

A Study on Emerging Trends in Trade Dress Protection in India

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ABSTRACT:

In essence, trade dress protection not only safeguards commercial interests but also contributes to the cultural and economic fabric of society. By promoting creativity, protecting consumer interests, and fostering trust between producers and consumers, trade dress protection contributes to the sustainable growth of industries and economies worldwide. As businesses continue to innovate and consumers continue to seek unique and reliable products and services, the role of trade dress protection will remain pivotal in shaping the future of commerce. The expanding scope of protection, the impact of digitalization, and the emphasis on consumer perception are among the key drivers shaping the evolution of trade dress law. As India continues to harmonize its legal framework with international standards, the protection of trade dress is poised to play a pivotal role in fostering innovation, promoting fair competition, and enhancing consumer trust in the marketplace. The aim of the study is to understand the different means of trade protection in India. Empirical research is carried out by a convenient sampling method. This study has both primary and secondary data. The secondary data is collected from various journals and websites. The total sample size is 230. The independent variables are age, gender, occupation, place of living, educational qualification. The dependent variable is, ranking, preference, is trade dress and patent the same, famous trade dress, will trade dress help in differentiating the product from other.

KEYWORDS: Trade, Protection, Infringement.

INTRODUCTION:

Trade dress protection, an essential aspect of intellectual property law, focuses on safeguarding the distinctive visual appearance of products and services. In India, trade dress protection has evolved significantly in response to changing market dynamics, technological advancements, and global trade scenarios. This delves into the key trends shaping trade dress protection in India. Recent trends indicate an expanding scope of trade dress protection in India. Courts are increasingly recognizing the non-traditional elements of trade dress, including product packaging, color schemes, and design patterns. This broader interpretation aligns with international practices and allows businesses to safeguard their unique visual identities comprehensively.

The rise of e-commerce has posed new challenges and opportunities for trade dress protection. Online marketplaces have led to an increased risk of counterfeiting and imitation. As a response, Indian courts have addressed issues related to online infringement and parallel imports, emphasizing the need to protect

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trade dress in the digital space. A significant trend involves courts emphasizing consumer perception and distinctiveness while determining trade dress infringement cases. This trend aligns with global practices and underscores the importance of consumers' ability to associate a specific trade dress with a particular brand or source of origin. As businesses seek to innovate and create unique product designs, the balance between protecting trade secrets and encouraging innovation has become crucial. Indian courts are striving to strike this balance by granting protection to distinctive trade dress elements while avoiding an overly restrictive approach that hampers competition. Globalization has heightened the need for cross-border trademark protection. Indian courts are taking cognizance of international jurisprudence and harmonizing their decisions with global standards. This trend promotes consistency and provides businesses with a more predictable environment for enforcing their trademark rights. The assessment of damages and remedies in trade dress infringement cases has witnessed evolution. Courts are adopting a more nuanced approach to quantifying damages, including factors such as the duration of infringement, the extent of harm, and the defendant's conduct. This trend aims to ensure fair compensation for rights holders. To combat the proliferation of counterfeit goods, Indian authorities and businesses are adopting stringent anti-counterfeiting measures. These measures encompass collaboration between law enforcement agencies, brand owners, and industry associations, fostering a collective effort to protect trade dress rights. Increasing awareness about trade dress protection rights among businesses, creators, and consumers is another noteworthy trend. Workshops, seminars, and educational initiatives are being conducted to enhance understanding of trade dress laws and best practices. Furthermore, the evolving remedies and damages, along with increased cross-border collaboration, signal a maturing understanding of trade dress protection's implications. The collective efforts of businesses, industry associations, and legal authorities have fostered a collaborative approach to combating infringement and maintaining the integrity of trade dress rights. As the global marketplace continues to expand and become more interconnected, trade dress protection will remain a vital instrument for maintaining a level playing field. Its ability to strike a balance between encouraging innovation and preserving fair competition ensures that businesses can differentiate themselves while providing consumers with reliable indicators of quality and source.

OBJECTIVES:

- To analyze the essentials of trade dress.
- To find the relationship between functionality and trade dress.
- To understand the various trade dress in the market.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

1. **(Kankanala, Kalyan C 2003)** The author in this conveys the business worthiness by value of asset by use of IP. Advantages: IP exclusivity helps business to form its competitive value, asset value of IP is much higher than the tangible ones, amalgamation, merger & alignment of various activities ranging from every aspect from building culture to effective portfolio management maximises benefits from IP.
2. **(Thakur, Aditi Verma 2005)** the author in this article attempts to generalise the perception of business units with respect to business units. It states that brand name is a powerful medium for any business. A brand name serves as a strong tool not just for competitiveness of the firm but also for enhancing

the commercial aspect of the products. The author concludes by stating that the business needs to understand the importance of names and identities and their hidden effects on the business.

3. **(Ravi Kiran 2006)** The author in this article explains the cultural adaptation of IPR tactics into the pharmaceutical industry and the effect of the same on the growth of the industry not just in the domestic market but also in the global market. The search conducted in this paper determines the status of IPR in individual firms and the results indicate noticeable growth but states need for improvement in awareness and implementations of IPRs across the industry.
4. **(Rindu Rika Gamayuni 2007)** the author in this article explains the relationship of intangible assets, financial policies and financial performance to the firm value at going-public companies. Intangible assets have no significant influence on financial policies but have positive and significant influences on financial performance and firm value. This paper further states that the financial statements set out limitations in measuring and disclosing intangible assets is the cause of significant difference between book value equity and market value equity. The measurement and disclosure of intangible assets' intellectual capital precisely and accurately is very important because intangible assets have a positive and significant effect on the firm value.
5. **(Ravi Kiran and Vijay Jain 2007)** The author in this paper explains the challenges faced by small and medium enterprises when dealing with the technological innovations and its implementations in the state of Punjab in India. The author highlights the low level of awareness and mediums to reach out in matters of IPR in India. policy initiatives and organisational factors for improvement of the IPR sector in the SME sector.
6. **(A.K. Saini and Surabhi Jain 2007)** The author in this article discusses the patent filing structure in selected Asian countries and its direct effect on the growth rate of the respective country. The paper evaluates that highly technology-based countries' economies are affected by a high number of patent applications filed and further utilised for economic activities.
7. **(Raju, K D 2008)** the author in this article examines various provisions of intellectual property taxation under different legislations in India. It argues that the lack of a comprehensive policy on intellectual property taxation acts as a disincentive to technology transfer and IP creation in India. Different categories are taxed with different objectives and purposes. Sometimes economies may want to discourage use of foreign goods within their countries and consequently therefore the tax on imported goods will be high. However, interestingly, taxing intellectual property is a recent phenomenon across the globe.
8. **(Kumar, Jayant 2008)** IP is being recognized as a valuable component of a company's assets because of the growth in IP as a strategic investment. In IP collateral there is generally a lower credit risk, which results in a low cost of financing, and pledging IP collateral will often allow a borrower to secure financing without the need to alter its capital structure.

