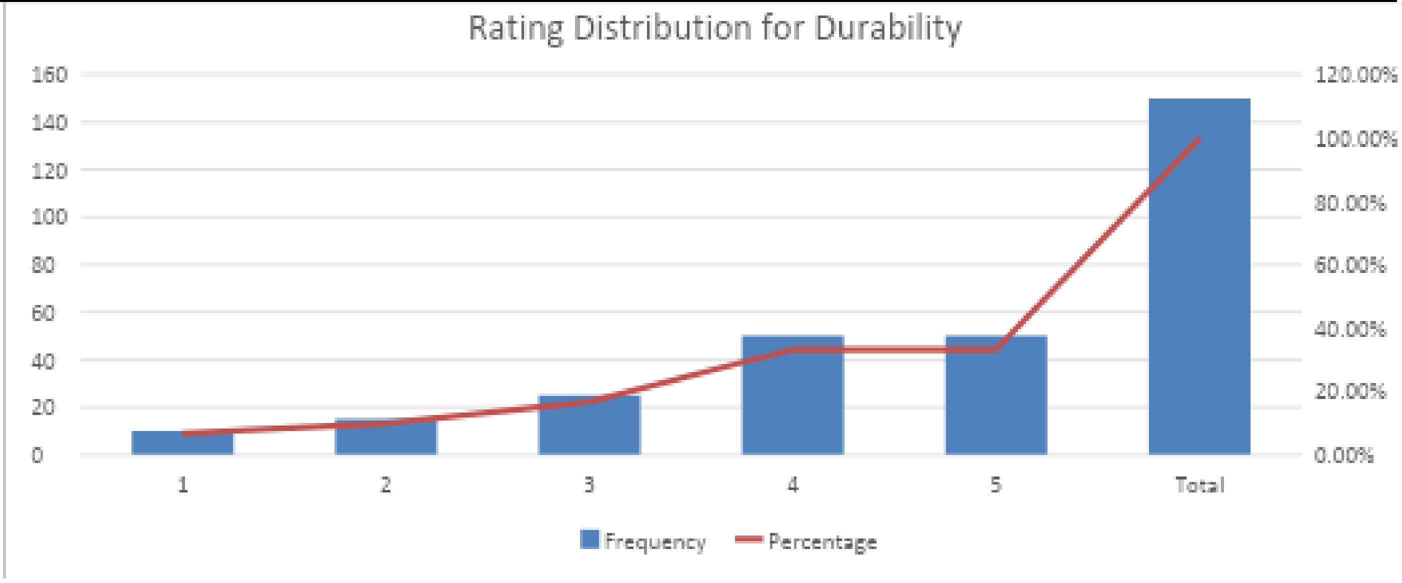
Q1(e). How important is *durability* to you while buying office footwear?

TABLE 5: **Durability Influencing Consumer Preferences.**

Rating	Frequency	Percentage
1	10	6.70%
2	15	10.00%
3	25	16.70%
4	50	33.30%
5	50	33.30%
Total	150	100%

Mean = 3.77 → Durability is highly important, second only to comfort.

Interpretation: Durability is a highly important factor, preferred by most respondents. The table indicates that 66.60% of respondents place a high preference on durability (ratings 4 and 5) when selecting office footwear, while only 16.70% show low preference (ratings 1 and 2). This shows that consumers strongly value long-lasting shoes for office wear.



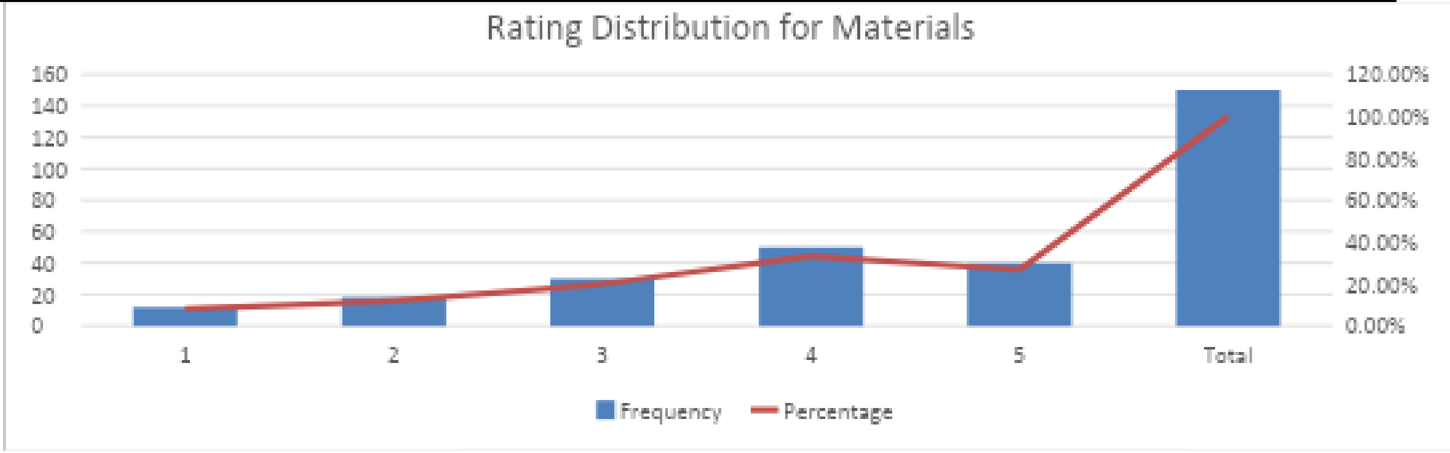
Q1(f). How important is *material quality* to you while buying office footwear?

