



**BIJU PATNAIK INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
& MANAGEMENT STUDIES (BIITM), BHUBANESWAR**

Plot No. F/4, Chandaka Industrial Estate, Infocity, Patia, Bhubaneswar-24
Approved by AICTE, Govt. of India | Affiliated to BPUT, Odisha | NAAC Accredited | ISO 9001 : 2015

SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROJECT 2025

REPORT TITLE

**Customer Satisfaction and Feedback
Management at Pantaloons**

SUBMITTED BY

Abinash Mahapatro

MBA Batch : 2024-2026

UNIVERSITY Regn.: 2406258008

Faculty Guide

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Corporate Guide

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CERTIFICATE OF FACULTY GUIDE

This is to certify that **Mr Abinash Mahapatro**, bearing university registration no **2406258008** of 2024-26 batch, has completed his summer internship at **Aditya Birla Fashion and Retails Ltd (Pantaloon)** from **05th June 2025** to **20th July 2025** under the supervision of **Prof. Sushruti Rani Panda**, Asst.Prof.(Marketing) and has submitted this project report in partial fulfilment of the requirements for award of the degree of Master of Business Administration at Biju Patnaik Institute of Information Technology and Management Studies, Bhubaneswar. To the best of my knowledge and belief, this project report has been prepared by the student and has not been submitted to any other institute or university for the award of any degree or diploma.

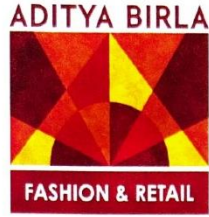
Date:

Signature of the Faculty Guide

Prof. Sushruti Rani Panda

Asst.Prof.(Marketing)

BIITM, Bhubaneswar



11th August, 2025

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that Abinash Mahapatro is a student of Master of Business Administration from BIITM, Bhubaneswar has successfully completed an internship with Aditya Birla Fashion & Retail Ltd. as Marketing Intern in Pantaloons store of Brahmapur, from 05th June 2025 to 20th July 2025, under the guidance of Sushanta Kumar Behera.

He has worked on the project "Customer satisfaction and feedback management". During the internship, he has gained several learnings and developed considerable skills.

I hereby certify his overall work as excellent to the best of my knowledge.

Wishing him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

For Aditya Birla Fashion & Retail Ltd.,

Suryakanta Swain
Store Manager



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Suryakanta Swain".

pantaloons

Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Limited (formerly known as Pantaloons Fashion & Retail Limited)
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DECLARATION

I, **Mr Abinash Mahapatro** bearing university registration no **2406258008 (2024-26 batch)**, hereby declare that the project report titled **Customer Satisfaction and Feedback Management** is based on my internship at **Pantaloons(ABFRL), Brahmapur**, during the period **5 June 2025 to 20 July 2025** and is an original work done by me under the supervision of **Mr Susanta Kumar Behera (Corporate Guide)** and **Prof. Sushruti Rani Panda (Faculty Guide)**. This report is being submitted to Biju Patnaik Institute of Information Technology and Management Studies, Bhubaneswar, affiliated to Biju Patnaik University of Technology, Odisha, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Business Administration. This project report has not been submitted to any other institute/university for the award of any degree or diploma.

Date:

Place: Bhubaneswar

Signature

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Apart from my own efforts, the success of any project depends largely on the encouragement and guidelines of many others. I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the people who have been instrumental in the successful completion of this project.

I would like to sincerely thank Pantaloons (ABFRL) for giving me the opportunity to do my internship with them. This experience has been incredibly valuable and has helped me learn a lot about the Retail Industry.

A special thank you to **Mr. Sushant Kumar Behera**, my guide at Pantaloons , for his constant support and help throughout my internship. His guidance and expertise have been invaluable in helping me overcome challenges and complete this project.

I am also very grateful to my internal guide, **Prof. Sushruti Rani Panda** , for her constant follow-up, encouragement, and guidance. Her support has been crucial in helping me finish this project on time.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Summer Internship Project, titled “**Customer Satisfaction and Feedback Management**” was carried out at Pantaloons, Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Ltd. (ABFRL), Brahmapur, from **5th June 2025 to 20th July 2025**. The study focused on assessing customer satisfaction, evaluating feedback mechanisms and suggesting improvements for enhancing customer experience.

Objectives

- To analyze customer satisfaction across product, service and store experience dimensions.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of existing customer feedback channels.
- To provide actionable recommendations to strengthen customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Methodology

- **Primary Research:**
 - Customer surveys with 20 respondents covering product quality, pricing, ambiance, staff behavior and checkout efficiency.
 - In-store observations on customer behavior and store processes.
 - Interviews with sales associates and department managers.
- **Secondary Research:**
 - Company reports, retail industry studies and academic literature on customer satisfaction models and feedback systems.

Key Findings

- **Strengths:**
 - Attractive and modern store interiors.
 - Knowledgeable and highly responsive sales associates.
 - Efficient and quick checkout process.
 - Clear return and exchange policy.

- **Weaknesses:**

- Perception of higher prices compared to competitors.
- Mixed opinions on product quality.
- Trial room availability and cleanliness issues.
- Store ambiance not consistently inviting.
- Feedback mechanisms underutilized, with customers preferring informal communication.

Conclusions

- Pantaloons has a **strong brand image, product variety, and customer trust**.
- However, **operational bottlenecks and underutilized feedback channels** reduce overall satisfaction.
- Addressing these gaps can elevate customer experience from satisfactory to excellent.

Recommendations

1. **Improve Operations** – streamline trial room management and introduce queue systems at checkout.
2. **Enhance Staff Empowerment** – advanced training, better product knowledge, and authority to resolve minor issues.
3. **Strengthen Feedback Management** – promote digital feedback, close the feedback loop, and train staff as feedback champions.
4. **Leverage Loyalty Data** – use Green Card insights for personalized offers and communication.
5. **Adopt Experiential Retail** – styling consultations, alteration services, and community engagement events.

Final Insight

By implementing these strategies, Pantaloons can **transform customer satisfaction into customer delight**, ensuring stronger loyalty, repeat business and a sustainable competitive advantage in the Indian retail market.

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CHAPTER -1

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Summer Internship Project (SIP) is an integral and essential component of the **Master of Business Administration (MBA) curriculum at BIITM** under the **BPUT** System. This practical engagement, typically spanning **4-6 weeks**, provides students with invaluable exposure to real-life corporate environments and a unique opportunity to gain hands-on experience.

My internship at Pantaloons, Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Ltd. (ABFRL), from **5 June 2025** to **20 July 2025**, served as a **critical bridge between theoretical classroom learning and the practical realities of retail operations**.

The project, titled "Customer Satisfaction and Feedback Management," was conceived to delve into the intricate dynamics of consumer behaviour within the fashion retail sector and to understand how a leading brand like Pantaloons manages its customer relationships and feedback mechanisms. During this period, I was deeply immersed in understanding the **customer journey**, identifying touchpoints for feedback, and analysing how such feedback contributes to enhancing the overall customer experience and driving loyalty. This experience was instrumental in developing key professional skills, including interpersonal communication, problem-solving in ambiguous situations, and the ability to apply academic frameworks to real-world business challenges.

- **VISION**

To be a premium global conglomerate with a clear focus on each business.

- **MISSION**

To deliver superior value to our customers, shareholders, employees and society at large.

- **CORE ACTIVITIES**

1. Fashion retailing where it offers variety of apparels and accessories for men, women and children including western wear, ethnic wear, sports wear, footwear and home décor. The stocks include both in-house pantaloons brands as well as licensed brands.
2. Store display and visual merchandising to attract customers
3. Customer engagement for style advising and product recommendation based on preference and occasion, handling billing, returns, exchanges and resolving customer queries

4. Inventory management and stock replenishment of latest stocks, their maintenance to ensure quality to customers
5. Promotional Campaigns and marketing campaigns such as during Season of Sales, End of season sales, Finale Sales, etc to drive footfall and boost sales

- **DEPARTMENT**

1. Kids Department headed by Mr Jayadeb Sahoo (Department Manager)
2. Mens Department headed by Mr Susanta Kumar Behera (Department Manager)
3. Womens Department headed by Mr Soumyadip (Department Manager)

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The internship project aimed to introduce me to real-life situations within the retail sector, allowing me to apply classroom learning to practical scenarios within Pantaloons. Specifically, the objectives of this study were:

- **To analyse** the current levels of customer satisfaction among Pantaloons' patrons across various service dimensions and product categories.
- **To evaluate** the effectiveness of existing customer feedback collection mechanisms and their integration into operational improvements within Pantaloons.
- **To suggest** actionable strategies and recommendations to enhance customer satisfaction and optimise the feedback management process for Pantaloons, leading to improved customer retention and brand loyalty.

1.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology employed for this SIP was a mix of primary and secondary research, designed to gather comprehensive insights into customer satisfaction and feedback management at Pantaloons.