9. **(Jain, Karuna, Sharma, Vandana" 2008)** Intellectual property rights as a key intellectual asset of the organisation empowers innovators to collect the full value of their invention. It has now become a prerequisite for organisations to develop expertise and capability not only to create intellectual property through R&D, but also to manage it and give it due weightage in strategic decision making, the role of Intellectual Property Management System (IPMS) in building organisational capabilities to achieve sustainable competitive advantage.
10. **(Laik, Kaushik 2009)** The author in this article explains that in spite of the economic growth of nations, there exist conflicting views between developed and developing countries. For example, the debate on implementation of competition laws and IP laws, that developing countries vary widely in the quality and capacity of their scientific and technical infrastructures, poses a major hurdle to the extent of applicability of IP, particularly, patent laws, to each of them. IP systems bring in socio-economic well-being. The fact that strong IPR actually provokes IPR infringements in many developing nations. The rift between unfair competition laws and IP has importance and hence needs to be particularly emphasised.
11. **(Richard A. Spinello; Herman T. Tavani, 2009)** the author in this chapter explains the confusions relating to exporting trademarks. The determination relating to 'likelihood of confusions' of trademarks arises when the infringement and passing-off of the brands in the domestic and international markets across the globe. Counterfeiting through infringements and lookalikes results in dilution of the brand depending on different features of the trademark. The authorities i.e. judicial decision makers evaluate both allegedly conflicting trademarks in the contexts in which they are used and make a determination about whether the dual usages create a "likelihood of confusion.
12. **(Bernard Marr, 2010)** The author in this paper explains intellectual capital from a valuation perspective. Referring to the difficulties relating to measuring intellectual capital, to define, measure, manage, and value in the traditional sense. Yet, given the profound importance of such assets to a firm's competitive advantage and value creation capabilities, serious attempts need to be, and increasingly are, made to establish clear definitions, measurement rules, and valuation principles. Also the paper quotes
13. **(Krugman 2000)** The intangibility of a company's most important assets makes it extremely hard to figure out what that company is really worth. That may partly explain the nauseating volatility of stock prices"
14. **(Ravindran, Sudhir Raja 2010)** The author in this article discusses the innovation strategy and capacity building provisions adapted due to IP structure/infrastructure. Commercialization of innovations and invention into advanced processes. The further emphasis for the improvement of IP laws and infrastructure in developing countries. The author in this article explains different facets of transfer of technology and the ways and means these transactions affect the economies of the less developed or developing nations. This paper attempts to explain the meaning of technology transfer, how it elaborates on the modalities of technology transfer agreement and the various types of the same.
15. **(Lall, Amar Raj; Khurana, Vinod; 2011)** : The author in this article evaluates and discusses about the outline of some of the issues arising in connection with brand valuation in the changing economic scenario their Types of brands, their valuation, intangible and tangible benefits of brand valuation.
16. **(King, Kelvin 2012)** in this paper the author discusses intellectual capital valuation concepts, methods and procedures applied value to intellectual property. Three broad categories of valuation methods, 1 }

market based 2} cost based 3} estimates of future economic benefits. The author explains the phenomena of the valuation process of IP and creating intellectual capital with its implications.

17. (Tiwari, S; 2015) The author in this paper conveys that India signing the TRIPS Agreement relates directly to enforcement of intellectual property rights. There is a set of enforcement standards which all members of the World Trade Organization are obliged to follow set by the agreement: this includes: 1} general guidelines to be followed by the Members 2} the provisions describe civil 3} administrative and criminal procedures 4} border measures for enforcing their intellectual property right 5} For developing countries some possible areas are identified where changes would be needed. Thus this emerged as a compliant procedure to be followed and implement the IP law in India.

18. (JayChatzke 2017) The author in this article explains the rationale background to the concepts of managing, measuring and reporting of intellectual capital. The author further suggests that the existing theories of evaluation and taxonomies and research methodologies need a structured format for calculation and consideration of intellectual capital.

19. (Moerman, Lee 2018) "The author in this article explains economic frameworks, such as accounting, which recognize and value intellectual property for providing information for decision making & discourse of accounting in recognition of intellectual property as an asset according to the new International Accounting Standards. The legal and accounting discourses in which intellectual property rights are acknowledged are compared & these discourses are not necessarily aligned. The effects and implications of the development of a global regime for accounting for intangibles may eventually harmonise the accounting treatment for intellectual property.

METHODOLOGY:

Empirical research is carried out by a convenient sampling method. This study has both primary and secondary data. The secondary data is collected from various journals and websites. The total sample size is 230. The independent variables are age, gender, occupation, place of living, educational qualification. The dependent variable is, ranking, preference, is trade dress and patent the same, famous trade dress, will trade dress help in differentiating the product from other.

