PURCHASE DECISION STYLES OF ADOLESCENT CONSUMERS IN CHENNAI CITY

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Abstract: This study examines the purchase decision styles of adolescent consumers. Specifically, Sproles and Kendall's Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) was used to determine the various decision-making styles. Eight styles were taken for the study. Questionnaire was prepared in a statement format using Likert scale. The questionnaires were tested among 250 adolescents, aged 13 to 17 years, 50 from each age group, to assess the reliability and validity of the measurement. The validation is done through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). The factors like quality consciousness, brand consciousness, novelty /fashion consciousness, recreational /shopping, price consciousness, impulsiveness/ careless, confused by over choice and habitual/ brand loyal which were found to be unique to the adolescent group .

Keywords: purchase decision styles, adolescents decision styles, consumer decision making, CSI, adolescents

I. INTRODUCTION

The last two decades has an unprecedented growth in the economy of India. An ever increasing plethora of consumer products are being offered, many of which are new, and technologically complicated. This is, in addition to, an overwhelmingly large and varied numbers of shopping choices being made available to the consumers. The sole breadwinner of the house was the husband and this suggests why in many homes of those years, the husband made most of the family purchase-decision. Today the trend has changed drastically, because both spouses and even their adolescent family members now contribute to the family financial income for the household. This trend has contributed to the shift in the family purchase decision-making process. Every member of the family now influences in one way or the other the family's purchase decision-making of the household. Moreover, with the advent of modern technology, children can be exposed to global market where they see varieties of durable goods that they believe can enhance their family status or satisfy their needs.

Adolescence is a transitional stage of physical and psychological development that generally occurs during the period from puberty to legal adulthood. Adolescence is usually associated with the teenage years, but its physical, psychological or cultural expressions may begin earlier and end later. Adolescence marks a rapid change in one's role within a family. Young children tend to assert themselves forcefully, but are unable to demonstrate much influence over family decisions until early adolescence, when they are increasingly viewed by parents as equals.

Sproles (1985) and Sproles and Kendall (1986) have been instrumental in developing and testing a Consumer Style Inventory (CSI), that could point a new direction in decision-making research. With the rapid growth in adolescents' population, the needs to further understand their influence in family decision becomes more significant. When compared to the adult decision making there is a different decision making style opted by the adolescent age group. Teens are often ignored by marketers as a consumer segment because their disadvantages in terms of monetary power, thus making them relatively unimportant segment to focus on. Failure to understand this segment is a mistake which can cost a big loss for the marketers because these group of consumers are their future customers. Past research has contributed greatly on understanding children behaviour however most of the studies on children influence revolved around children socialization which concern more on where children learn their consumer traits rather than how children influence the actual purchase. Reverse influence on the other hand try to investigate how children influence parents' decision. However understanding adolescents can become a challenging task because unlike their younger counterpart, adolescents are more creative in their persuasion attempt thus making them more influential in family purchase decision. Once they reached the age of adolescent, they have developed a sound knowledge on marketplace concept such as branding and pricing. The ability to utilize the information and abilities to manipulate parents to yield to their request often made adolescents more influential in family decision.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Foxman et al., (1988) observed adolescent-parent interaction in decision-making and reported that besides direct requests, adolescents are likely to use bargaining (money deals, other deals, and reasoning) and persuasion (opinions, begging) as strategies to influence decision outcomes.
2. Canabal, M.E. (2002) investigated the decision making styles of South Indian Consumers among the sample of 173 students and identified five decision making styles, Brand Conscious Style, High Quality Conscious / Perfectionist Style, Confused by over choice Style, Impulsive / Brand Indifferent Style, and Recreational Shopper Style.

3. Piron (2002) also pointed out that children who rely on pre-established preferences based more on premium incentives offered on a purchase than the nutritional features of a cereal at the time of influence on cereal purchases
4. Kwan, Yeung, Au (2004) They reported that the six decision-making styles (recreational and hedonistic consciousness, perfectionism consciousness, confused by over choice, habitual and brand loyalty, price and value consciousness, and brand and fashion consciousness) were found in the Mainland.
5. Nelson and Jenny (2005) found that strong organized family significantly makes more joint buying decision on vacation (specialty product) than weak organized family. They also established that modern family make significantly more joint purchase decision on vacation than traditional family.
6. Mohanram and Mahavi (2007) evaluated Teenagers are influenced by updated information of the product like price, technology and peer compulsion and sales talk of the dealers. They employ two types of strategies to convince their parents - emotional and logical. They give top priority to quality, durability, utility and long term benefits. They also look at colour, popularity, physical appearance and brand value. However for promotional mix, they are driven by dealers' sales initiative, cultural environment stimuli, sales promotion and advertisement. The emotional teenagers give least importance to sales promotion like offers and schemes whereas teenagers who approach logically consider offer and schemes as important.
7. Sijun, et al. (2007) noted that no particular attitude or set of attitudes uniquely determines for all products whether a mother would be influenced by her child or not. Family-oriented mothers or women with close knit families were more susceptible to children's influence. Mothers co-viewing TV programs along with their children were more likely to yield to children's influencing attempts for products advertised.
8. Patel (2008) conducted survey of 128 mall shoppers and found six decision making styles: price consciousness, quality consciousness, recreational, confused by overchoice, novelty conscious and variety seeking.
9. Hamilton (2009) discussed family purchase decisions among low income consumers in the UK focusing on conflict avoidance. He found that there may be gender and spousal changes at the BOP, the nature and impact of these changes might not be the same as in western markets. The rate at which these changes have happened at the BOP is likely to be different from that of the western markets, thereby creating a research gap which requires further investigation.
10. Bae Sungwon, Miller John (2009) examined specific shopping styles involving athletic apparel and to analyze specific shopping pattern differences between male and female college consumers in the United States. ANOVA and F-test was used to analyze the data. The results indicated that male and female college-aged consumers had different decision-making styles in relation to fashion, impulse, and brand consciousness. There were, however, no statistically significant differences between college classifications or interactions between gender and college classifications.