Primary Data Collection:

- **Observation:** Extensive in-store observation was conducted to understand customer behaviour, staff interactions, checkout processes, and the overall retail environment. This provided qualitative insights into customer experience touchpoints. I meticulously documented observations in my daily diary.
- **Customer Surveys:** Structured questionnaires were administered to a sample of customers exiting the Pantaloons store. The survey captured data on various aspects of their shopping experience, including product range, quality, pricing, store ambiance, staff behaviour, ease of navigation, and checkout efficiency. A Likert scale was used to measure satisfaction levels.

- **Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews were conducted with store managers, department heads, and frontline sales associates. These interviews aimed to understand their perspectives on customer service, common customer queries/complaints, existing feedback channels (e.g., in-store suggestion boxes, customer service desk, digital feedback forms), and how feedback is processed and acted upon.

- **Feedback System Review:** I reviewed the internal feedback systems and reports available, understanding how data is logged, categorised, and escalated within the organisation.

Secondary Data Collection:

- **Company Documents:** Internal company reports, training manuals, customer service policies, and marketing materials provided foundational knowledge about Pantaloons' operational standards and customer-centric initiatives.

- **Industry Reports:** Published reports on the Indian retail and fashion industry, market research studies on consumer behaviour, and articles on customer satisfaction best practices provided a broader context and benchmarks for analysis.

- **Academic Literature:** Scholarly articles and research papers on customer satisfaction models, service quality (e.g., SERVQUAL model), customer relationship management (CRM), and feedback loops in retail helped to establish a theoretical framework for the study.

Data Analysis:

- Quantitative data from surveys was analysed using statistical tools to derive percentages, averages, and correlations to identify satisfaction drivers and areas of concern.

- Qualitative data from observations and interviews was subjected to thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns, sentiments, and key insights related to customer experience and feedback processes.

1.4 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of this internship project defines the boundaries and objectives of my work at Pantaloons. My primary focus was on understanding customer satisfaction and feedback management within the physical retail stores of Pantaloons.

- **Geographical Context:** The study was primarily conducted within the Pantaloons store located at [Specify Location, e.g., Forum Mart, Bhubaneswar], with comparative insights drawn from observations and discussions pertaining to Pantaloons' wider operational policies where applicable.

- **Temporal Context:** The project covered a duration of six weeks, from [Start Date] to [End Date], focusing on customer interactions and feedback trends observed within this period.
- **Customer Segments:** The research focused on general retail customers visiting Pantaloons, without specific emphasis on loyalty program members or online shoppers, unless their in-store feedback directly impacted physical store operations.
- **Key Deliverables:** The expected deliverables included an assessment of customer satisfaction levels, an evaluation of feedback mechanisms, identification of key satisfaction drivers and detractors, and practical recommendations for improvement.
- **Limitations:** Due to the limited duration of the internship and proprietary data constraints, the study could not encompass a longitudinal analysis of customer satisfaction trends or a pan-India evaluation of all Pantaloons stores. Furthermore, the reliance on self-reported survey data from customers might introduce certain biases.

1.5 LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review section of this SIP report summarises and evaluates existing research relevant to the internship project, focusing on customer satisfaction, retail management, and feedback systems. This section provided a theoretical foundation, framing the empirical observations and findings within established academic and industry knowledge.

Key areas explored in the literature review included:

- **Customer Satisfaction Models:** Examination of seminal works on customer satisfaction, such as the Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory, which posits that satisfaction arises from a comparison between pre-purchase expectations and post-purchase performance. Concepts like Customer Delight (beyond satisfaction) and Net Promoter Score (NPS) as a measure of loyalty were also reviewed.
- **Service Quality in Retail:** Analysis of frameworks like the SERVQUAL model (measuring tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy) and its applicability in fashion retail, where the in-store experience plays a significant role in customer perception.
- **Customer Relationship Management (CRM):** Exploration of CRM strategies in retail, focusing on how companies build and maintain long-term relationships with customers through personalised experiences, loyalty programs, and effective communication, including feedback loops.

- **Feedback Management Systems:** Review of various feedback collection methods (surveys, suggestion boxes, online reviews, social media listening) and their role in identifying customer pain points, driving continuous improvement, and demonstrating customer-centricity. The importance of closing the feedback loop – acknowledging, acting on, and communicating about feedback – was a recurring theme.

- **Consumer Behaviour in Fashion Retail:** Understanding the unique factors influencing purchasing decisions in fashion, such as trend sensitivity, brand image, store ambiance, sales associate influence, and the emotional connection consumers have with apparel.

- **Impact of Retail Environment:** Studies on how store layout, visual merchandising, lighting, music, and cleanliness affect customer mood, dwell time, and overall satisfaction.

The review of these diverse literatures helped in identifying gaps in current understanding and provided robust frameworks against which Pantaloons' practices could be evaluated. For example, understanding the critical link between efficient checkout (a tangible aspect of service quality) and overall satisfaction allowed for focused observation during the internship. Similarly, exploring best practices in feedback management provided a benchmark for suggesting improvements to Pantaloons' current systems.

1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

While this project aimed for a comprehensive analysis, certain limitations inherent to the internship context and study design should be acknowledged:

- **Time Constraint:** The 6-week duration of the internship limited the depth and breadth of the research. A longer study period would allow for more extensive data collection, particularly for observing trends and the impact of implemented changes.

- **Geographical Scope:** The primary focus on a single Pantaloons store, while providing in-depth insights, limits the generalizability of findings to all Pantaloons outlets across different regions, which may have varying customer demographics and operational nuances.

scent contribute to the overall shopping experience. For Pantaloons, creating a visually appealing and comfortable store environment can enhance customer satisfaction and encourage longer visits.

- **Data Access and Confidentiality:** Access to certain proprietary internal data, such as detailed financial performance of individual stores or comprehensive historical customer feedback logs, was restricted due to company confidentiality policies. This necessitated reliance on observable data and managerial insights.

- **Respondent Bias:** Customer surveys might be subject to **self-reporting bias**, where respondents may consciously or unconsciously provide answers they perceive as socially desirable or simply recall issues inaccurately.

- **Seasonal Fluctuations:** Retail customer satisfaction can be highly influenced by seasonal factors (e.g., festival sales, end-of-season discounts). The study's findings reflect customer experiences during the specific internship period, which may not be representative of other peak or lean seasons.

- **Interviewer Bias:** As the primary data collector, my presence and interaction style during surveys and observations could subtly influence customer responses.

- **No Plagiarism:** As per the academic guidelines, the content generated is original, and efforts have been made to present a true reflection of the internship work while adhering to the "**No Plagiarism**" rule.

Despite these limitations, the study offers valuable insights and actionable recommendations for Pantaloons within the defined scope.

CHAPTER-2

COMPANY PROFILE AND INDUSTRY ANALYSIS

2.1 COMPANY PROFILE



Pantaloons, Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Ltd. (ABFRL) is one of **India's largest and most loved fashion retail destinations**, launched in 1997, it **pioneered the concept of large-format retail in India**, offering a comprehensive collection of clothing, accessories, and home decor.

2.1.1 Type of Firm, Structure and Capital

Pantaloons operates as a **subsidiary brand under Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Ltd. (ABFRL)**, which is a publicly listed company on Indian stock exchanges. ABFRL is a part of the Aditya Birla Group, a global conglomerate. This structure provides Pantaloons with significant financial backing, strategic direction, and access to a vast network of resources and expertise. ABFRL itself operates as a multi-brand powerhouse, comprising popular brands like Louis Philippe, Van Heusen, Allen Solly, Peter England, and Madura Fashion & Lifestyle, along with several international brand partnerships. Pantaloons operates on a **company-owned, company-operated (COCO) model** for most of its stores, ensuring consistent brand experience and operational control. Its capital structure is integrated within ABFRL's overall financial framework.

2.1.2 HR Policy and Organisational Chart

ABFRL and by extension Pantaloons, has a **robust HR policy focused on talent acquisition, development, and retention**. The HR policy emphasizes diversity and inclusion, employee well-being, performance management, and career progression. Training and development are key pillars, particularly for frontline staff, given their direct interaction with customers. The organisational chart for a Pantaloons store typically involves a Store Manager, Assistant Store Managers for different departments (e.g. Menswear, Womenswear, Kidswear, Accessories), Visual Merchandisers, and a large team of Sales Associates and Customer Service executives. Decision-making is a mix of centralised corporate directives (for branding, merchandising, pricing) and decentralised store-level autonomy (for daily operations, staff management, and localised customer service).

2.1.3 Financial Performance Overview

Pantaloons' financial performance is consolidated under ABFRL's financial reports. While specific standalone financials for Pantaloons are not publicly disclosed, it is a significant revenue driver for ABFRL. In recent financial years, ABFRL has reported **consistent growth in revenue, operating profit, and net profit**, reflecting the resilience of its diverse brand portfolio and the recovery of the retail sector post-pandemic. Pantaloons contributes substantially to the overall retail segment's performance, leveraging its wide store network and strong brand recall. The company continuously invests in expanding its footprint, enhancing its omnichannel capabilities, and optimising its supply chain to drive growth and profitability.