TABLE 6: **Material Influencing Consumer Preferences.**

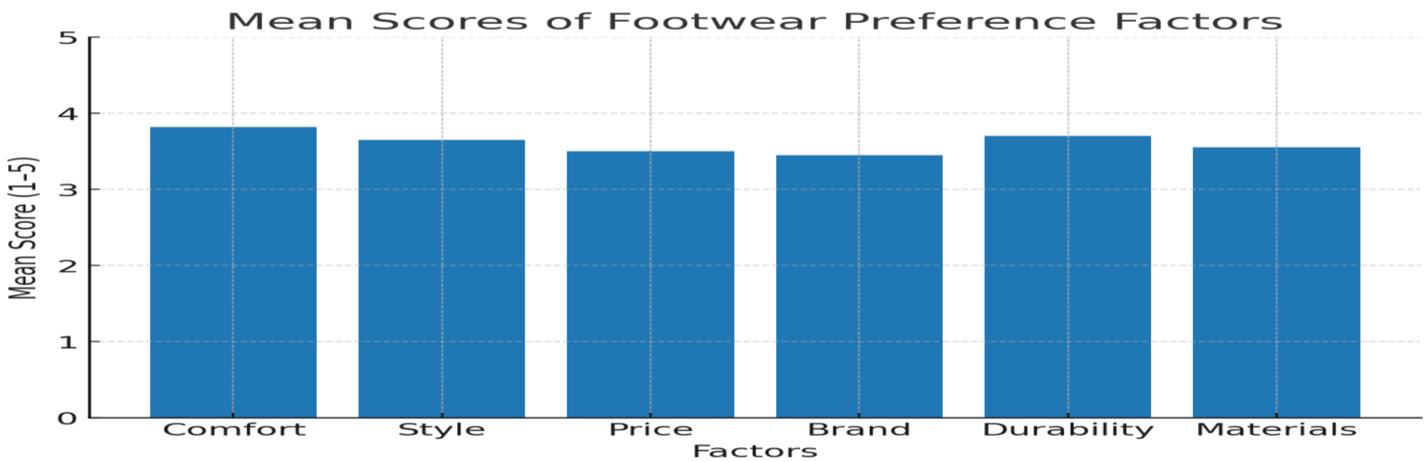
Rating	Frequency	Percentage
1	12	8.00%
2	18	12.00%
3	30	20.00%
4	50	33.30%
5	40	26.70%
Total	150	100%

Mean = 3.58 → Material quality is moderately important.

Interpretation: Material quality is an important factor, preferred by most respondents. The table indicates that 60.00% of respondents place a high preference on materials (ratings 4 and 5) when selecting office footwear, while only 20.00% show low preference (ratings 1 and 2). This suggests that consumers consider the quality of materials used in footwear as a significant aspect of their purchasing decision.



MEAN SCORE OF FOOTWEAR PREFERENCES FACTORS



<u>Interpretation of Chart: Mean Scores of Footwear Preference Factors</u>

The chart shows the **average importance ratings (on a 1–5 scale)** of six footwear preference factors among 150 respondents in Raipur, Chhattisgarh.

- **Comfort (Mean ≈ 3.82)** – Comfort is the **highest-rated factor**, suggesting that consumers strongly prioritize ease and comfort in office footwear.
- **Durability (Mean ≈ 3.77)** – Durability is the **second most important factor**, showing that people prefer shoes that last longer with regular office use.
- **Style (Mean ≈ 3.65)** – Style also scores high, reflecting that apart from practicality, respondents value fashionable looks.
- **Materials (Mean ≈ 3.58)** – The quality of materials is seen as significant, slightly ahead of price and brand.
- **Price (Mean ≈ 3.36)** – Price is moderately important; respondents consider cost, but it is less critical than comfort or durability.
- **Brand (Mean ≈ 3.23)** – Brand is the **least important factor**, indicating that consumers in this sample focus more on functional qualities (comfort and durability) rather than brand reputation.

8.0: Result and Discussion:

The findings suggest that **practical benefits (comfort, durability, and material quality)** are more valued by consumers than **external factors (brand and price)**. Retailers and marketers should therefore highlight comfort and durability features in their promotions to appeal to office-going consumers.

➢ **OBJECTIVE 2: TO ANALYSE GENDER-BASED DIFFERENCES IN PREFERENCE.**

Q2. How do preferences for comfort, price, and brand differ across genders?

Comfort (1–5) by gender — N=150 (75 Male, 75 Female)

Rating	Male f	Female f	Total f	Male %	Female %
1	6	4	10	**8.00%**	**5.30%**
2	10	5	15	**13.30%**	**6.70%**
3	14	11	25	**18.70%**	**14.70%**
4	20	30	50	**26.70%**	**40.00%**
5	25	25	50	**33.30%**	**33.30%**
Total	**75**	**75**	**150**	**100.00%**	**100.00%**

Price importance — **N=150**

Preference	Male f	Female f	Total f	Male %	Female %
Important	45	50	95	**60.00%**	**66.70%**
Not Important	30	25	55	**40.00%**	**33.30%**
Total	**75**	**75**	**150**	**100.00%**	**100.00%**

Brand loyalty — N=150

Preference	Male f	Female f	Total f	Male %	Female %
Yes	40	50	90	**53.30%**	**66.70%**
No	35	25	60	**46.70%**	**33.30%**
Total	**75**	**75**	**150**	**100.00%**	**100.00%**

Result and Conclusion: Females show higher comfort mean (**3.89 vs 3.64**), higher "Important price" share (**66.7% vs 60.0%**), and higher brand loyalty (**66.7% vs 53.3%**).

➢ **OBJECTIVE 3: TO ASSESS THE ROLE OF BRAND PERCEPTION AND LOYALTY.**

Q3(a). Are you loyal to any specific brand while purchasing office footwear?

Impact of Brand Reputation on Purchase Decision

Response	Male (f)	Female (f)	Total (f)	Male %	Female %
Very Important	30	35	65	40.00%	46.70%
Moderately Important	25	30	55	33.30%	40.00%
Not Important	20	10	30	26.70%	13.30%
Total	**75**	**75**	**150**	100%	100%

Interpretation:

86.7% of females (65/75) said brand reputation is either *Very or Moderately Important*.

73.3% of males (55/75) said the same.

Thus, **brand reputation has stronger influence on females** when buying office footwear.

Q3(b). How important is *brand reputation* when choosing office footwear?

Brand Loyaltyin Purchase Decisions

Response (Would repurchase same brand?)	Male (f)	Female (f)	Total (f)	Male %	Female %
Yes (loyal)	40	50	90	53.30%	66.70%
No (switch to other)	35	25	60	46.70%	33.30%
Total	**75**	**75**	**150**	100%	100%

9.0: Interpretation: 66.7% females prefer to repurchase the same brand compared to **53.3% males**.