Independent variables:

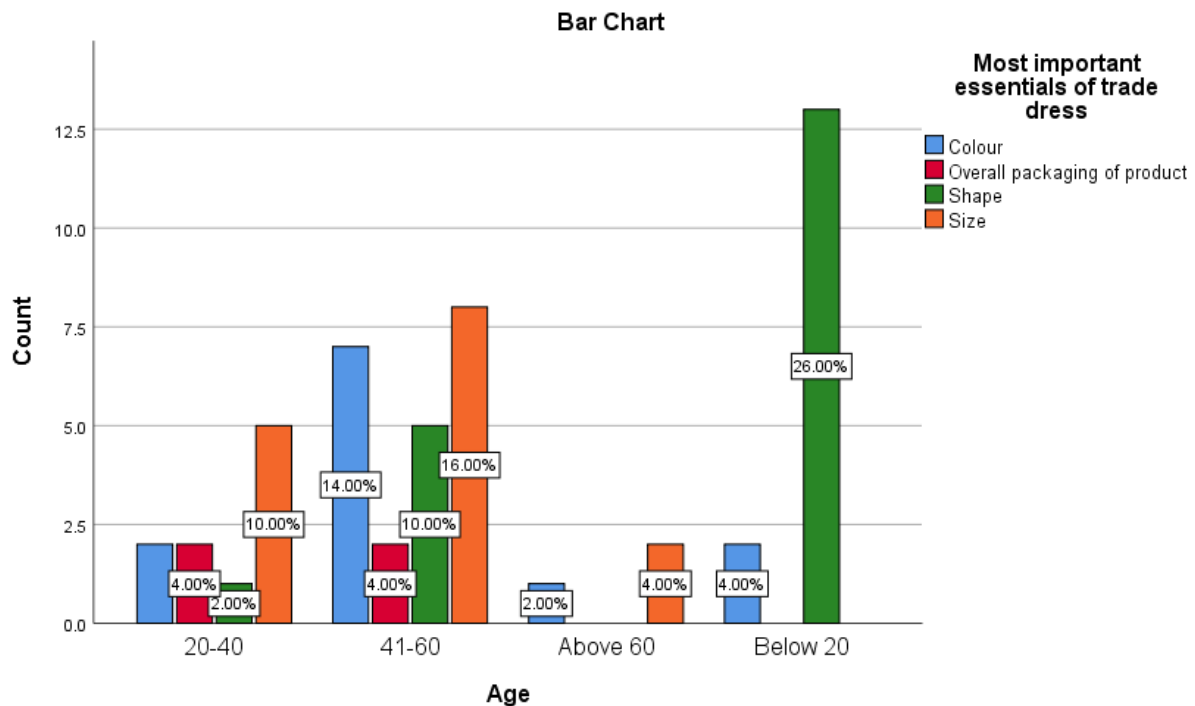
- Age
- Gender
- Place of living
- Educational Qualification
- Occupation

Dependent variables

- Most important essentials of trade dress
- Is trade dress and parent being the same
- Rank your preference on functionality of trade dress
- Famous trade dress
- Will trade dress help in differentiating the product from other product

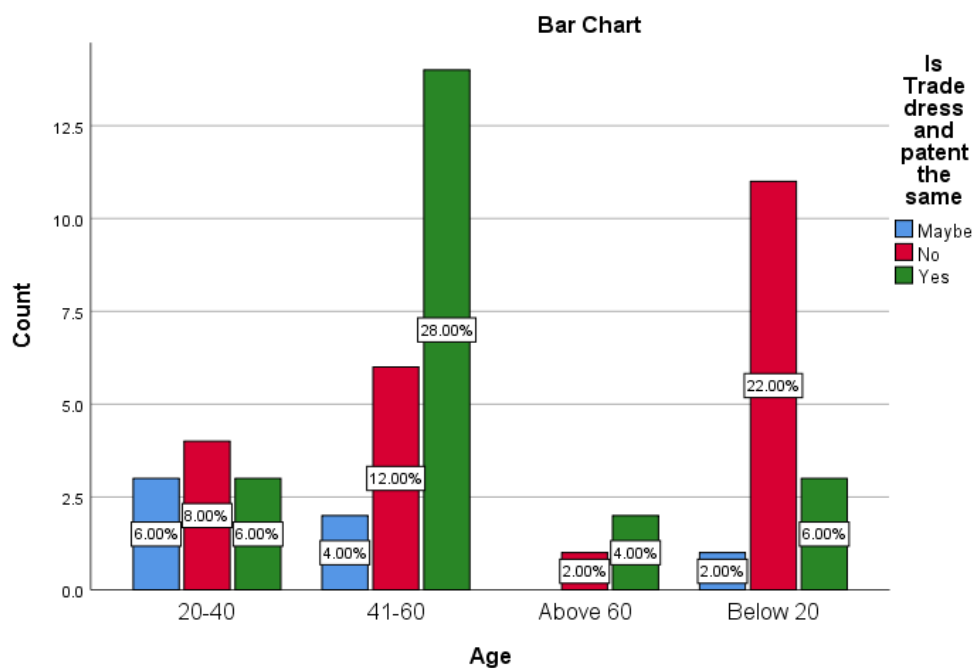
ANALYSIS:

FIGURE:1



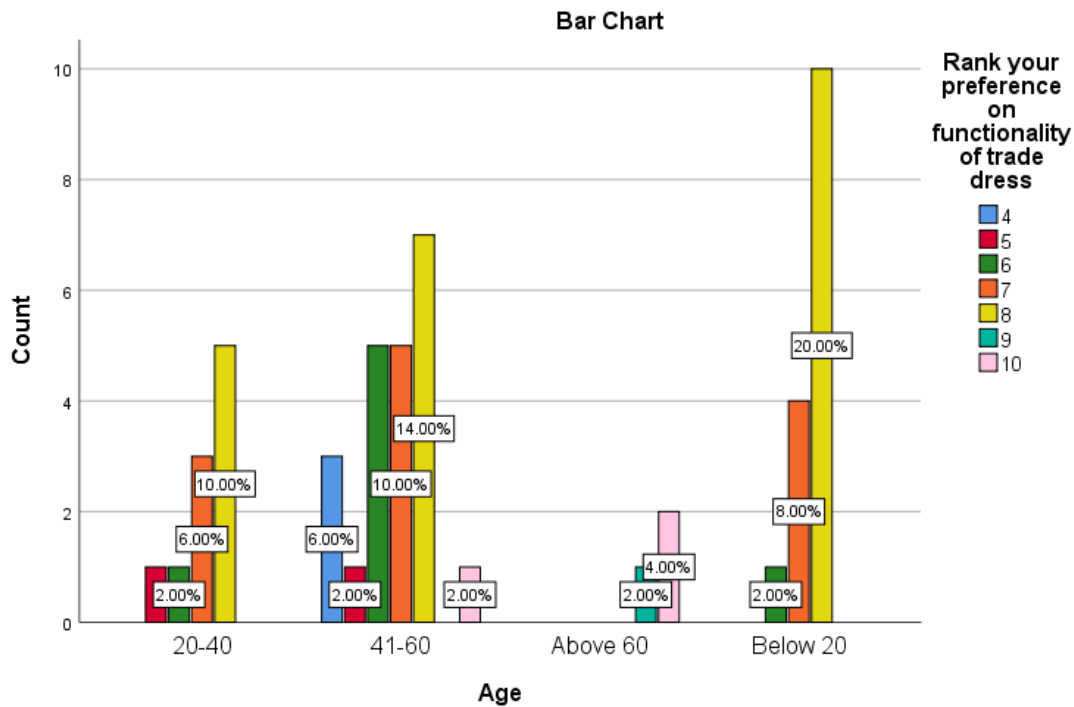
LEGEND: This figure represents the relationship between age and most important essential trade dress.