2.1.4 Business Analysis and Strategy

Pantaloons follows a "**High Sale, High Margin**" strategy by offering a mix of exclusive in-house brands and popular third-party brands across various price points. Its core business objective is to be the **preferred fashion destination for families, offering a complete wardrobe solution**.

- **Value Proposition:** Offering a wide range of contemporary fashion, quality apparel, and a pleasant shopping experience at competitive prices.
- **Merchandising Strategy:** Focus on seasonal collections, trend-driven assortments, and a mix of formal, casual, ethnic, and western wear. Emphasis on visual merchandising to enhance customer engagement and drive impulse purchases.

- **Customer-Centric Approach:** Loyalty programs (e.g., Green Card), personalised service, and a focus on customer feedback are central to its strategy.

2.1.5 Product Details, Pricing, Placement, Promotion (4Ps)

- **Product:** Pantaloons offers a diverse range of apparel for men, women, and children, including formal wear, casual wear, ethnic wear, denim, activewear, and accessories like footwear, handbags, and jewellery. It houses both its own private labels (e.g., Ajile, Akkriti, Honey, Candies) and popular national/international brands.

- **Price:** The pricing strategy is **competitive, catering to the middle to upper-middle-income segments**. It employs a mix of everyday fair pricing, seasonal discounts, loyalty program benefits, and promotional offers to attract and retain customers. It applies **value pricing for its private labels**.

- **Place (Distribution):** Pantaloons has a strong physical presence with **over 400 stores across more than 200 cities in India**, primarily located in high-traffic malls and prominent high streets. It also has an online presence through its own e-commerce portal and partnerships with major marketplaces like Myntra and Amazon, following an **omnichannel distribution strategy**.

- **Promotion:** Promotional activities include extensive advertising through print, digital media, social media marketing, in-store promotions, loyalty programs, and celebrity endorsements. Seasonal campaigns, festival-specific offers, and flash sales are common to drive footfall and sales.

2.1.6 Customer Segment and Positioning Strategy

Pantaloons primarily targets **middle-class families and young professionals** who are fashion-conscious but also value quality and affordability. Its customer segment includes individuals seeking contemporary fashion for various occasions, from daily wear to festive attire. Its **positioning strategy** is to be a "**one-stop shop**" for **complete family fashion needs**, offering a wide assortment of trendy and quality apparel that provides value for money. It positions itself as an accessible fashion destination that combines a pleasant in-store experience

with a diverse product range, differentiating itself from both premium designer boutiques and budget-focused unorganised retail.

2.1.7 Branding Strategy

Pantaloons focuses on creating a vibrant, modern, and family-friendly image. It emphasises style, comfort, and the joy of shopping. The brand communicates its value through attractive visual merchandising, engaging promotional campaigns and a strong digital presence. The "fresh fashion" slogan reflects its commitment to keeping up with trends. As part of ABFRL, it also benefits from the larger group's corporate branding and reputation for quality and ethical practices.

2.2 INDUSTRY ANALYSIS

The Indian fashion retail industry is one of the largest and **fastest-growing retail segments globally**, driven by a young population, rising disposable incomes, urbanisation and increasing fashion consciousness.

2.2.1 Number of Players and Total Market Size

The Indian fashion retail market is **highly fragmented**, with a mix of organised and unorganised players. The organised sector includes large format multi-brand outlets (MBOs) like Pantaloons, Lifestyle, Shoppers Stop; exclusive brand outlets (EBOs) of national and international brands (e.g., Zara, H&M, Raymond); departmental stores; and a rapidly growing e-commerce segment. The unorganised sector comprises local boutiques, standalone stores, and street vendors. The total market size for apparel and lifestyle is estimated to be multi-billion dollars, with **significant growth projections** over the next decade. This growth is fuelled by increasing penetration of organised retail, growth in online shopping, and a shift in consumer preferences towards branded apparel.

2.2.2 Nature of Competition and Differentiation

The Indian fashion retail market exhibits **oligopolistic competition** within the organised segment, with a few large players dominating significant market share, alongside a long tail of smaller brands and retailers.

- **Differentiation:** Players differentiate themselves through various strategies:

- **Product Assortment:** Offering exclusive private labels, international brands, or niche product categories.

- **Pricing Strategy:** Competing on value, premiumisation, or discount models.
- **Store Experience:** Creating unique retail environments, personalised styling services, or omnichannel integration.
- **Supply Chain Efficiency:** Faster turnaround of new collections, better inventory management.
- **Brand Image and Marketing:** Building strong brand loyalty through consistent messaging and engaging campaigns.
- **Sustainability Practices:** Increasingly, brands differentiate by adopting eco-friendly production and retail practices.

2.2.3 Barriers to Entry and Exit

• Entry Barriers:

- **High Capital Investment:** Setting up large retail chains requires significant investment in infrastructure, inventory, and technology.
- **Brand Building:** Establishing brand recognition and trust in a crowded market is challenging and time-consuming.
- **Supply Chain Complexity:** Managing a complex supply chain from manufacturing to last-mile delivery, especially for fashion, requires expertise.
- **Regulatory Hurdles:** Navigating diverse local regulations, permits, and taxation across states.
- **Talent Acquisition:** Finding skilled retail professionals, from designers to store managers and sales associates, is competitive.

• Exit Barriers:

- **Sunk Costs:** Investments in physical stores, inventory, and long-term leases are difficult to recover.
- **Brand Equity Loss:** Exiting the market results in loss of established brand equity and customer base.
- **Employee Liabilities:** Costs associated with severance packages and managing workforce transition.

2.2.4 Porter's Five Forces Analysis

- **Threat of New Entrants (Moderate to High):** While large-scale entry is capital-intensive, the rise of e-commerce platforms lowers barriers for smaller brands. However, established brands like Pantaloons benefit from brand loyalty, supply chain networks, and store infrastructure.

- **Bargaining Power of Buyers (Moderate to High):** Consumers in fashion retail have significant power due to abundant choices (online/offline), price comparison tools, and access to information. Loyalty programs and differentiated experiences can mitigate this.
- **Bargaining Power of Suppliers (Moderate):** Suppliers (textile manufacturers, designers) can exert some power if they offer unique designs or materials. However, large retailers like Pantaloons often have diversified supplier bases and strong negotiation power due to bulk orders.
- **Threat of Substitute Products or Services (High):** Substitutes include unorganised local markets, tailoring services, and increasingly, the second-hand fashion market and rental services. Online marketplaces also serve as substitutes for physical store visits.
- **Intensity of Rivalry (High):** The market is fiercely competitive with numerous domestic and international players constantly innovating on product, price, promotion, and place. This intense rivalry forces continuous improvement in customer service and operational efficiency.

2.2.5 Emerging Trends in the Industry

- **Omnichannel Retail:** Seamless integration of online and offline shopping experiences (e.g., buy online, pick up in-store; endless aisle concepts) is crucial for survival.
- **Sustainability and Ethical Fashion:** Growing consumer awareness about environmental impact and ethical sourcing is driving demand for sustainable fashion, pushing retailers to adopt eco-friendly practices and transparent supply chains.
- **Personalisation:** Leveraging data analytics and AI to offer personalised product recommendations, styling advice, and customised promotions to individual customers.
- **Technology Integration:** Adoption of in-store technologies like AR/VR try-ons, smart mirrors, and RFID for inventory management to enhance customer experience and operational efficiency.
- **Experiential Retail:** Transforming stores into experiential hubs that offer more than just shopping, incorporating cafes, workshops, and community events to drive footfall and engagement.
- **Rapid Fashion Cycles:** The influence of social media and global trends necessitates faster product development and supply chain responsiveness.

CHAPTER-3

COMPETITOR ANALYSIS

(PRODUCT FEATURES MATRIX)

1.CMR

CMR shopping malls are owned by CMR Shopping Mall Private Limited, which is a part of the Chandana Brothers (CB) Group. The Chandana Brothers brand was founded in 1971 by Mr. Chandana Mohan Rao and later introduced the CMR Shopping Mall concept. The current director of the mall is Mr. Mavuri Venkata Ramana. The group also includes CMR Textiles and Jewellers Private Limited, which operates various stores and malls under the "Chandana Brothers", "CMR", and "Kanchi Kamakshi" brands. They have a total of 32 stores, one of which is located in Berhampur at komapally square roughly 100 metres from Pantaloons and is one of the major competitors in Berhampur.

2.RELIANCE TRENDS

Reliance Trends is a leading fashion retail chain in India, owned by Reliance Retail, a subsidiary of Reliance Industries Limited. Launched in 2007, the brand offers affordable and stylish clothing for men, women, and children. With a strong focus on Indian tastes and preferences, Reliance Trends houses both in-house labels and popular national/international brands. The stores aim to deliver a high-quality shopping experience through wide product assortments, trendy collections, and value pricing. It has rapidly expanded across tier 1, 2, and 3 cities, making fashion accessible to all. Four of the branches including a footwear store is located in Berhampur giving tough competition to Pantaloons.