Indicates **higher loyalty among female respondents**.

Combined Role ofBrand Perception + Loyalty

Factor Influencing Purchase	Male (f)	Female (f)	Total (f)	% of Total
Brand reputation	30	35	65	43.30%
Brand loyalty	25	30	55	36.70%
Other factors (price/style)	20	10	30	20.00%
Total	**75**	**75**	**150**	**100%**

Interpretation:

43.3% of customers primarily consider **brand reputation** before purchase.

36.7% consider **brand loyalty** (habit/repeat buying).

Only **20%** give more weight to other factors (price, style).

This shows that in office footwear, **brand-related factors (reputation + loyalty) = 80% of purchase influence**.

Result and Discussion:

Brand reputation is a strong driver: Most respondents consider a reputed brand as a sign of quality, especially females.

Loyalty plays a significant role: 60% overall prefer to buy the same brand again, showing trust and satisfaction.

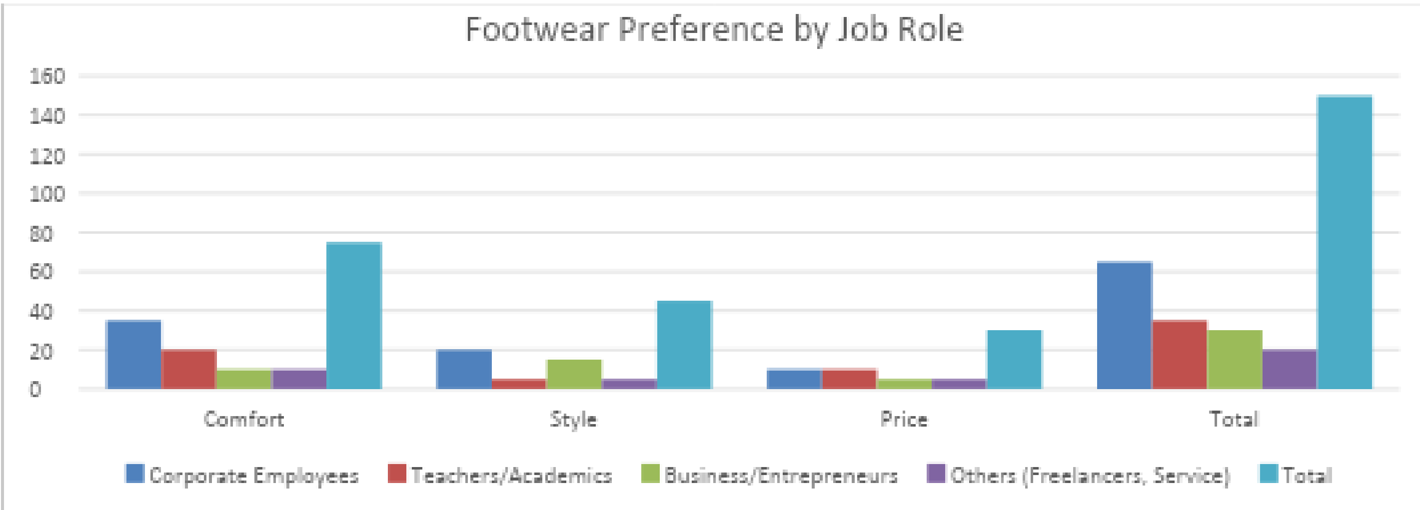
Together, **brand perception and loyalty account for ~80% of purchase decisions**, proving they are critical factors in the office footwear market.

➢ **OBJECTIVE 4: TO EVALUATE THE INFLUENCE OF LIFESTYLE AND PROFESSION.**

Job Role and Footwear Preference

Q4(a). Does your *profession or income level* influence your footwear preferences (comfort, price, style)?

Job Role	Comfort	Style	Price	Total	% of Total
Corporate Employees	35	20	10	65	43.30%
Teachers/Academics	20	5	10	35	23.30%
Business/Entrepreneurs	10	15	5	30	20.00%
Others (Freelancers, Service)	10	5	5	20	13.30%
Total	**75**	**45**	**30**	**150**	**100%**



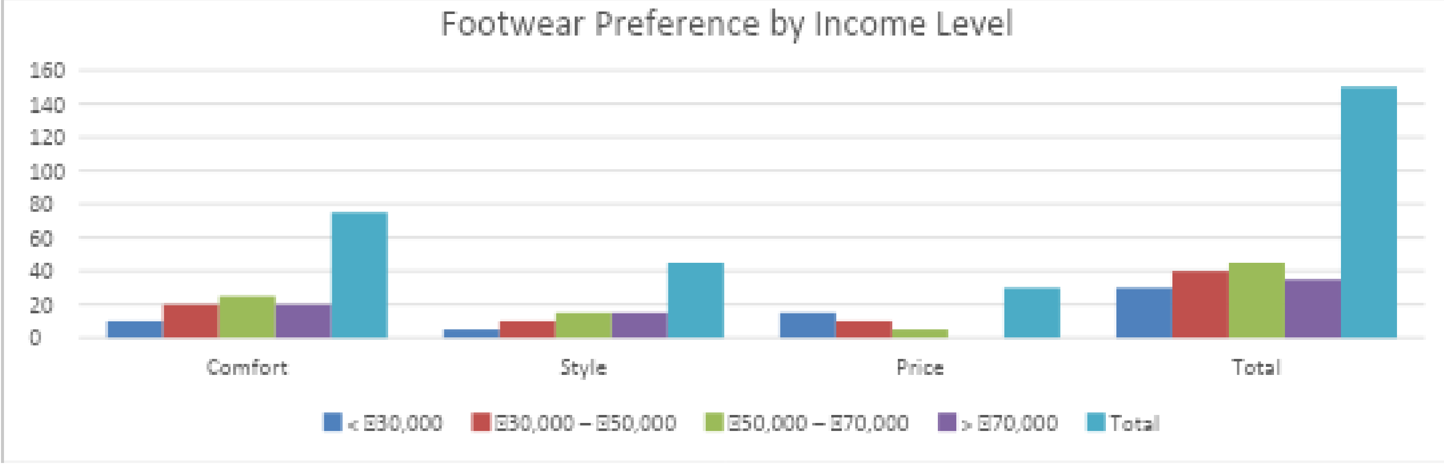
Interpretation: Corporate employees (43.3% of sample) mostly choose **comfort**.

