

CONSUMER DECISION MAKING STYLES IN PURCHASE OF LOCAL AND IMPORTED GOODS: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON WOLAITA SODO MERKATO MARKET,

Samuel Batisa (MBA)
Department of Management
College of Business and Economics
Wolaita Sodo University.

Addis Alemayehu (MBA)
Department of Management
College of Business and Economics
Wolaita Sodo University.

Abstract

This paper aims at investigating consumer decision making styles in purchase of local and imported goods in Wolaita Sodo Merkato market. The objectives of this study include; identifying decision making style of consumers in purchase of local and imported goods. A consumer style inventory of Sporless and Kendall (1986) was adopted for this study. A sample size of 265 questionnaire was distributed using time location sampling resulted in viable responses. The confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) disconfirmed the original eight model factors of Sporless and Kendall (1986), a new nine factor model (Store loyal, Brand loyal consumer, Confused by over choice, Impulsive/careless, Recreational, Information confusion, Brand conscious 'prestigious consumers' and quality, price value conscious) that best describe consumer decision making style is obtained using exploratory factor analysis (EFA). ANOVA was used to test variation in consumer decision making style across buyers of imported and foreign shoes revealing significant variation in four factors (Brand and fashion conscious, prestigious consumers, hedonistic and impulsive /careless). The independent mean sample t-test for gender variation also indicated significant variation in two factors (Crowded by over choice and Brand locality).

Key terms: Consumer Decision Making style (CDMS), Consumer Style Inventory (CSI), Imported goods, Domestic goods.

Background of the study

Consumer's purchase decision basically pertains to the choice of products; this choice often involves confusion as there is a different set of products that intends to meet the same or nearly the same needs (Kotler and Keller, 2012). This bewilderment is even higher in today's globalized environment since consumers are now confronted with a wide range of choice for each product type (Bauer *et al*, 2006; Durvasula *et al*, 1993; Zaichkowsky, 1991). The Globalized trend of the today's world is helping consumers to have ready access to various products manufactured elsewhere. The expansion in economic integration and international trade linkage which is intern accelerated by economic policy liberalizations held with advancement in communication and transportation technology is facilitating the easy flow of products around the world. Wisma (2008) in his book Global Business also indicated that consumers are now available with wide set of products manufactured elsewhere. Though, this trend is particularly high in developed country a market, the same trend is happening to consumers of the developing countries. AbuBakar (2011) also indicated that; the varieties of imported goods existing in developing country are providing consumers with more choice.

Ethiopia is one of the developing countries where consumers are presented with a wide set of imported and locally manufactured products. Ethiopian economy is improving; the overall GDP has grown at an average 11% per annum since 2003/04 and projected to grow by higher amount in the GTP period (Minister of Finance and Economic Development, 2012). The favorable investment policies aligned with the globalization trend of the world is facilitating the industrialization drive of the country. Major emphasis is given to the expansion of infrastructures and industrial development (MoFED, 2010). As a result, more and more manufacturers that produce wide set of products resulting in a better assortment of local consumer needs are emerging beside the export focus. The data from MoFED (2010) indicates that the industry sector has achieved an average growth rate of 10% in the year 2009/2010. Besides, wide set of products is imported from different countries mainly China (Economy Watch, 2010). In fact, the majority of the country's consumption is reliant on imports. The total import bill was reached 8.3 billion dollar, during 2009/2010, of which 30.4% were on consumer goods (MoFED, 2010).

As such, Ethiopian market is now characterized by a variety of product sets made in domestically and/or imported from abroad. This trend is even expected to be high in the future given the country's response to the Globalization trend of the world. The partnership and negotiations made to improve the regional trade partnership, economic integrations¹ and the WTO accession process are also expected to enhance the competition and range of product choice in Ethiopian industries (Sonobeet *et al.*, 2012; MoFED, 2012).

The country's abundant natural resource along with cheap work force is driving the goods revolution in Ethiopia (The Economist, 2012; Tegenge and Tilahun, 2009). Different industry has been growing because of a number of new entrants and expansions of existing enterprises. Sonobeet *et al.* (2007,) claims that more than 1000 enterprises that produce and sales lot of products are believed to exist in Wolaita Sodo markets. This expansion of the industry cluster is improving the growth of the sector by producing various quality products. Samuel (2008) also states that Ethiopian industry produces goods that are globally competitive in terms of both quality and price. Besides, wide range of products is imported from abroad providing the consumers with more alternatives while making the competitions more complicated. Various researchers (e. g. Tegenge, 2007; Sutton and Kellow, 2010; Tegenge and Tilahun 2009; Endalew, 2011) also state owned sector of Ethiopia faces strong competition from products imported from China and elsewhere. As such, the Ethiopian market is characterized by various sets of imported and local produced products that are available to meet consumer needs.