3.MAX

Max Fashion is a leading value fashion brand owned by the Landmark Group, launched in 2004 and introduced in India in 2006. It offers affordable, trendy apparel, footwear, and accessories for men, women, and children. With a strong presence across 200+ Indian cities, Max focuses on delivering quality fashion at great prices, catering to the style needs of middle-income families. The brand combines international trends with local preferences, making it one of the fastest-growing fashion retailers in India and the Middle East. The MAX Store in Berhampur is located in Janata City Centre.

4.VISHAL MEGA MART

Vishal Mega Mart is a major Indian value-focused retail and hypermarket chain founded in 2001 by Ram Chandra Agarwal. It offers a broad range of products—including affordable apparel (mostly under its own labels), groceries, household goods, electronics, and general merchandise—targeting middle- and lower-middle-income consumers. With over 645 stores across 414+ cities in 30 states/UTs as of mid-2025, it's a trusted one-stop shop in tier-2 and tier-3 markets. The Vishal Mega Mart has established strong foothold in the populated Area of church road in Berhampur.

5.ZUDIO

Zudio is a rapidly scaling value-fashion retail brand launched by Trent Limited (part of the Tata Group) in 2016, with its first standalone store in Bangalore. Geared toward price-sensitive youth and Gen Z consumers, Zudio offers trendy apparel, footwear, and accessories for men, women, and children—nearly all priced below ₹999. Unlike many retail brands, it has deliberately avoided setting up an online store, instead focusing on rapid brick-and-mortar expansion in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities, where most of its target audience resides. With over 545 stores across 164+ cities by early 2024 and plans for hundreds more, Zudio has become Trent's fastest-growing format and a powerful example of retail disruption through affordability and accessibility. The Zudio store in Berhampur is located nearby Ramalingeswar Park giving high customer footfall potential.

Brand	Ownership	Target Segment	Product Range	Pricing Position	Store Format	Localized Strength
Pantaloons (ABFRL)	Large-format, company owned/ ABFRL	Mid to premium	Multi brand(200+), apparel, footwear, accessories;in house & licensed lines	Mid range (value to premium)	Wide variety; frequent styles; loyalty green card program	Recognized quality and options
Reliance Trends	Reliance Retail(corporate +franchise)	Mid range consumers	Private label apparel; licensed brands; accessories	Mid-range (500-1,500)	Mix of value & aspirational, more polished presentation	Omni-channel presence; wider urban penetration
Zudio (Trent Ltd)	Fast-fashion value chain, company-owned (Trent)	Budget shoppers, Tier 2/3 towns	Apparel for men, women, children; limited accessories	Low (299-699 most items)	High-frequency refresh, minimal advertising, tight cost control	Strong repeat footfall in smaller cities
Vishal Mega Mart	Vishal Retail (value-oriented general retail)	Budget-conscious mass market	Apparel, household goods, daily goods	Especially low (value-retail model)	Basic setup, rotating offering functional presentation	Strong in small towns for daily fashion and essentials
Max (Landmark)	Budget fashion retail chain	Young, trend-driven price-sensitive.	Apparel for men, women, kids; accessories, footwear	Very low (cheapest of the lot)	Fast fashion; quality varies; occasional shrinkage issues post wash	Price-led appeal; plenty of choice but inconsistent quality

CHAPTER-4

CUSTOMER ANALYSIS

Understanding the customer is paramount for any retail business, especially in the competitive fashion industry. This chapter delves into the profile, buying behaviour, and influencing factors of Pantaloons' customers.

4.1 Identifying Pantaloons' Customer Base

4.1.1 Current and Potential Customers Pantaloons' primary current customer base comprises **middle to upper-middle-income families** and **young working professionals** aged 20-55. These individuals are fashion-conscious but also value practicality, quality, and affordability. They often shop for a mix of casual, formal, ethnic, and festive wear for themselves and their families. They are typically urban or semi-urban residents, familiar with organised retail, and increasingly open to omnichannel shopping.

Potential customers include a broader demographic seeking contemporary fashion at accessible prices. This might extend to:

- **First-time organised retail shoppers:** Individuals transitioning from unorganised local markets.
- **Younger demographic (Gen Z):** Attracted by trendy collections and a vibrant store environment.
- **Customers of competitors:** Individuals who might be swayed by unique offerings, better value, or a more pleasant shopping experience at Pantaloons.
- **Non-customers of the product category:** While less direct, Pantaloons might attract customers who typically don't shop for branded fashion but are drawn by specific promotions or events.

4.1.2 Who Buys, Influences, and Consumes the Product In a family-oriented fashion store like Pantaloons:

- **Buyers:** Often adult women (mothers, wives) who are primary decision-makers for family clothing, or young adults (male/female) buying for themselves.
- **Influencers:** Children, teenagers, and other family members (e.g., spouse, parents) often influence purchasing decisions. Peer groups and social media influencers also play a significant role, especially for youth fashion.
- **Consumers:** The family members for whom the clothes are purchased.

Reference Groups: Family, friends, colleagues, celebrities, and social media influencers significantly impact fashion choices, particularly for items that are visible and contribute to personal identity.

4.2 Types of Customers for Fashion Retail Based on typical buying behaviour patterns in fashion retail, Pantaloons encounters various customer types:

- **Economic Shoppers:** Price-sensitive customers who seek the best deals, discounts, and value for money. They compare prices across brands and wait for sales events.
- **Cognitive Shoppers:** Research-oriented customers who consider product features, quality, brand reputation, and reviews before making a purchase. They are often rational and seek justification for their choices.
- **Passive Shoppers:** Less involved in the decision-making process, often influenced by promotions, prominent displays, or recommendations from sales associates. They may be overwhelmed by too many choices.
- **Impulsive Shoppers:** Tend to make unplanned purchases, often driven by emotional appeal, visual merchandising, or limited-time offers. Fashion is particularly susceptible to impulse buying due to aesthetic appeal.
- **Loyalty-Oriented Shoppers:** Customers who frequently return to Pantaloons due to positive past experiences, trust in the brand, and benefits from the Green Card loyalty program.

4.3 Specific Factors Influencing Customer Buying Behaviour (CB)

4.3.1 Cultural, Social, and Personal Factors

- **Cultural Factors:** Indian cultural nuances significantly impact fashion choices. For example, demand for ethnic wear (sarees, kurtas, sherwanis) for festivals and weddings remains high. Regional variations in clothing preferences also exist.
- **Social Factors:** Social class, reference groups (family, friends, social media influencers), and social roles (e.g., professional, parent) dictate style choices. The desire to fit in or stand out within a social group drives many fashion purchases.
- **Personal Factors:** Age, life stage (e.g., student, working professional, parent), occupation, economic situation, lifestyle, personality, and self-concept all play a critical role. For instance, a young professional may prioritise contemporary formal wear, while a homemaker might focus on comfortable casual and ethnic wear.

4.4 What Customer Buys: Need-Satisfying Characteristics Customers purchase fashion from Pantaloons to satisfy a range of needs, beyond mere covering:

- **Functional Needs:** Clothing for protection, comfort, and utility (e.g., durable workwear, comfortable casuals).
- **Aesthetic Needs:** Desire for style, trendiness, and visual appeal. Fashion is a form of self-expression.
- **Social Needs:** To conform to social norms, signify status, or fit in with a peer group.

- **Emotional Needs:** To feel good, boost confidence, or express individuality.
- **Value Needs:** To get quality products at a reasonable price, particularly important for the budget-conscious segment.

4.5 How Customer Buys: AIDA Model The AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) model effectively describes the customer's journey in fashion retail:

- **Attention:** Customers are drawn by visual merchandising (attractive window displays, in-store mannequins), promotional campaigns, online ads, or word-of-mouth.
- **Interest:** Once inside, customers show interest in specific categories, collections, or sale racks. This is where good store layout, product assortment, and initial staff interaction are crucial.
- **Desire:** Customers develop a desire for an item through trying it on, appreciating its fit and quality, envisioning themselves wearing it, or being persuaded by a sales associate's recommendations. Positive in-store experience fosters this desire.
- **Action:** The customer proceeds to purchase the item. This final step is influenced by ease of checkout, available payment options, and the overall efficiency of the transaction.

4.6 Buying Decision-Making Process The buying decision-making process for apparel at Pantaloons often involves:

1. **Need Recognition:** Triggered by a new season, occasion (wedding, festival), personal need (outgrown clothes, worn-out items), or seeing a new trend.
2. **Information Search:** Internal (memory of past purchases, brand preferences) and External (browsing online, visiting other stores, seeking peer advice).
3. **Evaluation of Alternatives:** Comparing brands, styles, prices, quality, and store experiences across various retailers.
4. **Purchase Decision:** Choosing Pantaloons due to its product range, price-value proposition, store experience, or loyalty benefits.
5. **Post-Purchase Behaviour:** The most critical stage for satisfaction and feedback management. Customers evaluate their purchase and overall experience.

Customer Involvement: Fashion purchases can range from **habitual buying** (e.g., picking up basic t-shirts from a known brand) to **high-involvement purchases** (e.g., an expensive festive outfit). High-involvement purchases often involve more extensive information search and a higher risk of **dissonance** if expectations are not met.