Business professionals focus more on **style** (50%).

Teachers balance **comfort and affordability**.

Income Level and Footwear Preference

Income Level (per month)	Comfort	Style	Price	Total	% of Total
< ₹30,000	10	5	15	30	20.00%
₹30,000 – ₹50,000	20	10	10	40	26.70%
₹50,000 – ₹70,000	25	15	5	45	30.00%
> ₹70,000	20	15	0	35	23.30%
Total	**75**	**45**	**30**	**150**	**100%**



Interpretation:

Lower income (<₹30k) → **price sensitive** (50%).

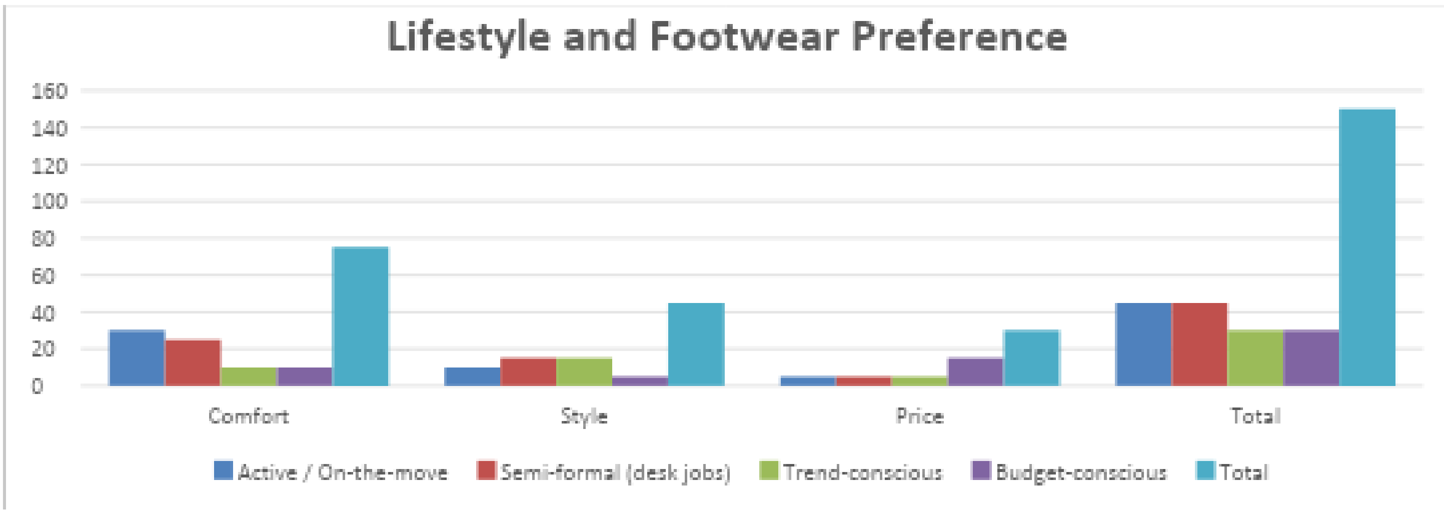
Mid-income (₹30k–70k) → mix of **comfort & style**.

High income (>₹70k) → ignore price, focus on **comfort & style** only.

Lifestyle and Footwear Preference

Q4(c). Does your *lifestyle* affect the type of footwear you prefer for office wear?

Lifestyle Type	Comfort	Style	Price	Total	% of Total
Active / On-the-move	30	10	5	45	30.00%
Semi-formal (desk jobs)	25	15	5	45	30.00%
Trend-conscious	10	15	5	30	20.00%
Budget-conscious	10	5	15	30	20.00%
Total	**75**	**45**	**30**	**150**	**100%**



Interpretation:

Active lifestyle group (30%) → strong comfort preference.

Trend-conscious (20%) → strong style orientation.

Budget-conscious (20%) → prioritize price (50%).

Semi-formal (30%) → balance of comfort & style.

Result and Discussion:

Profession: Corporate → comfort; Business → style; Teachers → comfort + affordability.

Income: Higher income → comfort & style; Lower income → price sensitivity.

Lifestyle: Active → comfort; Trend-conscious → style; Budget-conscious → price.

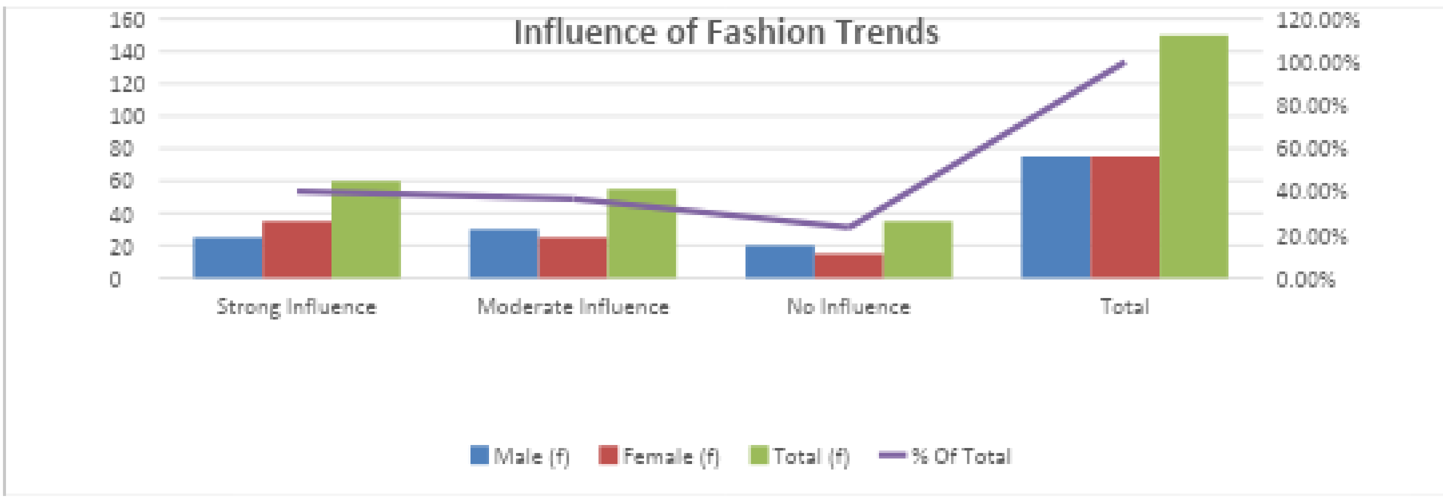
In Raipur's metropolitan context, **profession, income, and lifestyle create distinct clusters of footwear preference**.