FIGURE:2



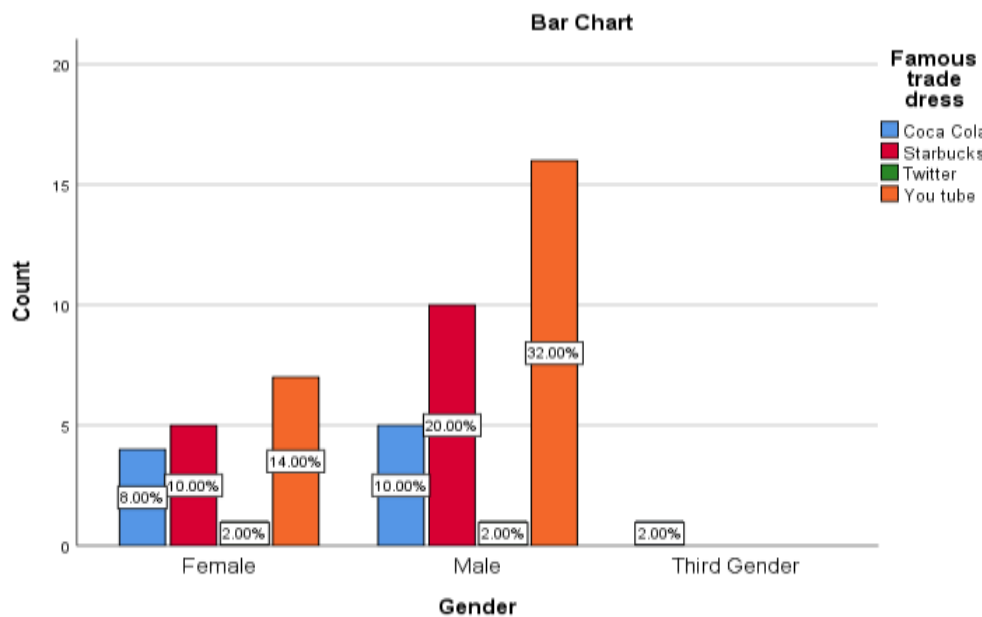
LEGEND: This figure represents the relationship between age and is trade dress and patent the same.

FIGURE:3.



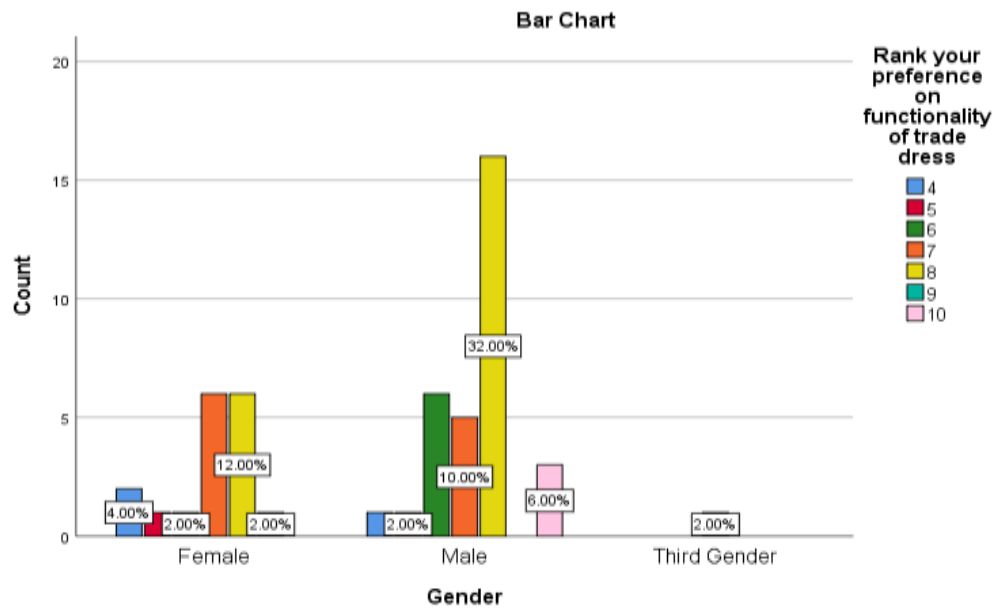
LEGEND: This figure represents the relationship between age and rank your preference on functionality of trade dress.

FIGURE: 4



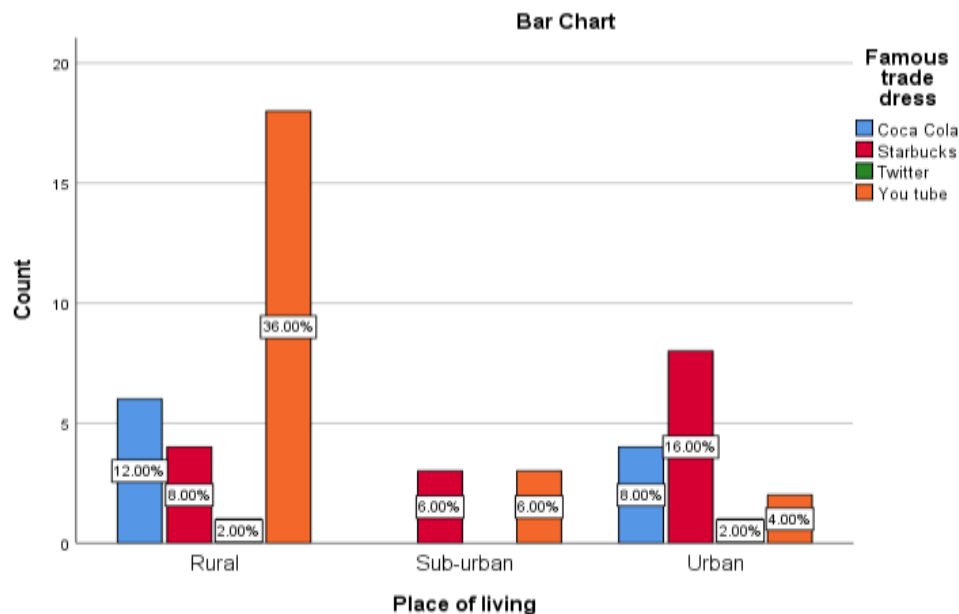
LEGEND: This figure represents the relationship between gender and famous trade dress.