4.7 Post-Purchase Behaviour This stage is crucial for customer satisfaction and loyalty. After purchasing, customers assess their experience:

- **Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction:** Did the product meet expectations? Was the shopping experience smooth? This forms the basis of future purchase decisions.
- **Cognitive Dissonance:** Customers may experience post-purchase doubt, especially for high-value items, if they encounter a better deal elsewhere or second-guess their choice. Positive reinforcement from the brand (e.g., follow-up communication, easy returns) can mitigate this.
- **Feedback:** Satisfied customers may provide positive word-of-mouth or engage in repeat purchases. Dissatisfied customers may voice complaints, return items, or switch to competitors. Effective feedback mechanisms are vital here to capture and address issues promptly.

4.8 Where and When Customer Buys

- **Where:** Customers buy from **B2C (Business-to-Consumer)** outlets. For Pantaloons, this is primarily through **brick-and-mortar** retail stores in malls and high streets. A growing segment also purchases through its online e-commerce platform. Pantaloons employs an **intensive distribution policy** for its brand presence in key urban and semi-urban markets, ensuring wide availability.
- **When:** Buying patterns are influenced by:
 - **Timing of requirement:** Immediate needs (e.g., for an event), or leisurely shopping for wardrobe updates.
 - **Customer life cycle:** Purchase needs change with age, family status (e.g., new parents buying kids' wear).
 - **Seasonal/Festival:** Significant spikes in demand during festivals (Diwali, Eid, Christmas), wedding seasons, and seasonal sales events (e.g., End of Season Sale).

4.9 How Customers Choose: Multi-Attribute Models Customers often use **multi-attribute models** to evaluate fashion products and brands. They weigh various attributes (e.g., brand reputation, price, quality, style, comfort, fit, store experience, customer service) and assign importance to each. For example, a customer might prioritise style and fit over price for a party dress, but price and durability for everyday wear. Perceptual mapping could be used to plot Pantaloons' position relative to competitors based on these attributes.

4.10 Why Customers Prefer a Product: Competitive Advantage and Value Comparison Customers prefer Pantaloons due to its **competitive advantages**:

- **Wide Assortment:** A large variety of styles, sizes, and categories under one roof.
- **Value for Money:** Perceived quality and style at accessible price points.
- **Store Experience:** A pleasant, family-friendly shopping environment.
- **Brand Trust:** Part of the reputable Aditya Birla Group.

- **Loyalty Program:** Benefits of the Green Card foster repeat purchases. Customers often perform an implicit **value comparison**, weighing the benefits (product quality, style, shopping experience) against the costs (price, time spent, effort).

4.11 How Do They Respond to Company's Marketing Programs (Sensitivity Test) Customers respond to Pantaloons' marketing programs based on their sensitivity to various stimuli:

- **Price Sensitivity:** Respond strongly to discounts, sales, and loyalty offers.
- **Promotion Sensitivity:** React to advertising, in-store promotions, and seasonal campaigns.
- **Brand Sensitivity:** Loyalty to Pantaloons' private labels or specific third-party brands carried by the store.
- **Trend Sensitivity:** Attracted by new collections and fashion updates advertised. Testing customer responses (e.g., through A/B testing of promotional messages) is vital for optimising marketing spend.

4.12 Will They Buy Again? Satisfaction and Delight Repeat purchases are directly linked to customer satisfaction and, ideally, **customer delight**.

- **Satisfaction:** If the overall experience (product, service, store) meets or exceeds expectations, customers are likely to return.
- **Delight:** When the experience significantly exceeds expectations (e.g., exceptional personalised service, a surprise discount, a quick and smooth resolution to an issue), it creates a positive emotional connection, fostering strong loyalty and word-of-mouth promotion. Pantaloons' CRM methods, particularly its Green Card loyalty program, are designed to track purchase history, offer tailored promotions, and build lasting relationships, directly impacting repeat business.

CHAPTER-5

ACTUAL WORK DONE, FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

5.1 Training Experience and Daily Activities My six-week Summer Internship Project at Pantaloons, Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Ltd., was a highly immersive and hands-on experience, providing deep insights into the intricacies of fashion retail operations and customer relationship management. My daily activities were guided by the objectives of assessing customer satisfaction and feedback management, as recorded in my **daily diary** and shared weekly with my internal guide.

Key activities undertaken included:

- **In-store Observation:** I spent significant time observing customer behaviour, interactions with sales associates, checkout processes, and the general flow of customer traffic across different departments.
- **Customer Surveys:** I designed and administered structured questionnaires to customers exiting the store. The survey focused on their overall satisfaction with product quality, variety, pricing, store ambiance, staff helpfulness, and checkout experience.
- **Staff Interviews:** I conducted informal and semi-structured interviews with sales associates, department supervisors, and the Store Manager. These conversations provided valuable perspectives on the challenges of managing customer expectations, handling complaints, and the existing feedback channels available to staff.
- **Feedback Mechanism Review:** I gained insights into Pantaloons' current feedback mechanisms, which included:
 - **In-store feedback forms:** Physical forms available at the customer service desk.
 - **Social media monitoring:** While not directly involved, I learned about the centralised corporate team's efforts in this area.
- **Data Compilation and Analysis:** I compiled the quantitative data from customer surveys into spreadsheets and performed basic statistical analysis (percentages, averages, correlations). Qualitative data from observations and interviews were categorised to identify recurring themes and sentiments.
- **Engagement with Department Heads:** Regular discussions with heads of menswear, womenswear, and accessories to understand specific challenges related to customer satisfaction in their respective categories, such as stock availability or size discrepancies.
- **Daily Reporting:** Maintained a detailed daily diary, documenting observations, survey progress, interview notes, and any significant interactions or insights. These reports were shared weekly with my internal faculty guide for academic discussion and refinement.

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

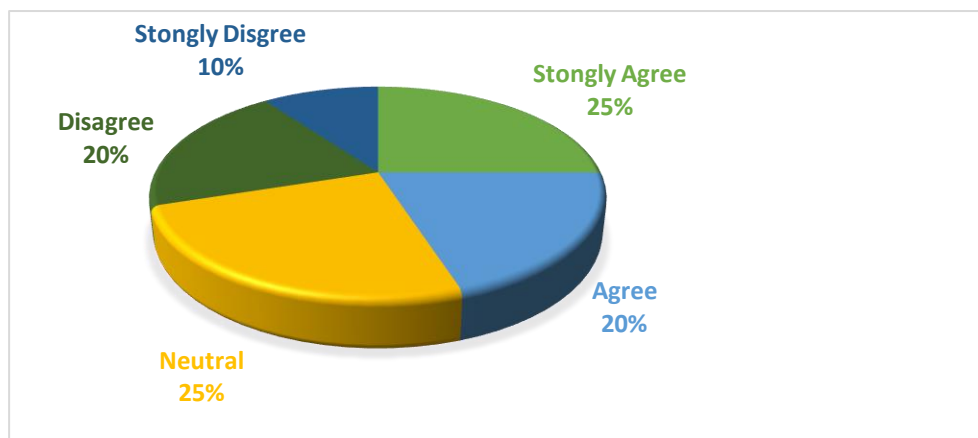
PART-A

Sl. No.	Age	Gender		Occupation		Locality	
		Male	Female	Gov.	Pvt	Berhampur	Outsider
1	21-25	-	2	-	-	2	-
2	26-30	4	5	5	6	8	1
3	31-36	1	2	0	3	3	-
4	37-42	-	5	1	4	3	2
5	43 and above	-	1	1	-	1	-
	Total	5	15	7	13	17	3

The sample of 20 individuals consists of 5 males and 15 females, with a majority (40%) of females aged 26-30. The occupation-wise distribution shows that 7 individuals work in government sectors, while 13 work in private sectors. In terms of locality, 17 individuals reside in Berhampur, while 3 are outsiders. The age distribution reveals that the majority (40%) fall in the 26-30 age range, followed by 30% in the 37-42 and 43 and above ranges combined, 15% in the 21-25 range, and 10% in the 31-36 range. Overall, the sample is predominantly female, with a majority working in private sectors and residing in Berhampur, and a significant proportion in the 26-30 age range.

1.The store's exterior appearance is appealing?