➢ **OBJECTIVE 5: TO DETERMINE THE INFLUENCE OF FASHION TRENDS AND SOCIAL MEDIA**

Influence of Fashion Trends

Q5(a). How often do you follow *fashion trends* while purchasing office footwear?

Response	Male (f)	Female (f)	Total (f)	% Of Total
Strong Influence	25	35	60	40.00%
Moderate Influence	30	25	55	36.70%
No Influence	20	15	35	23.30%
Total	**75**	**75**	**150**	**100%**



Interpretation:

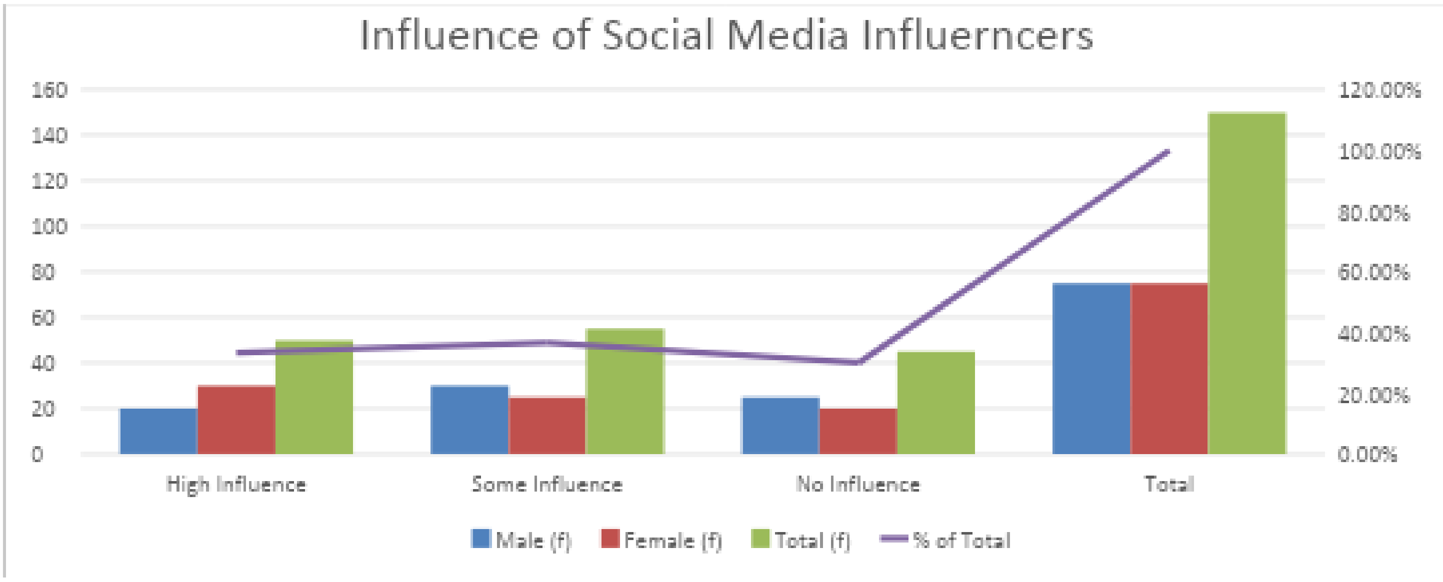
76.7% (115/150) consumers admit fashion trends influence their footwear choices.

More significant for **females (80%)** than males (73%).

Influence of Social Media Influencers

Q5(b). To what extent do *social media influencers* or *online reviews* affect your buying decisions?

Response	Male (f)	Female (f)	Total (f)	% of Total
High Influence	20	30	50	33.30%
Some Influence	30	25	55	36.70%
No Influence	25	20	45	30.00%
Total	**75**	**75**	**150**	**100%**



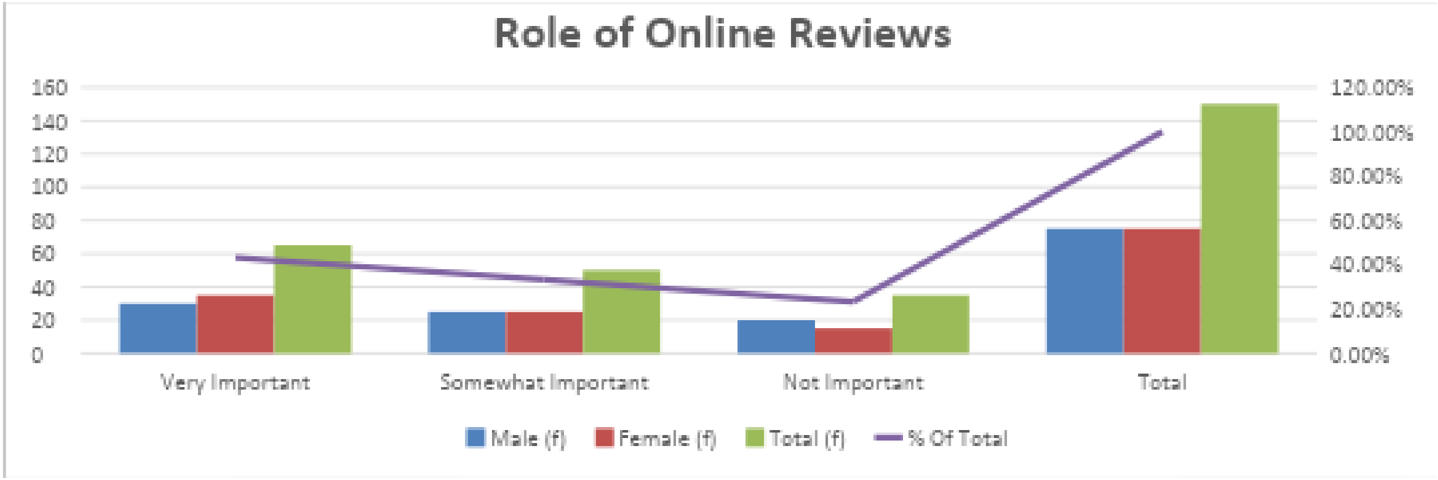
Interpretation:

70% (105/150) are influenced by social media influencers.