FIGURE: 5



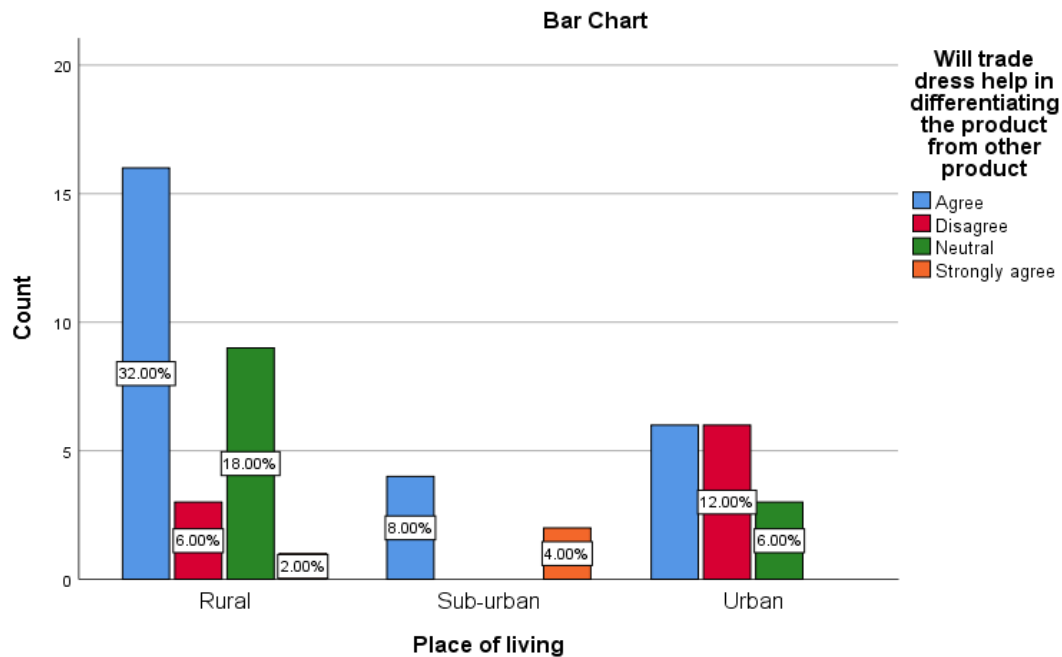
LEGEND: This figure represents the relationship between gender and rank your preference on functionality of trade dress.

FIGURE:6



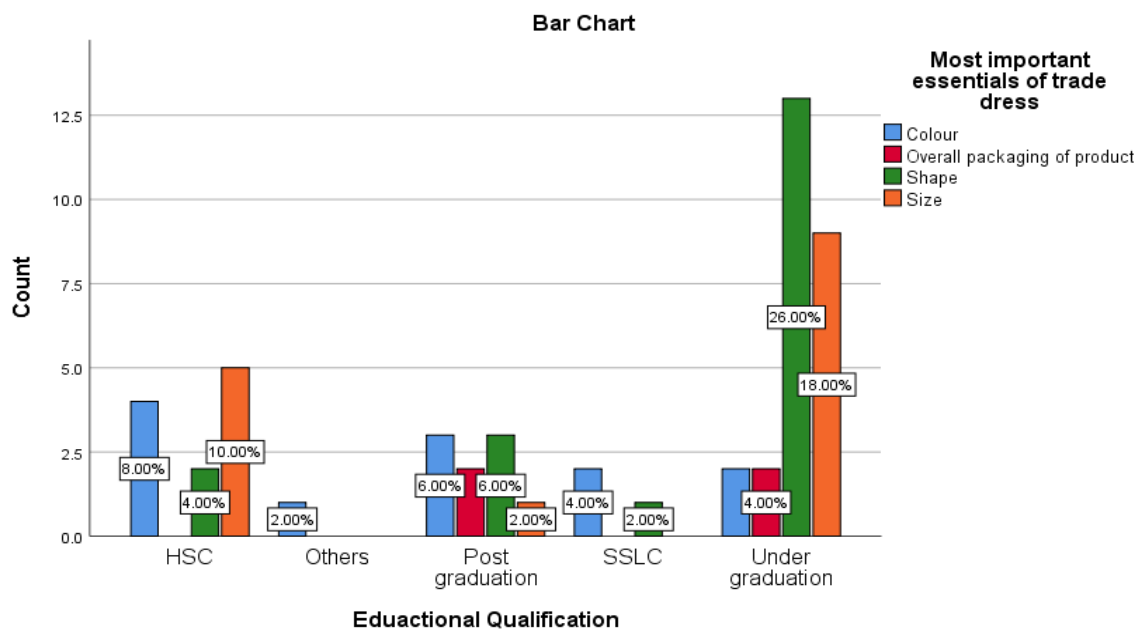
LEGEND: This figure represents the relationship between place of living and famous trade dress.