III. GAPS IN THE RESEARCH

Undeniably, teenagers and adolescents are often involved in family decision-making. Researching the adolescent group would be a challenge in any country, but particularly, it is difficult in India. This life stage is characterized by change and an age when they are most uncertain about identity. This is the age when they are transiting from the innocence of childhood to the problems of adulthood from dependence to independence. Though they are influenced by group behaviors, their aim is to progress towards individualism. Therefore in this paper we tried to expose the styles of adolescent consumers which was more complex, challenging and exciting.

IV. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To study the antecedents of purchase decision styles of adolescent consumers.
- To validate the factors influencing purchase decision styles of adolescent consumers.

V. HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

- There is no relationship between quality consciousness and purchase decision of adolescent consumers.
- There is no relationship between brand consciousness and purchase decision of adolescent consumers.
- There is no relationship between novelty /fashion consciousness and purchase decision of adolescent consumers.
- There is no relationship between recreational /shopping and purchase decision of adolescent consumers.
- There is no relationship between price consciousness and purchase decision of adolescent consumers.
- There is no relationship between impulsiveness/ careless and purchase decision of adolescent consumers.
- There is no relationship between confused by over choice and purchase decision of adolescent consumers.
- There is no relationship between habitual/ brand loyal and purchase decision of adolescent consumers.

VI. RESEARCH METHODOOLOGY

Researcher used convenience sampling method to collect the responses from the consumer of Chennai city. The researcher visited private and government schools in Chennai to issue the questionnaire among adolescent age group. The questionnaire was developed using the original items from the Sproles and Kendall Consumer Styles Inventory (1986). This questionnaire was

tested among 250 adolescents aged 13 to 17 years, 50 from each age group, to assess the reliability and validity of the measurement scales. Out of the 250 questionnaires administered, only 231 were usable for further analysis due to missing values or patterned marking of answers. Thus, the data obtained was first subjected to reliability analysis to ascertain the degree to which the measures were free from error and yielded consistent results. In order to measure the purchase decision styles of adolescent consumers, the psychological response are obtained by Likert five point scale which is designed as 1.Strongly disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Neutral, 4. Agree, 5. Strongly Agree.

VII. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

In this section researcher indented to find the reliability and validity of purchase decision factors namely quality consciousness, brand consciousness, novelty /fashion consciousness, recreational /shopping, price consciousness, impulsiveness/ careless, confused by over choice and habitual/ brand loyal. The following table indicates the reliability of all the 8 factors at present:

S.no	Factors	No of Statement	Cronbach Alpha
1	Quality Consciousness	9	0.787
2	Brand Consciousness	9	0.825
3	Novelty /Fashion Consciousness	9	0.900
4	Recreational /Shopping	9	0.779
5	Price Consciousness	9	0.801
6	Impulsiveness/ Careless	9	0.822
7	Confused By Over Choice	9	0.829
8	Habitual/ Brand Loyal	9	0.764

From the above table it can be inferred that all the Cronbach Alpha values are > 0.75. It is the above benchmark value generally stated in the commerce research as well as large sample size. It shows that all the 8 factors are highly reliable and researcher can go ahead for validation.

The validation is done through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). In this analysis researcher computes the mean average scores of all the 8 factors namely quality consciousness, brand consciousness, novelty/fashion consciousness, recreational/shopping, price consciousness, impulsiveness/ careless, confused by over choice and habitual/ brand loyal.

In this analysis these 8 factors are called observed factors and purchase decision of adolescent consumers are considered as unobserved factors. In this Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) the researcher wants to validate that the above mentioned 8 factors are the components of purchase decision of adolescent consumers. The confirmation can be done through following fit indices:

S. no	Fit Indices	Values	Benchmark Values
1	Chi-square value	2.742	--
2	T-value	0.477	>.05
3	Comparative fit index	0.971	>.9
4	Goodness of fit index	0.966	>.9
5	Normal fit index	0.952	>.9
6	Root mean square error of approximation	0.07	Less than or equal to .08

From the above table it is found that the Chi-square value and probability values are exactly satisfied the required benchmark values of > .05 it is further verified and confirmed through the comparative fit index, goodness of fit index and normal fit index. These values are greater than the bench mark value of > .9. In the third stage it is further confirmed through root mean square error of approximation. The expected value is less than or equal to .08. So all the fit indices simultaneously satisfying the required bench mark value of validity.

VIII. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The study concludes that the purchase decision of adolescent consumers is not a unique phenomenon but it is the combination of quality consciousness of adolescent consumers as well as their brand consciousness and attachment towards specific brands

attractive to them. The liberalization and globalization of Indian economy motivated the adolescent consumers to have novelty in their psychology and attractiveness towards fashion for the present trend. It is also believed that adolescent consumers are not able to draw the line of distinction between recreational approach and the shopping behavior. They strongly agree the shopping and recreation are always together to influence their purchase decision. The present day adolescent consumers are more priced conscious and also look for least price products with high quality. It is also found that they disagreed its approach in their purchase decision that strongly agreed for availability of many choices of products which confused them severely. There is moderate availability for brand loyalty but there are not habitually purchasing the products with particular brand.

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