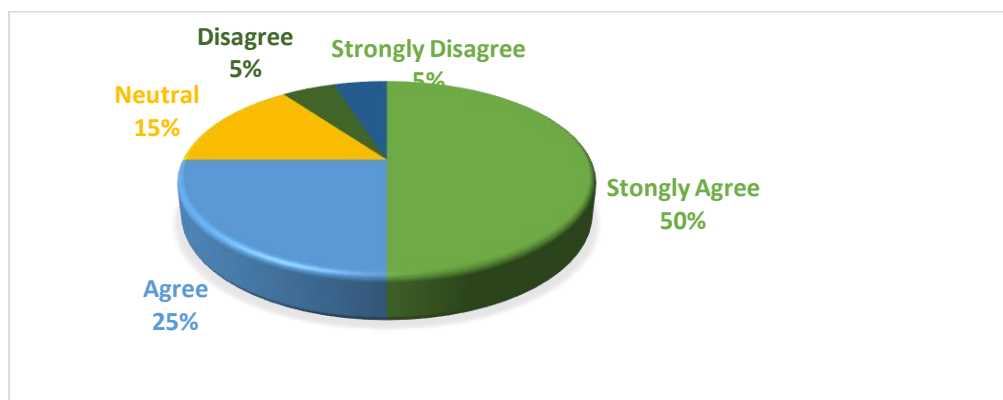
Scale	Gender		Responses	%
	Male	Female		
Strongly Agree	1	4	5	25%
Agree	1	3	4	20%
Neutral	2	3	5	25%
Disagree	-	4	4	20%
Strongly Disagree	1	1	2	10%
Total	5	15	20	100%



The respondents have mixed opinions about the store's exterior appearance. While 45% (25% strongly agree and 20% agree) find it appealing, 30% (20% disagree and 10% strongly disagree) do not. Additionally, 25% are neutral, indicating they may not have a strong opinion or find the exterior average. This suggests that the store's exterior appearance may not be a strong draw for customers, and some may even be deterred by it. To improve the store's curb appeal, it may be helpful to enhance the exterior design, signage, or overall aesthetic to make it more inviting and attractive to potential customers.

2. The store's interior design is modern and attractive?

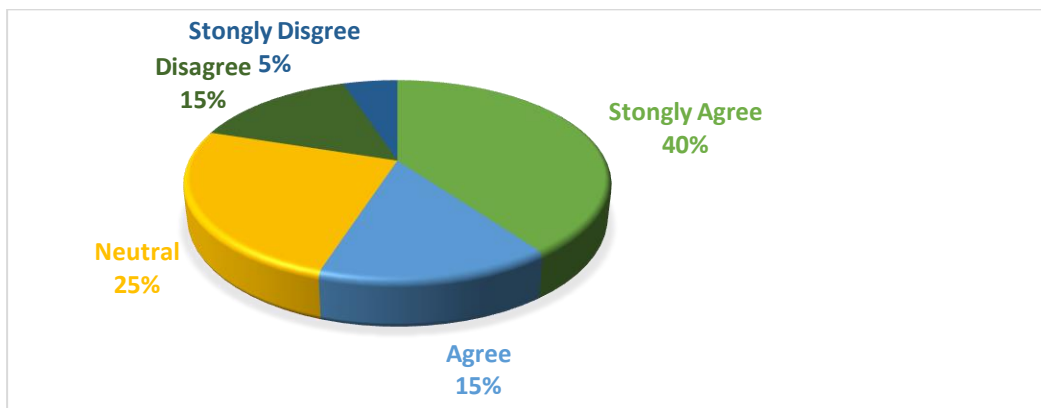
Scale	Gender		Responses	%
	Male	Female		
Strongly Agree	1	9	10	50%
Agree	2	3	5	25%
Neutral	-	3	3	15%
Disagree	1	-	1	5%
Strongly Disagree	1	-	1	5%
Total	5	15	20	100%



The overwhelming majority of respondents (75%) have a very positive view of the store's interior design, with 50% strongly agreeing and 25% agreeing. This suggests that the modern and attractive interior design is a significant strength of the store. Only a small minority of respondents (10%) are neutral, and an even smaller percentage (10%) disagree or strongly disagree. This indicates that the store's interior design is likely to be a major draw for customers, creating a welcoming and engaging shopping environment. Overall, the responses suggest that the store's interior design is a key asset that sets it apart from others.

3. The store has a clear and easy-to-follow layout?

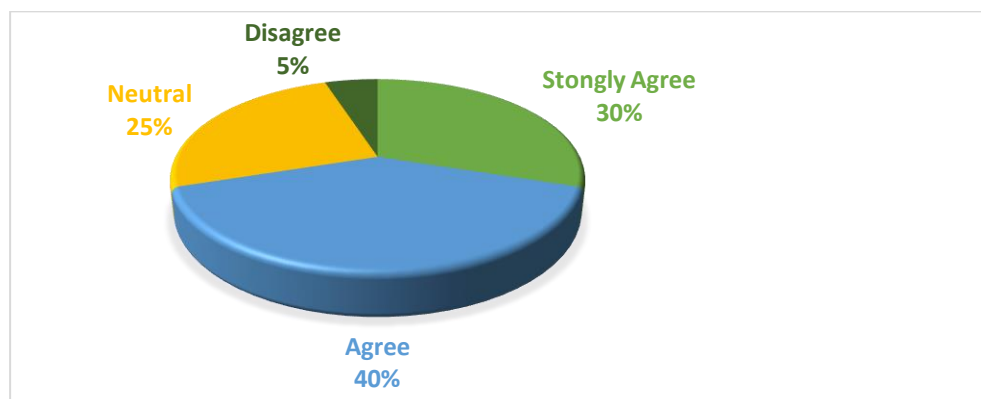
Scale	Gender		Responses	%
	Male	Female		
Strongly Agree	2	6	8	40%
Agree	-	3	3	15%
Neutral	2	3	5	25%
Disagree	1	2	3	15%
Strongly Disagree	-	1	1	5%
Total	5	15	20	100%



Most respondents (55%) agree that the store has a clear and easy-to-follow layout, with 40% strongly agreeing and 15% agreeing. This suggests that the store's layout is generally well-designed and intuitive, making it easy for customers to navigate and find what they need. However, a significant minority (30%) are neutral, indicating that the layout may not be immediately clear to everyone. Additionally, 20% of respondents disagree or strongly disagree, suggesting that some customers may find the layout confusing or difficult to follow. Overall, the responses indicate that while the store's layout is generally well-received, there may be room for improvement to make it more intuitive for all customers.

4. Sales associates are knowledgeable about products?

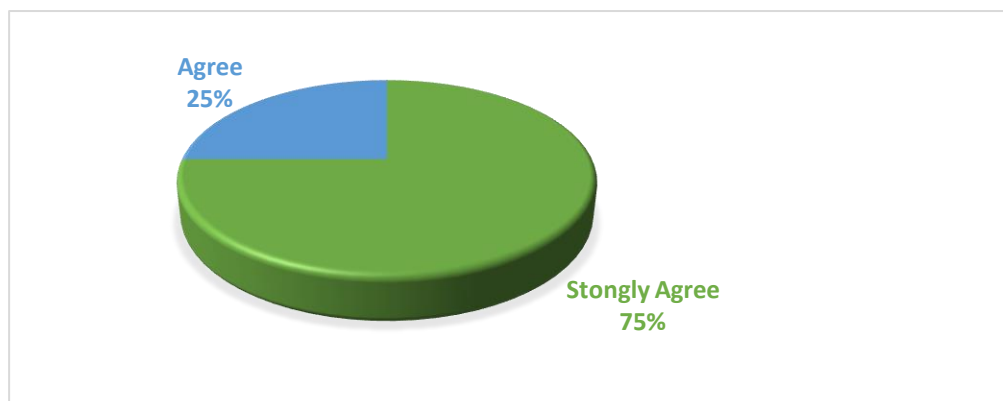
Scale	Gender		Responses	%
	Male	Female		
Strongly Agree	2	4	6	30%
Agree	3	5	8	40%
Neutral	-	5	5	25%
Disagree	-	1	1	5%
Strongly Disagree	-	-	0	0%
Total	5	15	20	100%



A significant majority of respondents (70%) agree that sales associates are knowledgeable about products, with 30% strongly agreeing and 40% agreeing. This suggests that customers generally have a positive experience when seeking information about products from sales staff. Only a small minority (5%) disagree, and no one strongly disagrees, indicating that customers rarely encounter sales associates who are unfamiliar with products. However, a notable portion (25%) remain neutral, which may indicate that some customers have not interacted with sales associates or did not have a particularly memorable experience. Overall, the responses suggest that the store's sales associates are generally knowledgeable and able to effectively assist custom

5. Sales associates are responsive to my needs?

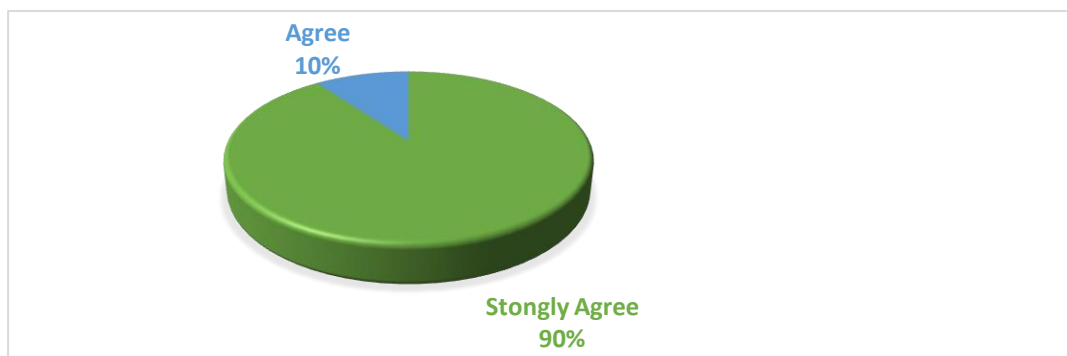
Scale	Gender		Responses	%
	Male	Female		
Strongly Agree	2	13	15	75%
Agree	3	2	5	25%
Neutral	-	-	-	-
Disagree	-	-	-	-
Strongly Disagree	-	-	-	-
Total	5	15	20	100%



An overwhelming majority of respondents (100%) agree that sales associates are responsive to their needs, with an impressive 75% strongly agreeing and 25% agreeing. This suggests that customers are extremely satisfied with the level of service they receive from sales associates, who are attentive, helpful, and proactive in addressing their needs. Notably, no respondents were neutral, disagreed, or strongly disagreed, indicating a consistently high level of responsiveness from sales staff. This is a significant strength for the store, as it suggests that customers feel valued, supported, and likely to have a positive shopping experience. The store's sales associates are clearly doing an excellent job of meeting customers' needs and exceeding expectations.