FIGURE: 7



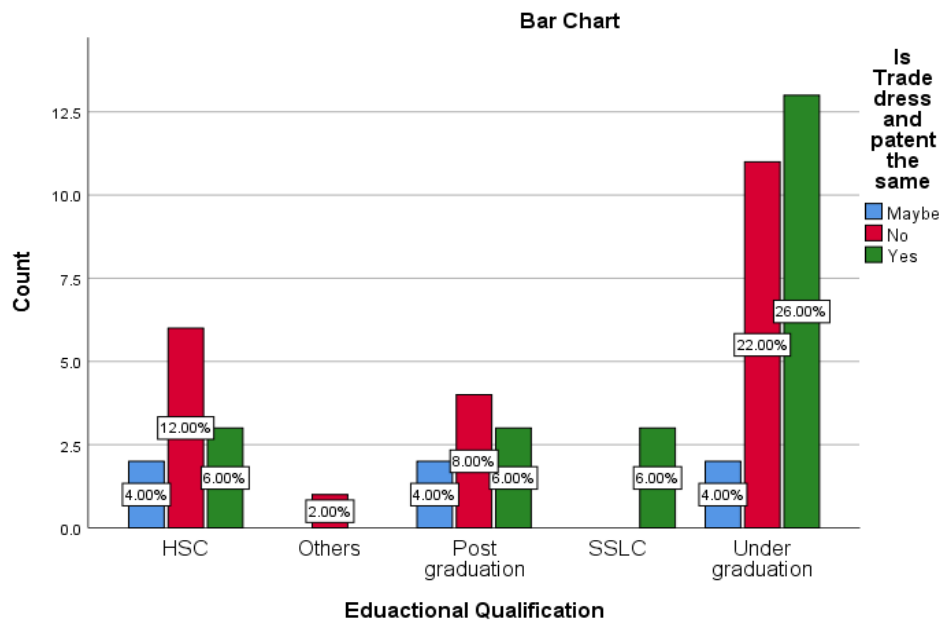
LEGEND: This figure represents the relationship between place of living and will trade dress help differentiate from other product.

FIGURE:8



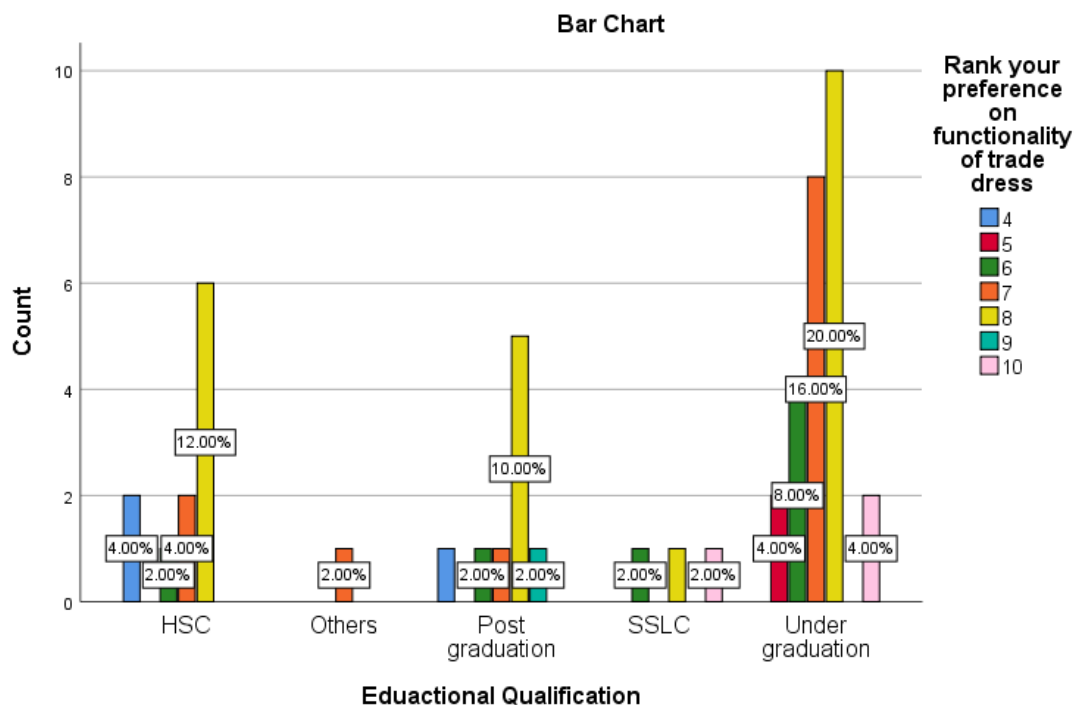
LEGEND: This figure represents the relationship between educational qualification and most important essentials of trade dress.

FIGURE:9



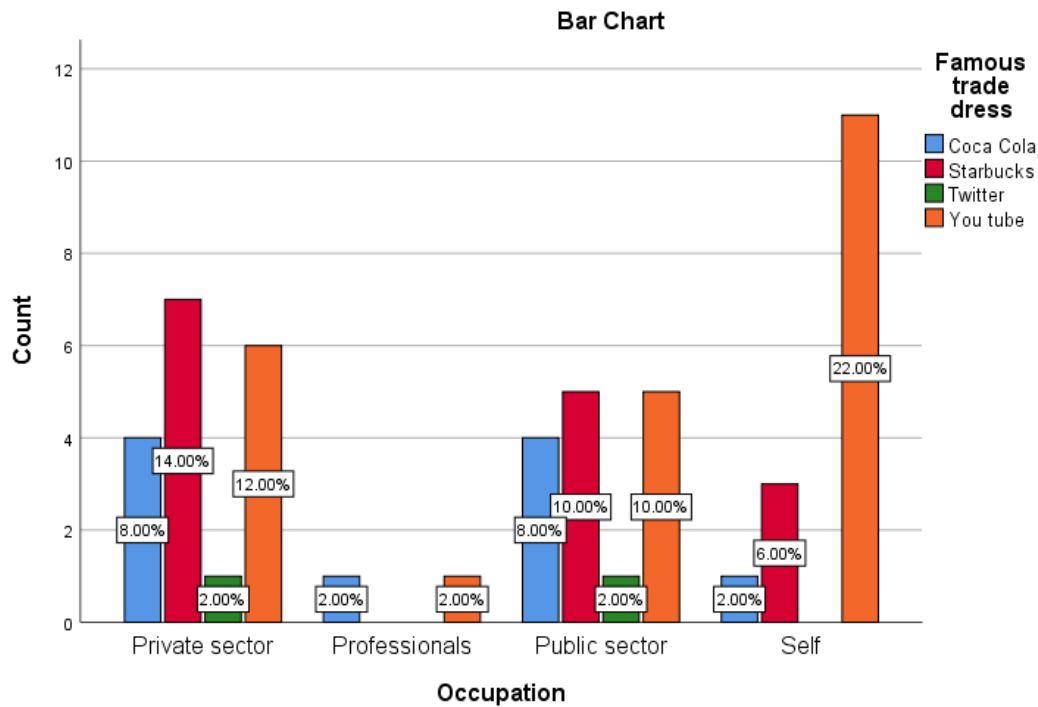
LEGEND: This figure represents the relationship between educational qualification and is trade dress and patent the same.

