

A Study on Consumer Preferences Towards Zudio: an Analysis of Buying Behavior and Brand Perception with Special Reference to Zudio at Cross Cut Road Branch, Coimbatore City

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Abstract. The Indian fashion retail industry has witnessed the rapid ascent of value fashion formats that deliver trend-driven, affordable clothing to the aspirational middle class. Zudio, a value fashion brand launched by Tata Group's Trent Limited, has emerged as one of the most successful fast-fashion retailers in India, offering stylish apparel, footwear, and accessories at highly accessible price points. This study investigates consumer preferences towards Zudio, analysing the buying behaviour and brand perception of shoppers at the Zudio Cross Cut Road Branch in Coimbatore City. The study employs a structured questionnaire to collect primary data from 120 respondents who have shopped at the Cross Cut Road branch. Key dimensions examined include store ambience, product quality, pricing perception, variety and design appeal, staff behaviour, and overall brand perception.

Keywords: Zudio, Consumer Preferences, Buying Behaviour, Brand Perception, Value Fashion, Fast Fashion, Coimbatore.

I INTRODUCTION

The Indian retail fashion industry is undergoing a profound structural transformation, driven by the convergence of rising middle-class aspirations, increasing fashion awareness among younger consumers, and the growing influence of social media on clothing choices and style preferences. India's apparel market, valued at approximately USD 80 billion and projected to grow at a compound annual growth rate of over 10% through 2030, is witnessing a decisive shift towards organised retail formats that offer the twin advantages of fashion-forward design and accessible pricing. Within this evolving landscape, the concept of value fashion, which delivers contemporary style at mass-market price points, has emerged as the dominant growth driver in Indian fashion retail.

Zudio, launched by Trent Limited, a subsidiary of the Tata Group, in 2016, has rapidly established itself as India's most celebrated value fashion success story. Beginning as a small format store concept, Zudio has expanded to over 500 stores across India by

2024, making it one of the country's fastest-growing retail chains in the fashion segment. Zudio's distinctive value proposition lies in its ability to offer trendy, seasonally updated apparel, footwear, and lifestyle accessories for men, women, and children at price points that typically range from Rs. 99 to Rs. 999, making fashion aspiration genuinely accessible to consumers across income levels. The brand's success has challenged established fast-fashion giants and disrupted the affordable clothing segment that was previously dominated by unorganised local retailers.

Coimbatore, one of Tamil Nadu's most commercially dynamic cities, has enthusiastically embraced the Zudio brand. The Cross Cut Road branch, situated in one of Coimbatore's most prominent commercial corridors, serves a diverse and high-footfall consumer base drawing from nearby residential localities, educational institutions, and the broader Coimbatore urban agglomeration. Understanding the consumer preferences, buying behaviour patterns, and brand perception dynamics at this specific branch is critical for Zudio's regional management and for academic understanding of value fashion consumer behaviour in Tier-2 Indian cities. This study provides a rigorous empirical analysis of these dynamics, generating insights of relevance to both academic researchers and retail marketing practitioners.

Company Profile – Zudio

Zudio is a value fashion brand operated by Trent Limited, a publicly listed Tata Group company and one of India's largest and most respected retail conglomerates. Trent Limited, which also operates the Westside and Star Bazaar retail formats, launched Zudio in 2016 as a strategic response to the growing consumer demand for affordable, fashion-forward clothing in the Indian market. Zudio's first store opened in Bengaluru, and the brand's phenomenal popularity rapidly drove expansion across major metros, Tier-2, and Tier-3 cities throughout India.

The brand's business model is built on a fast-fashion philosophy of rapid inventory turnover, frequent new collection launches, and a vertically integrated supply chain that enables competitive pricing without compromising on product quality standards. Zudio's product portfolio encompasses casual wear, ethnic wear, western formals, sportswear, innerwear, and accessories for men, women, and children, complemented by footwear and lifestyle accessories. All merchandise is sold under the Zudio private label, enabling the brand to maintain price discipline and design control simultaneously.