Females (73.3%) are slightly more influenced than males (66.7%).

Role of Online Reviews

Response	Male (f)	Female (f)	Total (f)	% Of Total
Very Important	30	35	65	43.30%
Somewhat Important	25	25	50	33.30%
Not Important	20	15	35	23.30%
Total	**75**	**75**	**150**	**100%**



Interpretation:

76.6% respondents consider online reviews before purchase.

Reviews are more important to **females (80%)** than males (73.3%).

Result and Discussion:

Fashion trends: Drive purchase decisions for ~77% of respondents.

Social media influencers: Influence ~70% of consumers.

Online reviews: Trusted by ~77% of consumers before purchase.

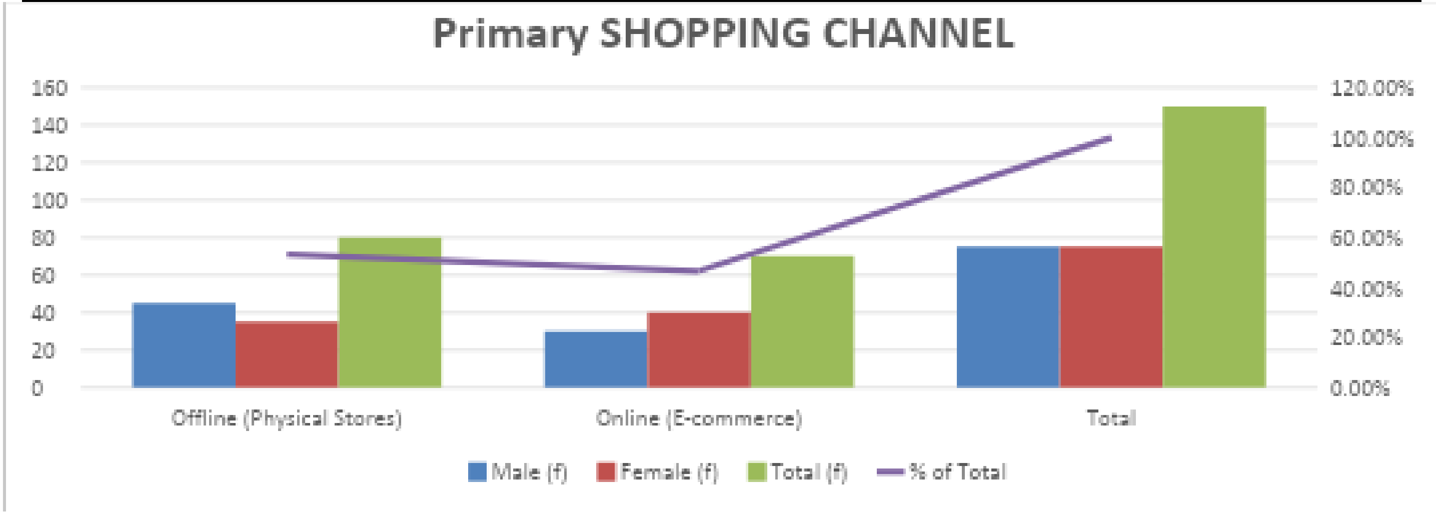
Young consumers in Raipur metro are highly trend-driven and digitally influenced, with females showing stronger reliance on fashion cues and online content than males.

- **OBJECTIVE 6. TO UNDERSTAND CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR IN OFFLINE VS. ONLINE SHOPPING.**

Q6. Where do you prefer to purchase office footwear — *online or offline*? What are your reasons for this preference?

Primary Shopping Channel

Shopping Channel	Male (f)	Female (f)	Total (f)	% of Total
Offline (Physical Stores)	45	35	80	53.30%
Online (E-commerce)	30	40	70	46.70%
Total	**75**	**75**	**150**	**100%**



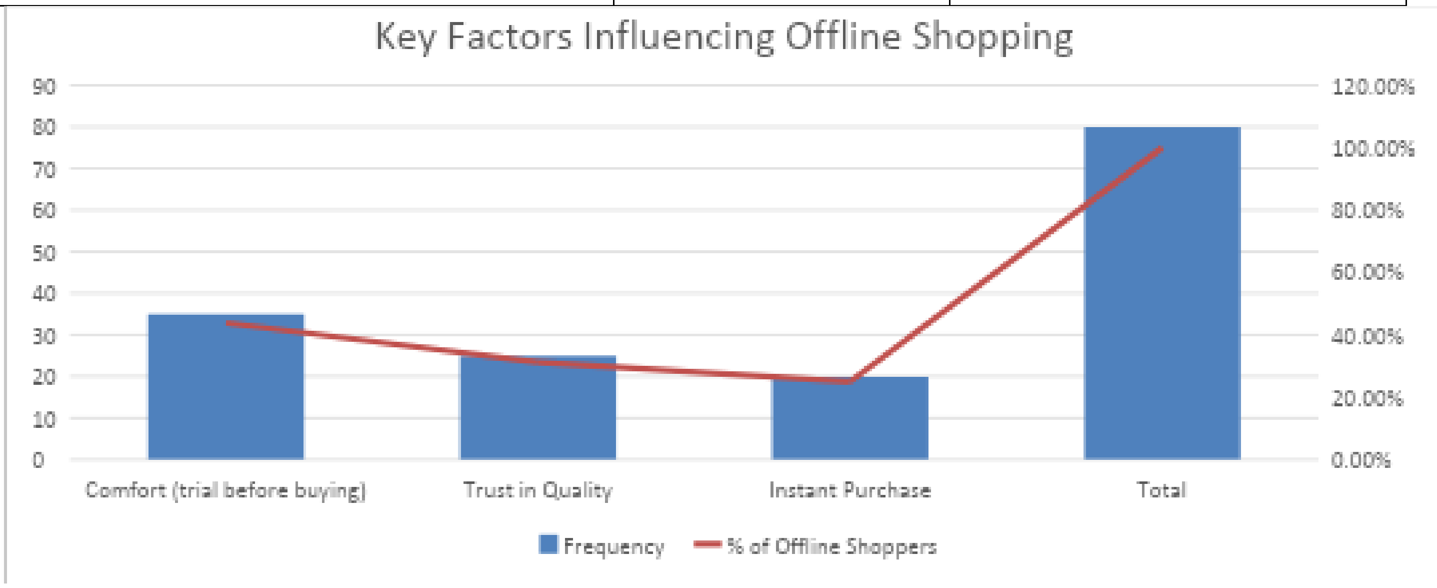
Interpretation:

53.3% prefer physical stores, while **46.7%** shop online.