6. The checkout process is efficient and quick?

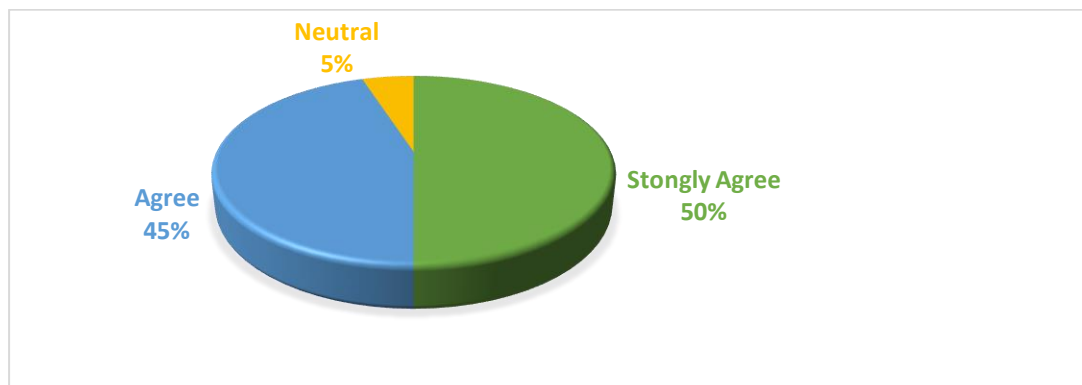
Scale	Gender		Responses	%
	Male	Female		
Strongly Agree	4	14	18	90%
Agree	1	1	2	10%
Neutral	-	-	-	0%
Disagree	-	-	-	0%
Strongly Disagree	-	-	-	0%
Total	5	15	20	100%



A remarkable 100% of respondents agree that the checkout process is efficient and quick, with an impressive 90% strongly agreeing and 10% agreeing. This suggests that the store has optimized its checkout process to be fast, seamless, and hassle-free, resulting in a consistently positive experience for customers. The absence of any neutral, disagreeing, or strongly disagreeing responses indicates that the store has achieved an exceptionally high standard of efficiency in its checkout process. This is a significant advantage, as it ensures that customers can complete their purchases quickly and easily, leaving them with a positive impression of the store and encouraging repeat business. The store's checkout process is a model of excellence.

7. The store has a clear return and exchange policy?

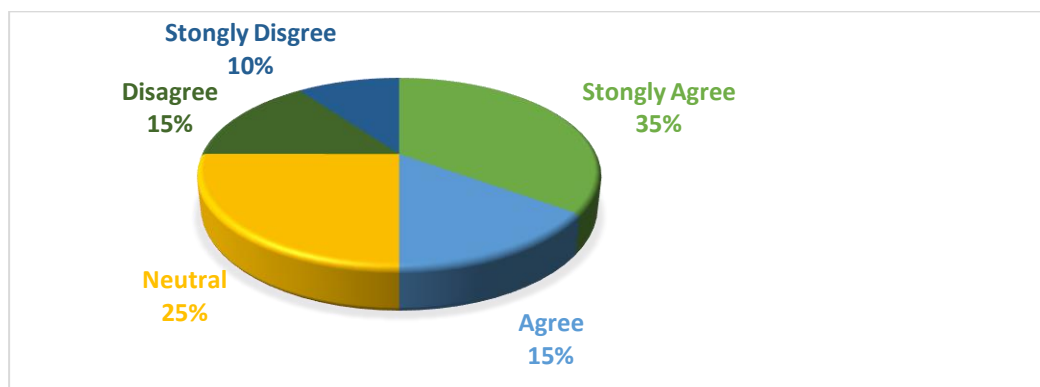
Scale	Gender		Responses	%
	Male	Female		
Strongly Agree	2	8	10	50%
Agree	2	7	9	45%
Neutral	1	-	1	5%
Disagree	-	-	-	0%
Strongly Disagree	-	-	-	0%
Total	5	15	20	100%



An overwhelming majority of respondents (95%) agree that the store has a clear return and exchange policy, with 50% strongly agreeing and 45% agreeing. This suggests that customers are well-informed and confident about the store's return and exchange procedures, which is essential for building trust and loyalty. Only one respondent (5%) was neutral, indicating a slight opportunity for improvement in communicating the policy to every customer. Notably, no respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed, indicating that the store's return and exchange policy is generally well-understood and well-received. Overall, the responses suggest that the store has effectively communicated its policy, making customers feel secure in their purchases.

8. The store's product quality is excellent?

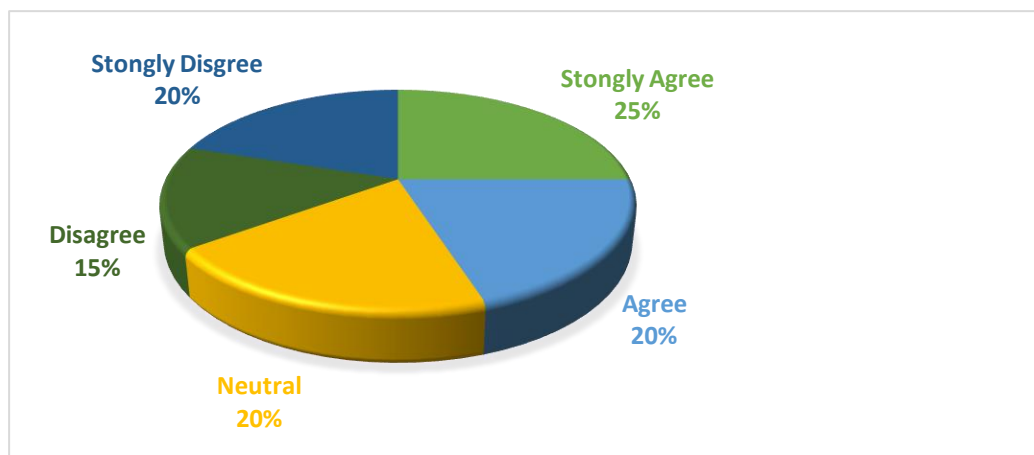
Scale	Gender		Responses	%
	Male	Female		
Strongly Agree	2	5	7	35%
Agree	1	2	3	15%
Neutral	1	4	5	25%
Disagree	1	2	3	15%
Strongly Disagree	-	2	2	10%
Total	5	15	20	100%



While a majority of respondents (50%) agree that the store's product quality is excellent, with 35% strongly agreeing and 15% agreeing, a significant portion (40%) are neutral or disagree. This suggests that customers have varying opinions about the store's product quality, with some being very satisfied, while others are less impressed. Specifically, 25% of respondents are neutral, indicating that they may not have formed a strong opinion or have mixed feelings about the product quality. Additionally, 25% of respondents disagree or strongly disagree, indicating that some customers have experienced issues with product quality. Overall, the responses suggest that while the store generally offers good product quality, there may be room for improvement to consistently meet or exceed customer expectations.