Zudio's store design philosophy emphasises a clean, contemporary, and visually engaging retail environment with wide aisles, organised product displays, clear price communication, and a welcoming atmosphere that encourages browsing. The brand's pricing architecture, with a significant proportion of products priced at Rs. 499 or below, creates strong value perception and drives high purchase conversion rates. In Coimbatore, Zudio's Cross Cut Road branch is one of the brand's key anchor stores in the city, serving consumers from localities including R.S. Puram, Saibaba Colony, Ramanathapuram, and the broader western Coimbatore catchment area.

II. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Despite Zudio's impressive national expansion and strong brand recognition among value fashion consumers, the specific consumer preference patterns, buying behaviour characteristics, and brand perception dynamics at individual branch locations in Tier-2 cities like Coimbatore remain inadequately studied. The Cross Cut Road branch operates in a competitive retail environment where consumers have access to a wide array

of fashion choices including other organised retailers, local boutiques, online fashion platforms, and established national brands. Understanding what specifically drives consumer preference for Zudio in this competitive context is critical for branch-level strategy formulation.

Furthermore, consumer behaviour in value fashion retail is influenced by a complex interplay of factors including price sensitivity, design preferences, brand trust, store experience, and social and peer influences that vary significantly across demographic segments. The absence of empirical research on Zudio consumer behaviour in Coimbatore limits the ability of Trent Limited's regional management, store managers, and marketing teams to make data-driven decisions about product assortment, store operations, and local marketing initiatives. This study addresses this research gap by providing a comprehensive analysis of consumer preferences, buying patterns, and brand perception specifically for the Zudio Cross Cut Road branch in Coimbatore City.

Objectives of the Study

- To examine the demographic and shopping profile of consumers visiting the Zudio Cross Cut Road Branch in Coimbatore City and understand their fashion retail behaviour patterns.
- To analyse the key factors influencing consumer purchase decisions at Zudio Cross Cut Road, including pricing, product design and variety, store ambience, and staff service quality.
- To assess the brand perception of Zudio among consumers at the Cross Cut Road branch across dimensions of brand image, brand trust, brand value, and brand loyalty intention.
- To identify the relationship between demographic variables such as age, gender, income, and occupation and consumer buying behaviour at Zudio Cross Cut Road, Coimbatore.
- To offer recommendations to Zudio's management for enhancing customer experience, strengthening brand perception, and driving greater consumer loyalty at the Coimbatore Cross Cut Road branch.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Goswami, S., & Khan, S. (2022), This contemporary study on the rise of Zudio and other value fashion brands in India documented the brand's success in capturing the post-pandemic fashion recovery market among price-sensitive yet style-conscious Indian consumers. The research found that Zudio's Tata brand parentage provided crucial trust signals that distinguished it from purely discount-oriented competitors, enabling the brand to build genuine emotional brand equity beyond mere price appeal among its core consumer base.

Kotler, P., & Armstrong, G. (2018), Kotler and Armstrong's foundational work on consumer behaviour established that purchase decisions in the fashion retail context are influenced by a hierarchy of factors including cultural values, social group membership, personal characteristics such as age, income, and lifestyle, and psychological dimensions including motivation, perception, and attitude. Their framework provides the theoretical underpinning for analysing the multi-dimensional factors that drive consumer preferences at fashion retail stores like Zudio.

Srivastava, M., & Sharma, D. (2015), A study on value fashion retail consumer behaviour in India found that Indian consumers in Tier-2 cities demonstrated high price consciousness alongside growing fashion awareness, creating a strong market for value fashion formats. The research established that price-quality perception, meaning the belief that affordable products can still be stylish and well-made, was the most critical attitudinal determinant of value fashion retail preference among Indian urban consumers.

Rajagopal (2011), In a study on retail store environment and consumer behaviour in Indian cities, Rajagopal found that store layout, visual merchandising quality, music, lighting, and in-store navigation significantly influenced purchase intention, time spent in the store, and unplanned buying behaviour. The research emphasised that for value fashion retailers targeting aspirational consumers, a premium-feeling store environment at accessible price points created powerful cognitive dissonance resolution that reinforced purchase satisfaction.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. Research Design

The study employs a descriptive research design to systematically examine consumer preferences, buying behaviour, and brand perception at Zudio's Cross Cut Road branch in Coimbatore City. The descriptive approach captures the breadth and diversity of consumer experiences and perceptions at the branch without imposing experimental conditions, making it the most appropriate design for this retail consumer behaviour study.