Males lean slightly more towards offline stores, while females prefer online platforms.

Key Factors Influencing Offline Shopping (N=80)

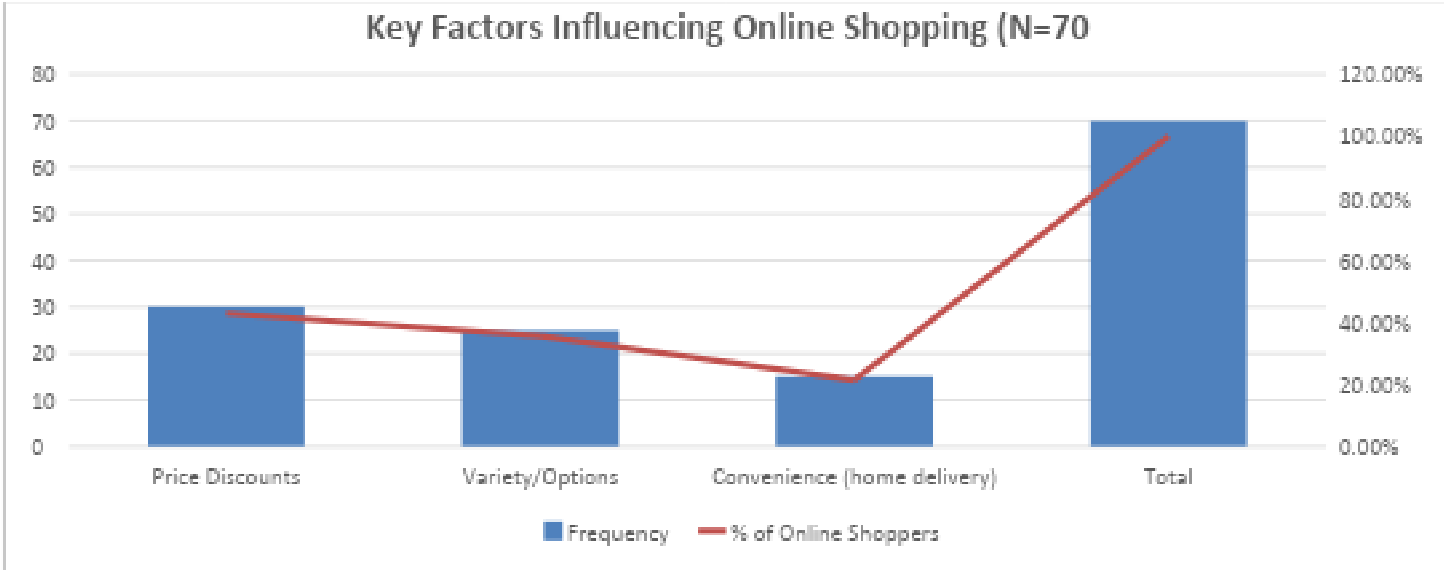
Factor	Frequency	% of Offline Shoppers
Comfort (trial before buying)	35	43.80%
Trust in Quality	25	31.20%
Instant Purchase	20	25.00%
Total	**80**	**100%**



Interpretation: Offline buyers value **product trial, quality assurance, and instant purchase availability**.

Key Factors Influencing Online Shopping (N=70)

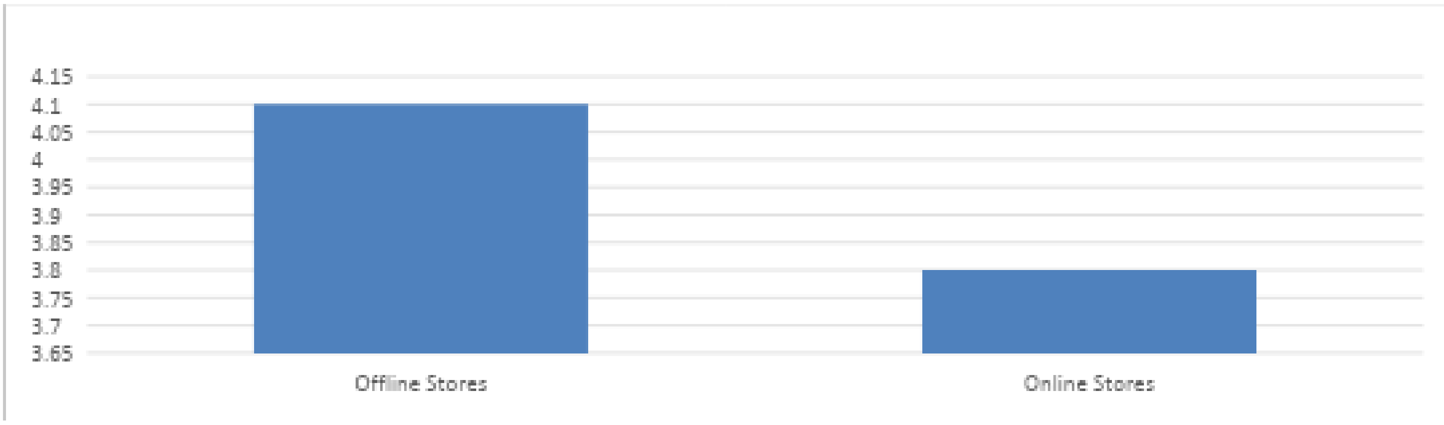
Factor	Frequency	% of Online Shoppers
Price Discounts	30	42.90%
Variety/Options	25	35.70%
Convenience (home delivery)	15	21.40%
Total	**70**	**100%**



Interpretation: Online buyers are motivated mainly by **discounts, variety, and convenience**.