FIGURE:10



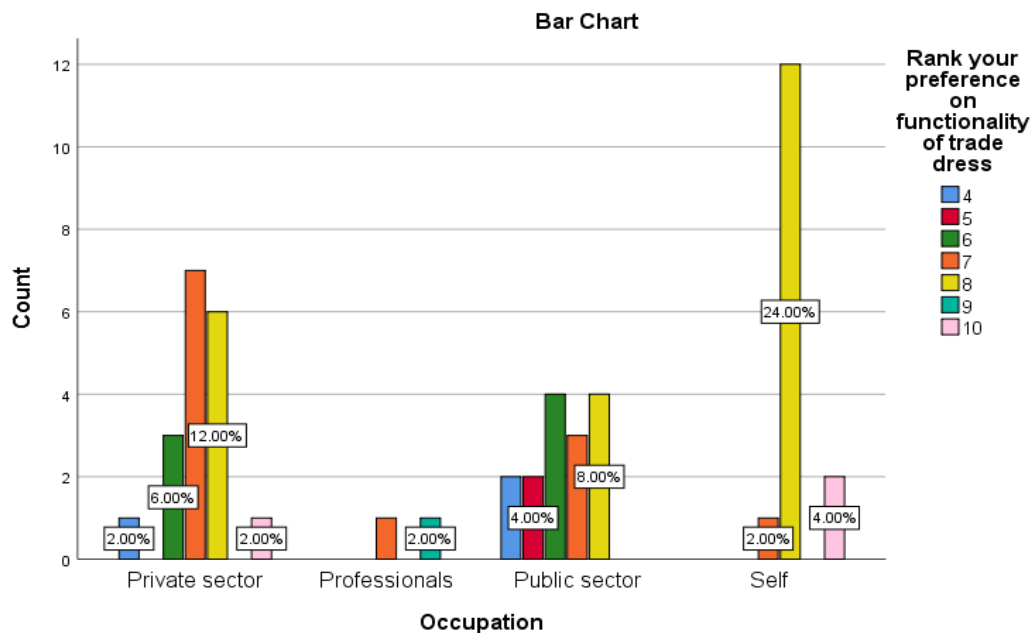
Legend: This figure represents the relationship between educational qualification and rank your preference on the functionality of trade dress.

FIGURE:11



Legend: This figure represents the relationship between occupation and famous trade dress.

FIGURE:12



LEGEND: This figure represents the relationship between occupation and rank your preference on functionality on of trade dress.

RESULT:

(FIGURE:1) represents the relationship between age and the most important essentials of trade dress. For ages of 20-40 4% respond to color and overall package, 2% to shape, and 10% to size. For age of 41-60, 14% for colour, 4% for overall packaging of product 10% for shape, 16% for size, for above age 60, 2% for color, 4% for size, for below age 20, 4% for color, 26% for shape.

(FIGURE:2) represents the relationship between age and whether trade dress and patent are the same, For age of 20-40, 6% is for maybe, 8% for no, 6% for yes, for age of 41-60, 4% is for maybe, 12% for no, 28% for yes; for age above 60, 2% is for no, 4% for yes, below 20, 2% is for maybe, 22% for no, 6% is for yes.

(FIGURE:3) represents the relationship between age and ranking your preference on the functionality of trade dress. For age of 20-40, 2% is for rank 5, 6, 6% is for rank 7, 10% is for rank 8, for age of 41-60, 6% is for rank 4, 2% is for rank 5, 10% is for rank 6, 7, 14% is for rank 8, 2%, above 60, 2% is rank 9, 4% is rank 10, for age below 20, 2% is for rank 6, and 20% is for rank 8.

(FIGURE:4) represents the relationship between gender and famous trade dress, for females, 8% is for coca cola, 10% is for Starbucks, 2% is for Twitter, 14% is for YouTube, for males, 10% is for coca cola, 20% is for Starbucks, 2% is for Twitter, 32% is for YouTube, and for third genders, 2% is for coca cola.

(FIGURE:5) represents the relationship between gender and the rank functionality of trade dress, for females 4% is for rank 4, 2% is for rank 5, 12% is for rank 7,8, 2% is for rank 9, for male 2% is for rank 4, 10% is for rank 6,7, 32% is for rank 8, 6% for rank 10.

(FIGURE:7) represents the place of living and will help in differentiating the product from other products. In rural areas, 32% agree, 6% disagree, 18% are neutral, and 2% strongly agree, in sub-urban areas, 8%, agree, 4% strongly agree, in urban areas, 12% agree, 6% is for neutral.

(FIGURE:8) represents the relationship between educational qualification and most important essentials for trade dress, for HSC 8% is for colour, 4% is for shape, 10% is for size, in post graduation 6% is for colour, overall packaging of product, shape, 2% is for size, for SSLC 4% is for colour, 2% is for shape, for under graduation 4% is for color, over all packaging of product, 26% is for shape, 18% is size.

(FIGURE:9) represents the relationship between educational qualifications and trade dress and patents, for HSC, 4% is for maybe, 12% is for no, 6% is for yes, for others, 2% is for no, for post graduation 4% is for maybe, 8% is for no, 6% is for yes; for SSLC, 6% is for yes, under graduation 4% is for maybe, 22% is for no, 26%.

(FIGURE:10) represents the relationship between educational qualification and ranking your preference on functionality of trade dress, For HSC, 4% is for rank 4, 2% is for rank 6, 4% is for rank 7, 12% is for rank 8, for post graduation 2% is for rank 4, 6, 7, 10% is for rank 8, 2% is rank 9, for SSLC, 2% is for rank of 6, 8, 10, for undergrad, 4% is for rank 5, 8% is for rank 6, 18% for rank of 7, 20% is for rank 8, 4% is for rank of 10.

(FIGURE:11) represents the relationship between occupation and famous trade dress, for private sector 8% is for coca cola, 14% is for starbucks, 2% is for twitter 12% for YouTube; for professionals, 2% is for coca cola, 2% for Twitter; in public sector, 8% is for coca cola, 10% is for Starbucks; 2% is for Twitter; 10% is for YouTube; for self employment, 2% is for coca cola, 6% is for Starbucks; 22% is youtube.

(FIGURE:12) represents the relationship between occupation and rank your preference on functionality of trade dress, in private sector, 2% is for rank 4, 6% is for rank of 6, 12% is for rank of 7,8, 2% is for rank of 10, in professional sector, 2% is for rank of 7, 9, in private sector 4% is for rank of 4,5, 8% is for rank of 8,9, in self employment 2% is rank of 7, 24% is for rank 8, 4% for rank of 10.

DISCUSSION:

(FIGURE:1) represents the relationship between age and the most important essentials of trade dress. The highest response is from the age of below 20, of 28%, and this can be because of the shape the trade dress represents and the major population feels that size and shape will be a better hand in understanding the trade dress and can be one of the important essentials of a trade dress as those are the major things that would influence a consumer in consuming a product.

(FIGURE:2) represents the relationship between age and whether trade dress and patent are the same. For age of 20-40, 6% is for maybe, 8% for no, 6% for yes, for age of 41-60, 4% is for maybe, 12% for no, 28% for yes; for age above 60, 2% is for no, 4% for yes, below 20, 2% is for maybe, 22% for no, 6% is for yes. This helps us to understand that the respondents from the age of 41-60, has a response of 28% for option of no. The major population feels that Trade Dress and Patent are similar and couldn't find any difference in it, only quite and the population feels that Trade Dress and Patent are different, this can be because of the kind of education that happens and in recent days advertisements and social media distributes knowledge at a lightning speed.

(FIGURE:3) represents the relationship between age and ranking your preference on the functionality of trade dress. For age of 20-40, 2% is for rank 5, 6, 6% is for rank 7, 10% is for rank 8, for age of 41-60, 6% is for rank 4, 2% is for rank 5, 10% is for rank 6, 7, 14% is for rank 8, 2%, above 60, 2% is rank 9, 4% is rank 10, for age below 20, 2% is for rank 6, and 20% is for rank 8, this represents us that the highest ranking is for the rank of 8. In reference to the functionality of Trade Dress the score of 8 is a decent one and this helps in coming to an understanding that the public has some knowledge on Trade Dress.

(FIGURE:4) represents the relationship between gender and famous trade dress, for females, 8% is for coca cola, 10% is for Starbucks, 2% is for Twitter, 14% is for YouTube, for males, 10% is for coca cola, 20% is for Starbucks, 2% is for Twitter, 32% is for YouTube, and for third genders, 2% is for coca cola. When it comes to various Trade Dress, YouTube has been the highest ranking as it widely being used by both the genders and the kind of knowledge transfer it has helps in bringing in a wider scope and public awareness.

(FIGURE:5) represents the relationship between gender and the rank functionality of trade dress, for females 4% is for rank 4, 2% is for rank 5, 12% is for rank 7, 8, 2% is for rank 9, for male 2% is for rank 4, 10% is for rank 6, 7, 32% is for rank 8, 6% for rank 10. When it comes to functionality of Trade Dress both male and female has ranked it as 8, this would help us in coming to a understanding that the job of Trade Dress is being satisfied.

(FIGURE:6) represents the relationship between place of living and famous trade dress, In rural areas, 12% are for coca cola, 8% are Starbucks, 2% are Twitter, and 36% are YouTube. In sub-urban areas, 6% are Starbucks, 6% are YouTube, and in urban areas, 8% are for coca cola, 16% are Starbucks, 2% are Twitter, and 4% are YouTube. When it comes to urban and sub-urban all the areas of living people use YouTube and the functionality and the accessibility makes it the best in bringing it to the public.

(FIGURE:8) represents the relationship between educational qualification and most important essentials for trade dress, for HSC 8% is for colour, 4% is for shape, 10% is for size, in post graduation 6% is for colour, overall packaging of product, shape, 2% is for size, for SSLC 4% is for colour, 2% is for shape, for under graduation 4% is for color, over all packaging of product, 26% is for shape, 18% is size. When it

comes to the various essentials of a Trade Dress, shape and size places a major role as it helps in understanding and differentiating the various products in the market.

(FIGURE:9) represents the relationship between educational qualifications and trade dress and patents, for HSC, 4% is for maybe, 12% is for no, 6% is for yes, for others, 2% is for no, for post graduation 4% is for maybe, 8% is for no, 6% is for yes; for SSLC, 6% is for yes, under graduation 4% is for maybe, 22% is for no, 26%. When it comes to the education that is being provided to the public the higher education people feels that Trade Dress will bring in the differentiation among various products in the market and that is important in understanding and Trade Dress and Patent are two different sectors of a product.

(FIGURE:10) represents the relationship between educational qualification and ranking your preference on functionality of trade dress, For HSC, 4% is for rank 4, 2% is for rank 6, 4% is for rank 7, 12% is for rank 8, for post graduation 2% is for rank 4, 6, 7, 10% is for rank 8, 2% is rank 9, for SSLC, 2% is for rank of 6, 8, 10, for undergrad, 4% is for rank 5, 8% is for rank 6, 18% for rank of 7, 20% is for rank 8, 4% is for rank of 10. When it comes to functionality it is ranked as 8 and that is important and it helps us to come to a conclusion that the products that is given helps in serving its purpose and the functionality of a Trade Dress is being fulfilled.

(FIGURE:11) represents the relationship between occupation and famous trade dress, the highest number of response is from self employed for youtube. When it comes to professional and Trade Dress the widely used sector is You Tube and it being used widely regardless of profession, education and age the main reason is due to its accessibility and efficiency. Fig 12 represents the relationship between occupation and rank your preference on functionality of trade dress, this helps us to understand that self employment people feel that rank of 8 with 24% on their functionality of trade dress. According to profession and ranking people feel that every sector of public will have benefit due to the Trade Dress and its functions.

CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, trade dress protection stands as a critical component of intellectual property law, safeguarding the visual identity and distinctiveness of products and services. Its significance lies in its ability to foster fair competition, promote innovation, and uphold consumer trust within a constantly evolving marketplace. Through this legal framework, businesses can secure their unique branding elements, packaging designs, and overall product appearances. Trade dress protection has evolved over time to accommodate changing market dynamics, technological advancements, and global trade scenarios. This evolution has been marked by a broader interpretation of protected elements, adaptation to digital platforms and online marketplaces, and a growing emphasis on consumer perception and distinctiveness. As businesses navigate the complexities of the digital age, trade dress protection plays a crucial role in preventing counterfeiting, imitation, and unfair competition.

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