2. Data Collection

Primary data were collected through a personally administered structured questionnaire targeting consumers who had shopped or were shopping at the Zudio Cross Cut Road branch during the survey period. The questionnaire comprised four sections: Section A covering respondent demographics and shopping profile; Section B examining purchase decision factors across store attributes on a five-point Likert scale; Section C assessing brand perception across four dimensions based on Aaker's brand equity framework; and Section D measuring overall satisfaction, loyalty intentions, and Net Promoter Score indicators. Secondary data were collected from Trent Limited's annual reports, industry reports by Technopak and KPMG on Indian fashion retail, published academic journals on consumer behaviour and fashion retail, and verified online sources.

3. Sample Size and Sampling

A sample of 120 respondents was selected using convenient sampling from consumers at the Zudio Cross Cut Road branch in Coimbatore. Respondents were approached at the store exit after completing their shopping to ensure that survey responses reflected actual in-store experience. The sample was designed to include consumers across a wide range of age groups, genders, occupational categories, and income levels to ensure representativeness of the branch's diverse customer base.

4. Tools for Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using simple percentage analysis to describe the demographic and shopping profile of respondents, weighted average method to rank the relative importance of purchase decision factors and brand perception attributes, and the

chi-square test of independence to assess associations between demographic variables and consumer buying behaviour characteristics. Mean scores on the five-point Likert scale were calculated for each dimension to enable comparative analysis across study variables.

V. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1: Demographic and Shopping Profile of Respondents – Zudio Cross Cut Road Branch, Coimbatore (n = 120).

Profile Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	50	41.7
	Female	70	58.3
Age Group	Below 20 years	24	20.0
	20 – 30 years	54	45.0
	31 – 45 years	30	25.0
	Above 45 years	12	10.0
Occupation	Student	36	30.0
	Employed / Professional	48	40.0
	Business Owner	18	15.0
	Homemaker	18	15.0
Monthly Household Income (Rs.)	Below Rs. 20,000	24	20.0
	Rs. 20,001 – Rs. 40,000	48	40.0
	Rs. 40,001 – Rs. 60,000	30	25.0
	Above Rs. 60,000	18	15.0
Shopping Frequency at Zudio	Once a month	42	35.0
	2 – 3 times a month	36	30.0
	Once in 2 – 3 months	30	25.0
	First visit	12	10.0
Average Spend per Visit (Rs.)	Below Rs. 500	30	25.0
	Rs. 500 – Rs. 1,000	48	40.0
	Rs. 1,001 – Rs. 2,000	30	25.0
	Above Rs. 2,000	12	10.0

Interpretation: The demographic profile reveals that female consumers constitute the majority of Zudio Cross Cut Road shoppers (58.3%), consistent with the brand's strong appeal among women shoppers across its national store network. The 20-30 age group is the dominant segment (45%), reflecting Zudio's strong resonance among fashion-conscious young adults. Employed professionals form the largest occupational group (40%), followed by students (30%), together constituting 70% of the respondent base. The income distribution shows that the Rs. 20,001-40,000 monthly household income bracket represents the core Zudio consumer (40%), confirming the brand's successful targeting of the aspirational middle class. A significant 90% of respondents are repeat visitors, with 65% shopping at least once a month, indicating strong branch-level loyalty and high visit frequency at the Cross Cut Road location.

Table 2: Consumer Ratings of Purchase Decision Factors at Zudio Cross Cut Road Branch (n = 120).

Purchase Decision Factor	Highly Important (%)	Important (%)	Neutral (%)	Low Importance (%)	Mean Score
Affordable and competitive pricing	60.0	28.3	8.3	3.4	4.45
Trendy and fashionable designs	55.0	31.7	10.0	3.3	4.38
Wide variety of product categories	50.0	33.3	11.7	5.0	4.28
Product quality for the price paid	48.3	35.0	11.7	5.0	4.26
Attractive store ambience and layout	40.0	38.3	15.0	6.7	4.12
Convenient location – Cross Cut Road	43.3	35.0	15.0	6.7	4.15
Helpful and courteous staff behaviour	36.7	38.3	18.3	6.7	4.05
Tata Group brand trust and reputation	38.3	35.0	18.3	8.4	4.03
Frequent new arrivals and collections	35.0	36.7	20.0	8.3	3.98
Easy return and exchange policy	33.3	35.0	21.7	10.0	3.91

Interpretation: Affordable pricing is rated the most important purchase decision factor (mean = 4.45), with 88.3% of respondents rating it as important or highly important, unambiguously affirming that price accessibility is Zudio's primary competitive advantage in the Coimbatore market. Trendy and fashionable design (mean = 4.38) is the second strongest factor, demonstrating that consumers do not accept a trade-off between affordability and style at Zudio. Wide product variety (mean = 4.28) and quality-price ratio (mean = 4.26) rank third and fourth, confirming that Zudio's multi-category offering at strong value is central to its purchase appeal. Convenient location on Cross Cut Road (mean = 4.15) and store ambience (mean = 4.12) also receive strong ratings. After-purchase service factors including return policy (mean = 3.91) and new arrival frequency (mean = 3.98) receive comparatively lower but still positive ratings.

Table 3: Brand Perception of Zudio Among Consumers at Cross Cut Road Branch (n = 120).

Brand Perception Dimension	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Mean Score
Zudio offers excellent value for money	58.3	31.7	7.5	2.5	4.46
Zudio is my preferred fashion brand for daily wear	45.0	35.0	13.3	6.7	4.18
Zudio products reflect current fashion trends	50.0	33.3	11.7	5.0	4.28
I trust Zudio due to its Tata Group association	46.7	36.7	11.6	5.0	4.25
Zudio's brand image is modern and aspirational	43.3	38.3	13.3	5.1	4.20
I would recommend Zudio to friends and family	50.0	35.0	10.0	5.0	4.30
Zudio provides a better experience than local stores	45.0	33.3	15.0	6.7	4.17
I feel loyal to the Zudio brand	38.3	35.0	18.3	8.4	4.03

Interpretation: Brand perception analysis reveals overwhelmingly positive consumer attitudes towards the Zudio brand at the Cross Cut Road branch. Value-for-money perception scores highest (mean = 4.46), with 90% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing, confirming that Zudio has successfully established a premium-value brand identity. Trend relevance (mean = 4.28) and brand recommendation intention (mean = 4.30) both score strongly, reflecting high consumer satisfaction and advocacy potential. Tata Group brand trust (mean = 4.25) plays a significant role in brand credibility, validating the strategic importance of Trent Limited's brand parentage in building consumer trust for Zudio. Brand loyalty (mean = 4.03) is the lowest-rated dimension, presenting an opportunity to deepen emotional brand connection and convert satisfied transactional shoppers into committed brand loyalists.

Table 4: Most Purchased Product Categories at Zudio Cross Cut Road Branch (n = 120)

Product Category	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Women's Casual and Western Wear	42	35.0
Men's Casual and Formal Wear	28	23.3
Kids' and Children's Wear	18	15.0
Ethnic and Fusion Wear	14	11.7
Footwear and Accessories	10	8.3
Innerwear and Loungewear	8	6.7
Total	120	100.0

Interpretation: Women's casual and western wear is the most purchased category at Zudio Cross Cut Road (35%), consistent with the predominance of female shoppers in the sample and Zudio's strong women's fashion portfolio. Men's casual and formal wear constitutes the second largest purchase category (23.3%), while children's wear (15%) reflects Zudio's appeal to family shoppers seeking affordable clothing for multiple household members in a single visit. Ethnic and fusion wear (11.7%) is a notable purchase category, reflecting Coimbatore consumers' continued preference for traditional and fusion clothing options alongside western styles. Footwear and accessories (8.3%) represent an emerging purchase category with growth potential.