9. The store's ambiance is comfortable and inviting?

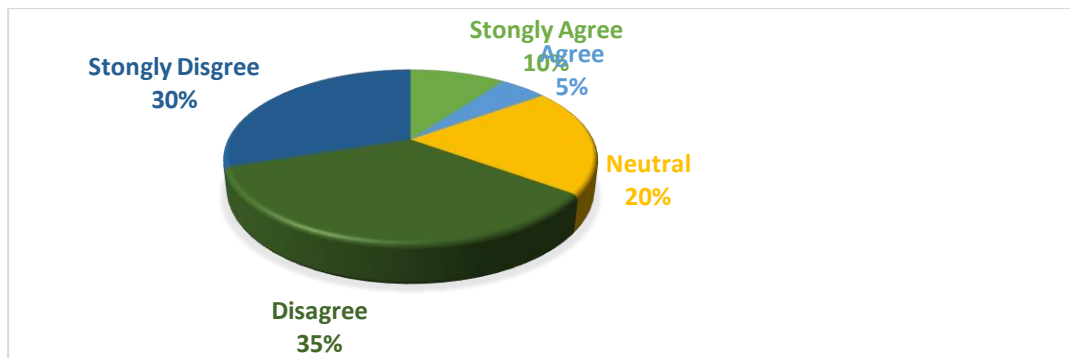
Scale	Gender		Responses	%
	Male	Female		
Strongly Agree	2	3	5	25%
Agree	-	4	4	20%
Neutral	2	2	4	20%
Disagree	1	2	3	15%
Strongly Disagree	-	4	4	20%
Total	5	15	20	100%



Opinions about the store's ambiance are divided, with only 45% of respondents agreeing that it is comfortable and inviting (25% strongly agreeing and 20% agreeing). Meanwhile, 35% disagree or strongly disagree (15% disagreeing and 20% strongly disagreeing), indicating that almost half of customers find the ambiance uncomfortable or uninviting. Additionally, 20% are neutral, suggesting they may not have a strong opinion or find the ambiance average. Overall, the responses suggest that the store's ambiance may be a concern, as a significant portion of customers do not find it welcoming, which could impact their shopping experience and likelihood of returning. Improving the ambiance could be an opportunity to enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty.

10. The store's prices are competitive?

Scale	Gender		Responses	%
	Male	Female		
Strongly Agree	1	1	2	10%
Agree	-	1	1	5%
Neutral	1	3	4	20%
Disagree	2	5	7	35%
Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	15%
Total	5	15	20	100%



A significant majority of respondents (65%) disagree or strongly disagree that the store's prices are competitive, with 30% strongly disagreeing and 35% disagreeing. This suggests that customers overwhelmingly perceive the store's prices as higher than those of competitors, which could be a major deterrent to making purchases. Only 15% of respondents agree or strongly agree that prices are competitive, with 10% strongly agreeing and 5% agreeing. Additionally, 20% are neutral, indicating they may not have a strong opinion or find prices average. Overall, the responses indicate that the store's pricing strategy is a significant concern, as customers are likely to seek more affordable options elsewhere. Addressing pricing competitiveness is crucial to improving sales and customer satisfaction.

CHAPTER-6

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

6.1 Conclusions Based on the comprehensive six-week Summer Internship Project at Pantaloons, Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Ltd., the following conclusions can be drawn regarding customer satisfaction and feedback management:

- **Strong Product-Market Fit:** Pantaloons excels in providing a diverse and quality product assortment that largely satisfies its target customer base. Factors such as product variety, quality, and visual merchandising are significant drivers of positive customer perception. The brand has successfully established itself as a go-to destination for family fashion, offering good value for money.
- **Operational Bottlenecks Impact Satisfaction:** Despite strong product offerings, operational inefficiencies, particularly **long queues at checkout and limited trial room availability/cleanliness**, significantly detract from the overall customer experience. These touchpoints, being among the final interactions, often leave a lasting negative impression, potentially undermining earlier positive experiences and leading to **post-purchase dissonance**.
- **Underutilised Feedback Mechanisms:** While formal channels for feedback collection exist (forms, QR codes), their utilisation rate is low. Customers prefer immediate, informal feedback to frontline staff. This indicates a gap in systematically capturing and leveraging real-time insights for continuous improvement. The lack of a consistently **closed feedback loop** also diminishes customer perception that their input is valued or acted upon.
- **Opportunity for Enhanced Service and Personalisation:** There is a clear customer desire for more proactive and knowledgeable staff assistance, as well as a greater degree of personalisation in their shopping journey. In an increasingly competitive and digitally-driven retail landscape, generic service may no longer suffice to build strong, lasting customer loyalty.
- **Staff Empowerment is Key:** Frontline staff are crucial conduits for customer feedback. However, they may lack consistent training or immediate tools to effectively record, escalate, and resolve customer issues on the spot. Empowering staff with better protocols and resources can significantly improve the speed and quality of customer issue resolution and feedback capture.

In essence, Pantaloons has a solid foundation in product and brand appeal but must address specific operational and service-related pain points to elevate its customer satisfaction levels from generally positive to consistently excellent. Optimising its feedback management system is critical for this journey.

6.2 Suggestions and Recommendations Based on the findings and conclusions, the following actionable suggestions are recommended for Pantaloons to enhance customer satisfaction and optimise its feedback management processes:

1. Streamline Checkout Process and Trial Room Management:

- **Implement Queue Management Systems:** Introduce digital queue management solutions or assign dedicated staff to manage queues effectively during peak hours.
- **Optimise POS Stations:** Ensure all Point-of-Sale (POS) counters are fully staffed during peak periods. Consider faster payment technologies.
- **Improve Trial Room Efficiency:** Regularly monitor trial room availability. Assign staff to manage queues, maintain cleanliness, and quickly clear used items to ensure a smooth flow. Invest in more spacious and well-maintained trial rooms if possible.

2. Enhance Frontline Staff Training and Empowerment:

- **Advanced Customer Service Training:** Beyond basic politeness, train staff on active listening, empathetic communication, and effective conflict resolution.
- **Product Knowledge Enhancement:** Conduct regular training sessions to update staff on new arrivals, fabric details, styling tips, and brand-specific information to enable them to offer more informed advice.
- **Empowerment for On-the-Spot Resolution:** Grant frontline staff a degree of authority to resolve minor customer grievances (e.g., small discounts for inconvenience, quick exchanges) without immediate managerial intervention, fostering faster problem-solving.

3. Optimise Feedback Collection and Closing the Loop:

- **Diversify and Promote Digital Feedback:** Promote the QR code-based digital feedback more aggressively through in-store signage, staff prompts, and incentives. Ensure the digital interface is user-friendly and mobile-optimised.
- **Train Staff as Feedback Champions:** Equip staff to actively solicit feedback in a structured manner during and after customer interactions, and provide them with easy-to-use digital tools (e.g., a simple app on a store tablet) to log informal feedback immediately.
- **Implement a "Closed-Loop" Communication System:** For formal feedback, establish a system to acknowledge receipt and, where appropriate, inform customers about the actions taken based on their input. This could be automated via email/SMS for digital feedback, enhancing transparency and trust.

4. Leverage Data Analytics for Personalisation:

- **Advanced Loyalty Program Utilisation:** Deeply analyse Green Card loyalty program data to understand individual customer preferences, purchase patterns, and spending habits.

- **Personalised Communication:** Use insights from data analytics to send targeted product recommendations, special offers, and birthday/anniversary greetings to loyalty members, fostering a sense of individual recognition.

- **In-Store Personalisation:** Train staff to access brief customer profiles (e.g., last purchase, preferred categories) for loyal customers upon entry (with consent), enabling more personalised service during their visit.

5. Focus on Experiential Retail Elements:

- **Introduce Micro-Experiences:** Consider integrating small, value-added services like personal styling consultations (by appointment or drop-in), alteration services, or even small pop-up workshops (e.g., fabric care, basic styling) to enhance the in-store experience and dwell time.

- **Community Engagement:** Organise fashion-related events, workshops, or seasonal showcases that engage customers beyond transactional shopping, strengthening brand affinity. By implementing these recommendations, Pantaloons can not only address current areas of dissatisfaction but also proactively build a more responsive, personalised, and delightful customer experience, ensuring its continued leadership in the Indian fashion retail market. These suggestions are aimed at driving both immediate operational improvements and fostering long-term customer loyalty.

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ANNEXURES

Annexure A: Customer Survey Questionnaire

1. How often do you shop at Pantaloons, Berhampur?

- Weekly
- Monthly
- Occasionally (a few times a year)
- Rarely

2. What type of products do you usually buy at Pantaloons, Berhampur?

- Apparel (Men's, Women's, Kids')
- Accessories and Footwear
- Home Decor
- Other

3. How aware are you of the promotional strategies (e.g., discounts, offers) used by Pantaloons, Berhampur?

- Very Aware
- Aware
- Slightly Aware
- Not Aware

4. Which type of promotion at Pantaloons, Berhampur influences your buying decisions the most?

- Discounts/Sales
- Buy One Get One Free (BOGO)
- Loyalty Programs
- Seasonal Offers

5. How often do you shop at Pantaloons, Berhampur because of a promotion?

- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Rarely
- Never

6. How do you usually find out about Pantaloons, Berhampur promotions?

- In-Store Advertisements
- Social Media
- SMS/Email Notifications
- Word of Mouth

7. How likely are you to try a new product at Pantaloons, Berhampur because of a promotion?

- Very Likely
- Likely
- Unlikely
- Very Unlikely

8. How often do Pantaloons promotions lead you to buy more than you originally planned?

- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

9. Do Pantaloons promotions increase your loyalty to the store?

- Significantly
- Moderately
- Slightly
- Not at All

10. Which Pantaloons promotional strategy do you find most appealing?

- Price Discounts
- Free Samples
- Cashback Offers
- Contest/Giveaways

Annexure B

BRAND PORTFOLIO :

MENS:



KIDS:



WOMENS:

PT BRANDS:



NPT BRANDS:

