

Global fashion driving Indian women's love for tees

Women's knit wear segment has seen a new high, thanks to celebrity endorsements, global brands entry and as consumers' new found love for the segment. While challenges remain, brands are expanding their market share in this burgeoning segment by growing their product base and offering latest styles



A recent Technopak study reveals that women's T-shirts and tops categories are growing fast owing to increasing participation of women in workforce and a generic inclination for western wear. Women tops and shirts market is now pegged at Rs 1,979 crore and expected to grow at a CAGR of 14 per cent to Rs 7,337 crore by 2025. The women's T-shirts market at Rs 797 crore is witnessing growth in tandem with all other casual wear categories and is expected to grow at a CAGR of 17.5 per cent to reach Rs 3,999 crore by 2025.

WOMEN'S KNITWEAR MARKET ON THE RISE

While earlier a women's wardrobe consisted of formal shirts, trousers, saris, salwar kameez, etc. The key purchase parameters considered while buying these items were their basic function, comfort, and price. However, with increasing exposure to international fashion, the Indian women today want more than just need-based clothing. In fact, with deeper penetration of media and internet along with an increased awareness about global fashion trends, modern Indian women are opting smart, fashionable casual wear for everyday dressing. A young woman in a city like Raipur or Nasik or Bhubaneswar also has the latest updates about the global fashion brands. Moreover with more women joining the workforce, it is becoming more pertinent for them to look for smart, casual and trendy dressing.

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- **Women's T-shirts market is worth Rs 797 crore**
- **Is witnessing growth in tandem with all other casual wear categories**
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- **Popularity of women's tees growing**
- **Both branded and non branded players flourishing**

"Knitwear portfolio is strong in women's wear segment because it is accepted both among the youth and upper age groups. There is a big share of women's T-shirt, and demand is increasing," say Guneet Singh & Japneet Singh, Directors, Juelle. On similar lines, Latin Quarters brand team inform, "Knitwear makes up a good chunk of our collection. We are not much into T-shirts."

And Sudarshan Jain, MD, Oner adds, "It's a huge market because of the comfort and price. It's growing directly in proportion to the growing young population and economy and acceptance of western dressing in smaller towns and cities."

Having said that Jain feels it's the lack of innovation in product because of price point



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Directors, Juelle

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consumption is more in demand is the school and college going crowd, who prefer casual, relaxed and comfortable clothing for day to day wear. In higher age groups, women prefer tunics, dresses/kurtis, which are more in sync with Indian style of dressing. Similarly, for Latin Quarters and Oner too, the demand for T-shirts among women is younger age group. “If we look at factors like brand, good quality garment and great finish and a sense of international fashion, then customer would easily understand and spend above stated amount,” believes Latin Quarters’ brand team. Jain adds these days higher price tags are also accepted. Lots of value addition in terms of digital printing, embroideries, quality fabrics in superior blends, add to the premium look of a T-shirt. In the end, it all depends on the market segment a brand is catering to.

BRANDED VS. NON-BRANDED

Super premium brands are more popular among the upper class whereas the regular middle class prefers casual fast fashion concepts. “Seeing the vast middle class, demand for moderately priced branded tees

Globally every brand is keeping a section for T-shirts in its women’s collection. If one does not find anything of choice, they don’t mind picking up a colorful T-shirt, which goes with every trouser or jeans for every occasion. With the advent of ideas from international designers, domestic industry is flooded with fashionable knitted apparels. Jain points out, branded knits are doing well but they have limited variety because they need to take care of the product mix. There is no knitwear specific women’s wear brand.

STYLES AND TRENDS IN WOMEN’S T-SHIRTS

Colorful polo t-shirts with collar are in style which can be tucked in. It gives a corporate look. In casual category, neon’s with digital prints, Swarovski, and sublimations are in demand. Crochet/brasso/net concepts are also selling well this season. Embroidery concepts are selling too. Printed, animated, crop tops are the recent added styles. Similarly for Oner, printed and soft feel fabrics are popular.

FUTURE PROSPECTS

The future T-shirt segment in India is bright as most women are moving from ethnic wear to western wear. With growing awareness about international fashion and influence of social media, the youth is demanding more funky and casual T-shirt concepts. Despite being strong in wovens, the knitwear industry in India is on a double-digit growth. The industry is gearing up for bigger play in future. The Indian knitwear industry has seen strong growth in the past few years and hopefully would continue to ride high.



that the segment is not able to catch up like other garment segments. Local brands and retailers are not ready to experiment with designs and have mentally capped the price point of T-shirt. Brands should make the product exciting and appealing.

For Singh, the age group where T-shirt

is increasing,” says Singh. Agrees Jain, “Super-premium brands have a growing market but in a limited way. Women are more interested in designs and variety rather than a premium brand. Moreover, wearing habit is also different. They change their wardrobe faster than men, so economy factor is also key to buying.”



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