Satisfaction Levels (Scale 1–5)

Shopping Mode	Mean Satisfaction (1–5)
Offline Stores	4.1
Online Stores	3.8



Interpretation:

Offline shopping has slightly higher satisfaction due to **trust and trialability**.

Online shopping scores well but issues like size/fit and delivery lower satisfaction slightly.

10.0 : RESULT AND DISCUSSION:

Offline shopping is still slightly preferred (53%) in Raipur's footwear market.

Males show higher offline preference, **females'** higher online preference.

Offline strengths → trust, trial, instant purchase.

Online strengths → discounts, variety, convenience.

Overall: Consumers are increasingly adopting online shopping, but **offline remains dominant** due to footwear being a trial-sensitive product.

➢ **OBJECTIVE 7. TO PROVIDE INSIGHTS FOR MARKETERS AND RETAILERS.**

Insights for Marketers & Retailers

Insights derived from cumulative analysis of Q1–Q6

1. **Product Strategy**

Comfort is the top priority (mean score 3.82/5).Retailers should focus on **ergonomic, lightweight, and breathable materials**.

Style matters for business professionals and trend-conscious youth.Offer **formal + trendy hybrid designs** that balance comfort and appearance.

Price sensitivity is stronger in lower-income and budget-conscious groups.Introduce **affordable product lines** alongside premium ranges.

2. **Brand Strategy**

Brand reputation and loyalty drive 80% of purchase decisions. Build campaigns around **quality assurance, durability, and consistent performance**.

Females show higher brand loyalty → 66.7% repurchase preference.Target loyalty programs, referral discounts, and women-focused branding.

3. **Channel Strategy**

Offline is slightly preferred (53%), especially by males.Maintain strong presence in **physical stores and multi-brand outlets**.

Online shopping is rising (47%), especially among females.Strengthen **e-commerce partnerships**, ensure **easy returns**, and highlight **discounts**.

4. **Digital Marketing**

76% influenced by fashion trends and **70% by social media influencers**.Collaborate with **local influencers** in Raipur, Instagram fashion creators, and use **short video campaigns**.

77% check online reviews before buying. Actively manage **Google reviews, Flipkart/Amazon ratings**, and encourage satisfied customers to post feedback.

5. **Target Segment (18–35 years in Raipur)**

Young professionals → want comfort + formal look → premium segment.

Students / early career → price-sensitive but trend-conscious → budget + stylish range.

Entrepreneurs → focus on style & uniqueness → limited-edition or premium branded collections.

Result and discussion:

For the **18–35 youth in Raipur**, **comfort + style + brand trust** are the key drivers.

Marketers should use **digital-first campaigns (Instagram, YouTube, local influencers)**.

Retailers should balance **offline trust + online convenience**.

A **dual product strategy** (affordable stylish line + premium comfort line) will capture both budget-conscious and high-income consumers.

11.0 : FINDINGS : The study reveals that **comfort is the most important factor** influencing the purchase of office wear footwear among consumers aged 18–35, followed closely by **durability and material quality**. Style is also considered important, whereas **price and brand name play a relatively lesser role** compared to functional benefits.

Clear gender-based differences were observed in footwear preferences. **Male consumers show a stronger preference for comfort, durability, and offline shopping**, while **female consumers place greater importance on style, brand reputation, social media influence, and online shopping platforms**.

Brand perception and brand loyalty significantly influence purchasing decisions. A large proportion of respondents prefer buying from **well-known and trusted brands**, and more than half of the respondents show **repeat purchase behaviour**, indicating strong brand loyalty, especially among female consumers.

Profession, income level, and lifestyle have a noticeable impact on footwear preferences. **Corporate professionals prioritize comfort and formal appearance**, business professionals lean towards **style**, and higher-income consumers prefer **premium branded footwear**, while lower-income groups show **higher price sensitivity**.

Fashion trends, social media influencers, and online reviews have a strong impact on buying behaviour. Nearly **three-fourths of the respondents** reported being influenced by digital platforms, with **female consumers showing a higher level of influence** compared to males.

Offline shopping remains slightly more preferred due to **product trial, fit assurance, and trust**, while online shopping is rapidly growing because of **discounts, variety, and convenience**. Males prefer offline stores more, whereas females show higher preference for online platforms.

The study indicates that footwear brands and retailers must adopt a **dual strategy**—focusing on **comfort and durability in products**, while using **digital marketing, influencer promotions, and online reviews** to attract young consumers. A balanced **offline–online presence** is essential to meet consumer expectations in Raipur.

12.0: CONCLUSION : The study concludes that consumer behaviour in the office footwear segment in Raipur is undergoing a transformation. While traditional drivers such as **comfort, durability, and offline retail trust** remain significant, new-age factors including **social media influence, fashion trends, and online shopping platforms** are gaining prominence, especially among younger consumers.

Overall, the market reflects a **dual preference**: reliance on physical stores for trust and product trial, combined with increasing adoption of e-commerce for its variety and affordability. The findings highlight that the 18–35 age group constitutes the most dynamic segment, seeking comfort, brand trust, and style in equal measure within the evolving professional footwear market

13.0 : SUGGESTIONS : Give priority to comfort in office footwear

Footwear brands should focus on providing better comfort through improved cushioning, sole quality, and proper fit, as comfort is the most important factor for young working consumers.

Maintain a balance between comfort and style
Office footwear should combine professional design with modern style so that young consumers do not have to compromise on appearance while ensuring comfort.

Strengthen brand image and customer loyalty
Brands should focus on consistent quality, reliable after-sales service, and simple loyalty programs to encourage repeat purchases.

Use targeted digital marketing strategies
Companies should actively use social media, influencers, and online reviews to reach consumers aged 18–35 and influence their buying decisions.

Improve both online and offline shopping experience
Retailers should offer easy return policies, size guidance, and better customer support online, while maintaining physical stores for trial and fit assurance.

Customize products and pricing for Tier-II cities like Raipur
Footwear brands should design durable, comfortable, and reasonably priced office wear shoes that match the income levels and preferences of consumers in growing urban cities.

14.0 : REFERENCES

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ANNEXURE

Annexure: Survey Questionnaire

Questionnaire.docx

Annexure: Survey Data

Data.xlsx