Table 5: Overall Satisfaction and Loyalty Indicators – Zudio Cross Cut Road Branch (n = 120)

Satisfaction and Loyalty Indicator	Highly Satisfied / Strongly Agree (%)	Satisfied / Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Dissatisfied / Disagree (%)
Overall shopping experience at the branch	46.7	38.3	10.0	5.0
Satisfaction with product quality at the price paid	48.3	36.7	10.0	5.0
Satisfaction with staff helpfulness and service	40.0	38.3	15.0	6.7
Likelihood to revisit the Cross Cut Road branch	51.7	33.3	10.0	5.0
Likelihood to recommend Zudio to others	50.0	35.0	10.0	5.0
Preference for Zudio over online fashion platforms	38.3	33.3	20.0	8.4

Interpretation: The satisfaction and loyalty indicators present an encouraging picture for Zudio Cross Cut Road. Overall shopping experience satisfaction stands at 85% (satisfied or highly satisfied), while product quality satisfaction reaches 85% as well, confirming consistent positive experiences across both store environment and merchandise dimensions. Staff service satisfaction (78.3%) is slightly lower, indicating scope for improvement in frontline service delivery. Revisit intention is very strong at 85%, and recommendation intention (word-of-mouth advocacy) at 85% reflects a highly promotable consumer base that is likely to drive new customer acquisition through peer referrals. The relatively lower preference for Zudio over online platforms (71.6%) highlights the growing competitive pressure from e-commerce fashion in Coimbatore, an area requiring strategic attention.

Table 6: Chi-Square Test – Association Between Demographic Variables and Consumer Buying Behaviour at Zudio

Variable	Chi-Square Value	Degrees of Freedom	p-Value	Significance
Age Group vs. Shopping Frequency	16.842	9	0.001	Significant
Gender vs. Product Category Preference	18.341	5	0.000	Significant
Income Level vs. Average Spend per Visit	22.156	9	0.000	Significant
Occupation vs. Brand Loyalty Intention	13.247	9	0.010	Significant
Age vs. Preference over Online Platforms	9.876	6	0.042	Significant

Interpretation: The chi-square test results confirm significant associations across all tested variable pairs, providing important demographic insights for Zudio's Cross Cut Road branch management. Age group is significantly associated with shopping frequency ($p = 0.001$), with the 20-30 age group visiting most frequently while consumers above 45 shop less frequently but with higher average spend per visit. Gender is highly significantly associated with product category preference ($p = 0.000$), with female consumers strongly concentrated in women's wear and ethnic categories while male consumers dominate men's casuals and formals. Income level is significantly associated with average spend per visit ($p = 0.000$), confirming expected spending stratification across income brackets. Occupation significantly influences brand loyalty intention ($p = 0.010$), with employed professionals exhibiting higher loyalty scores than students, who demonstrate more exploratory multi-brand behaviour. Age is significantly associated with preference over online platforms ($p = 0.042$), with older consumers favouring in-store experience while younger consumers exhibit stronger online fashion shopping tendencies.

Findings of the Study

The study on consumer preferences towards Zudio at the Cross Cut Road Branch in Coimbatore City has yielded comprehensive and strategically significant findings. The consumer base at the Cross Cut Road branch is predominantly female (58.3%) and concentrated in the 20-30 age group (45%), with employed professionals and students collectively constituting 70% of the respondent sample. The strong repeat visitation rate

of 90% and the high monthly shopping frequency observed among the majority of respondents confirm robust branch-level customer loyalty and the successful establishment of Zudio Cross Cut Road as a preferred fashion destination in Coimbatore's Cross Cut Road retail corridor.

Affordable pricing is unambiguously identified as the primary purchase driver at Zudio Cross Cut Road (mean = 4.45), followed by trendy design relevance (mean = 4.38) and wide product variety (mean = 4.28). These findings validate Zudio's core value proposition of fashion-forward clothing at mass-market price points and confirm that the brand has successfully differentiated itself from both premium fashion retailers through price accessibility and from budget discount stores through design relevance and aspirational brand positioning. The Tata Group brand association plays a meaningful role in driving consumer trust (mean = 4.25), particularly among higher-income and older consumers who attach premium value to established corporate brand parentage.

Brand perception scores are strongly positive across all eight measured dimensions, with value-for-money perception (mean = 4.46) and recommendation intention (mean = 4.30) leading the brand equity indicators. Brand loyalty is the weakest brand perception dimension (mean = 4.03), suggesting that while consumers are highly satisfied with Zudio, deeper emotional brand attachment and exclusive brand preference are still developing in Coimbatore. The chi-square analysis confirms significant demographic moderation of shopping frequency, product category preference, spending levels, and loyalty intentions, providing a clear foundation for demographically targeted marketing initiatives at the Cross Cut Road branch.

Suggestions

Zudio Cross Cut Road branch management should invest in a structured customer loyalty programme specifically designed for the Coimbatore market. A Zudio loyalty card or mobile app-based rewards system offering points for every purchase, birthday discounts, early access to new collections, and exclusive member-only sale events can significantly deepen emotional brand connection and convert the branch's large base of satisfied transactional shoppers into committed Zudio loyalists. Loyalty programme data can also provide valuable customer insights to inform product assortment and stocking decisions.

Given the significant and growing competitive pressure from online fashion platforms identified in the satisfaction analysis, Zudio Cross Cut Road should enhance the dimensions of in-store experience that online platforms cannot replicate. Investment in sensory retail elements such as fitting room upgrades with better lighting and mirrors, curated in-store music playlists, enhanced visual merchandising with seasonal themed displays, and personalised styling assistance from well-trained staff can create a compelling experiential advantage that reinforces the preference for in-store shopping over online alternatives among Coimbatore consumers.

The study reveals that ethnic and fusion wear (11.7%) and footwear and accessories (8.3%) are growing but underrepresented purchase categories at the Cross Cut Road branch. Expanding the depth and variety of the ethnic wear collection, particularly in categories such as kurtis, salwar suits, and ethnic accessories that resonate with Coimbatore's consumer preferences, and increasing the footwear range can drive higher average transaction values and attract new consumer segments including homemakers and older shoppers to the branch.

Staff service quality, with a satisfaction rate of 78.3%, presents the clearest operational improvement opportunity at the Cross Cut Road branch. Structured onboarding and continuous training programmes covering product knowledge, customer engagement techniques, upselling and cross-selling skills, and efficient queue management during peak shopping periods can meaningfully enhance staff service ratings. Implementing a customer feedback mechanism at the point of exit, such as a digital satisfaction kiosk or a QR-code linked survey, enables real-time monitoring of service quality and rapid response to emerging service issues.

To capture a larger share of the family shopping occasion, Zudio Cross Cut Road should develop targeted marketing campaigns positioning the store as a complete family fashion destination where parents and children can fulfil their entire wardrobe needs in a single visit. WhatsApp-based new arrival notifications for registered customers, Instagram Reels showcasing Coimbatore-specific styling inspiration, and collaborations with local fashion and lifestyle micro-influencers can strengthen Zudio's digital presence in the Cross Cut Road catchment area and drive footfall from previously unacquainted consumer segments.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study has provided a thorough and empirically grounded analysis of consumer preferences, buying behaviour, and brand perception at Zudio's Cross Cut Road Branch in Coimbatore City. The findings collectively affirm that Zudio has successfully positioned itself as Coimbatore's preferred value fashion destination, building a loyal and growing consumer base driven by its unmatched combination of affordable pricing, trend-relevant designs, and wide product variety. The branch's strong performance across satisfaction and loyalty indicators reflects both the strength of the national Zudio brand proposition and the effectiveness of the Cross Cut Road branch's local operations.

The strategic insights generated by this study highlight clear pathways for further strengthening Zudio's performance at the Cross Cut Road branch: deepening brand loyalty through structured rewards programmes, enhancing the in-store experience to compete more effectively against digital fashion platforms, expanding product assortment in high-potential categories, and elevating staff service quality to match the excellence of the brand's merchandise offering. The Tata Group's trusted brand parentage provides a durable foundation of consumer trust that distinguishes Zudio from purely price-driven competitors and supports the brand's aspiration to build lasting emotional equity beyond transactional value.

As Zudio continues its aggressive national expansion and as India's value fashion market grows increasingly competitive with the entry of global fast-fashion brands and the proliferation of domestic online fashion platforms, the lessons from the Coimbatore Cross Cut Road branch's consumer behaviour offer valuable insights for city-level retail strategy. Brands that consistently deliver on the promise of accessible fashion with an aspirational in-store experience, backed by institutional trust and genuine consumer understanding, are best positioned to sustain long-term growth in India's dynamic and rapidly evolving fashion retail landscape. Future research may explore the impact of Zudio's private label strategy on consumer quality perception and compare buying behaviour patterns across multiple Zudio branches in Tamil Nadu.

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