It is true that, the existence of such an assortment of products in the market helps the consumers to better meet their needs by providing ample of product choice. Nonetheless, it may also make their decision making more complex. Sporless and Kendall (1986) also indicated that the availability of a wide range of alternatives makes consumer decision making more difficult by creating confusions and information overload. Mitchell and Bates (1998) in turn stated that consumers are confronted with complexity and they may adopt particular decision-making styles and certain purchasing strategies as the way to interact with the marketplace and to cope with the complexity confronting them. Thus, investigating the decision making styles which they may adopt will give a competitive advantage for marketers. Sporless and Kendall (1986) also states that identifying the basic characteristics of their decision making style is fundamental to consumer interest studies. The analysis of consumer decision making styles could provide rich information and help marketers to understand more about consumers' motivation in their choice of products (Cheng *et al.*, 2004). It helps the marketers to get competitive advantage by efficiently tailoring their offerings and positioning to the consumers. Makkizadeh and Azizi (2012) also state that characterizing shoppers in this way allows marketers to differentiate their offerings both at the store and product level. Such characterization could also be used as a tool for market segmentation. Therefore, it is quite essential to investigate Ethiopian consumer decision making style in purchase of local and foreign goods. It help marketers, retailers, manufacturers, importers and the like to have a better understanding and deeper insights about their consumers purchase behavior. Such understanding enables them to effectively and efficiently position their offerings. Moreover, it also helps retailers, manufacturers and marketers of related products as consumers of shoes product are probably consumer of other products.

¹Ethiopia has made regional trade partnerships (Inter-Governmental Authority on Development, san'aforum, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the COMESA-East African Development Community Tripartite). It has also Economic partnership Agreement(EPA) with European Union.

Accordingly, this paper investigates consumer decision making style in purchase of local and imported products in Sodo Merkato market², Wolaita.

Statement of the problem

Characterizing consumer decision making style has been given considerable attention in consumer studies. Several studies have been made by different researchers in order to describe consumer decision making styles (e.g. Hiuet *et al*, 2001; Ivan *et al*, 2010; Kwan *et al*, 2004; Li *et al*, 2010; Makkizadeh and Azizi, 2012; Mitchell and Bates, 1998; Mokhlis and Salleh, 2009; Sporless and Kendall, 1986; Walsh *et al*, 2001). Nevertheless, the literature review indicates that studies related to consumer decision making style are mainly conducted in USA, European countries and some Asian countries particularly China, India, Malaysia and Iran. While such studies have contributed substantially to the literature on consumer decision making styles, their findings may not address decision making styles of consumers in developing countries like Ethiopia. Several researchers (e.g. Durvasula *et al*, 1993; Leo *et al*, 2005; Steven *et al*, 1996) also states that some consumer decision-making styles differ due to differences in culture, economic capability, legal environments and people's lifestyles.

Consumer confusion of product choice is becoming more of a problem in emerging markets of today's globalizing world due to increasing global consumption tendencies and easy flow of products (Lianxi, 2005). Abubaker (2011) study also indicated that in today's era of globalizing world, the variety of imported goods existing in developing country are providing consumers with more choice while making competition more rigorous. Ethiopian market; in particular the footwear sector, is characterized by the availability of a wide range of domestic and imported brands. Such availability of a wide range of domestic and international brands is making consumer decision making style more complex while making the competition severe. Several researchers (e.g. Endallew, 2011; Tegenge, 2007; Samuel, 2008; Sutton and Kellow, 2010) also stated that Ethiopian shoe manufacturers are facing strong competition from traders with shoes imported from China and elsewhere. Thus, it is quite essential to study Ethiopian consumer's decision making style in purchasing local and imported goods since such characterization will give competitive advantage to manufacturers, marketers and other stakeholders³ in the area.

Irrespective of the need, it must be stressed that, to the best of researcher's knowledge, no research has been done to describe the consumer's decision making styles in Ethiopia. Furthermore, most of the studies on this and related issues conducted elsewhere (e.g. Kwan *et al*, 2004; Hafstrom *et al*, 1992; Sporless and Kendal, 1986; Mishra, 2010; Ghodeswar, 1998; Mokhlis and Salleh, 2009; Makkizadeh and Azizi, 2012) were conducted only on certain group of consumers, mainly students. Likewise, some others have given a little emphasis to the influence of product type and tried to describe consumer decision making style without considering specific product. Bauer *et al* (2006, p. 351) also stated that CDMs are not 'product-independent'.

Therefore, this research fills the identified gaps by extending research on consumer decision making style into Ethiopian context; by investigating consumer decision making style in purchase of local and foreign products in Sodo market. Furthermore, it discovers the difference of decision making styles between foreign and domestic product purchasers to identify factors that lead consumers demand for local (domestic) versus non local brands. Besides, this study considers all consumers buying goods in Sodomerkato market.

Objective of the study

The general objective of this study is to investigate the consumer decision making style in purchase of foreign and local products in Wolaita Sodo Merkato market.

Literature

Consumer decision making is claimed by many disciplines each approaching with different approaches. As clearly stated in the above paragraphs each approach has tried to describe certain dimensions of consumer decision making style. All approaches suggested existence of different mental orientations in making purchase decisions (Zaichkowsky, 1991). Jacoby (1976) stated that customers may rely on certain typical characteristics. Sporless and Kandell (1986) conceptualized basic characteristics of consumer decision making style and developed Consumer style Inventory (CSI) to empirically measure them.

²Merkato is the largest Regional open-air marketplace located in the Merkato district of Wolaita Sodo, Ethiopia.

³ Other Stake holders include all other parties that actively participate in manufacturing, importing purchasing and selling of foreign and domestic shoes.

Consumer decision making style is defined as “a mental orientation characterizing a consumer’s approach to making choices”(Sproles and Kendall, 1986, p. 268). It has cognitive and affective characteristics. Considering the fact there was no clear instrument for measuring consumer characteristic spores developed an instrument to measure consumer decision making style in 1985. The instrument was rated on a 5 point Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. A model with nine hypothetical styles was developed based on the literatures. Yet, the result from factor analysis confirm only six styles which were named as ;(1) perfectionism, those who prefer products with greater performance. (2) Value conscious, those who tend to buy products that yield best value for the money they pay in exchange. (3) Brand Conscious, are those who measure product quality with its price and prefer to buy prestigious brand. (4) Novelty-Fad-Fashion Consciousness, those who are early adaptors (5) Shopping-Avoider-Time saver- Sacrifices, who dislike shopping. (6) Confused, support-seeking decision makers, who can’t easily pick the products they need. Later on in 1986, Sporless and Kendall redeveloped and tested the original instrument in order to develop the model that will help consumer interested professionals in addition to meeting marketing needs of consumers. They developed the model on the following basic criteria;

Contains mental characteristics of consumer’s decision making that are among the most important “real world” consumer characteristics. The characteristics should be as clear as possible identifying as a small number of basic and independent consumer decision making characteristics. The method should measure how consumers rate for each characteristic. The method should include measures important to consumer- interest professionals in their varied roles as consumer educator, researcher, and financial consultant (Sporless and Kendall, 1986, p. 269).

They formulated eight basic characteristics by evaluating various characteristics of consumer decision making they listed from different literatures. The eight characteristics are used as a base for consumer style inventory (CSI) which as an instrument for measuring consumer decision making style (Sporless and Kendall, 1986). Then they administered the CSI consisting 40 questions to 501 students in the USA to test the instrument. The result from the constrained factor analysis with principal component analysis confirmed the eight characteristics. 46 % of the rotation was explained in factor rotation with Eigenvalue greater than 1. The eight factors have also been tested for reliability with cronbach alpha. The confirmed eight factors of Sporles and Kendall (1986) are discussed here under.

Factor 1: Perfectionist, high quality conscious consumer characteristic.

Items in this factor measure consumers’ preference for best quality products. Consumers who are higher in this characteristic make a purchase after careful evaluation of products in terms of quality.

Factor 2: Brand conscious, price equals quality’ consumer characteristic.

This factor measures consumers favor for expensive products. Consumers who score high in this characteristic are prestigious consumers they evaluate the quality of the product with the price charged on it.

Factor 3: Novelty-fashion conscious consumer characteristics

Consumers with high score in this factor are stylish, they are early adopters. They also enjoy the change.

Factor4: Recreational and hedonistic shopping conscious characteristic

This factor measures how well the consumers like shopping. Consumers with high score in this factor enjoys shopping and they take it as a fun.

Factor5: Price conscious, “value for money”

Consumers with high score in this factor are conscious about the money they are paying in exchange for the value that can be obtained from the product. They want balance in the money they pay (price of the product) and the value it delivers.

Factor 6: impulsive, careless consumer

This factor refers to unplanned purchase. Consumer with high score in this factor do not normally think of buying them rather careless make purchase. They are not concerned with best quality or balance of price with product value.

Factor7: confused by over the choice

This factor refers to how difficult it is for the consumer to pick the products or make a purchase decision? Consumers with high score in this factor find it difficult to make choice of products they want and often relied on friends or someone else’s suggestions.

Factor 8: Habitual and Brand loyal

This factor major's consumer likely of sticking with certain brands. Consumers with high score in this factor most likely have the brands they favor and found it difficult to switch to other brands.

Clearly, Sporless and Kendall (1986) conceptualization of consumer decision making style and their development of CSI for empirical measurement has a great contribution in studying consumer decision making style due to several reasons. Among other reasons, it is relatively the holistic measurement as it constitutes all earliest approaches stated as economic, psychological, and cognitive approach. Obviously, a consumer will not always rational or irrational. Equally, a consumer cannot always tend to follow complex process. Each of them might describe certain elements of consumer decision making. Accordingly, a holistic model and standard instrument like CSI is demanded.

Besides, the fact that this model of Sporless and Kendall (1986) is designed with consideration of four highly valuable basic criteria's; stated as, real-world representation, clarity in measuring small and independent characteristics, how well it measures how consumers' ratings for each characteristic and its importance for consumer-interest professionals enhance its contributions for real world application and theoretical consumptions.

Nevertheless, Sporless and Kendall (1986) model is not silver bullet fall every situation it has some limitations that demanded further investigations most of which are stated by the researchers themselves. First, this study done one USA high school students and hence, it requires further investigation on general consumers and consumers with different countries. The CSI might also vary from product to product and hence requires investigation on specific products. Besides, discrepancy in gender and the effect of other personal characteristics is also left for future studies. Consequently, several studies have been made in different countries using this model either to test its validity or for measuring consumers' decision making style in different contexts. The subsequent discussion will present a review of numerous studies done on consumer decision making using CSI.

3. Methodology

A quantitative, descriptive and cross sectional survey design was used in this study. The cross-sectional survey design was used since the data were collected from consumers at a point in time. This design is suitable to find out the prevalence of the situation or the phenomena as it stands at the time of the study (Kumar 2005). The target population that was included in this study is only those consumers who make purchases of (Imported and/or domestic) product in the SodoMerkato market from April 20, 2018 to May 20, 2018. Both primary and secondary sources of data were employed. The sample size of the study was 265, but the survey was considering infinite population given the fact that; the spread of the population is not clearly known. A Probabilistic sampling which is time location sampling were employed in study because it enables the researcher to randomly choose the respondents of this study by overcoming difficulties sample frame construction. Self-administered questionnaires were used as data collection methods. Data presentations were conducted through the use of descriptive and inferential statistics tools were applied specially ANOVA and exploratory factor analysis (EFA).

4. Data Analysis, Conclusion and Recommendation

Structural Equation Modeling (Confirmatory Factor Analysis)

Amos program version 4.0 is used to undertake the structural equation modeling- confirmatory factor analysis to test whether the 8 factor model fits the data. The result indicates that, the Chi-square for goodness of fit is 2014.174 with 665 degrees of freedom (*DF*), which is significant at $P < 0.001$ (the probability 0.00 (meaning $P < 0.001$), represents unluckily event occurring less than one in 1000. Field (2009) also suggested that if the value of chi square is more than double the *dfs* then the solution is not admissible. In this case, Chi-square is 2014.174 with 665 *dfs* so the omens are not good. Yet, due to the fact that the X^2 test is very sensitive to sample size and the probability of rejecting any model increases as the sample size increases even when model minimally false (Bentler, 1990); a number of fit indices were used to assess the overall fit of the confirmatory factor analysis model in this study which is summarized in the table 4.2 below.

Turning to the next group of fit tests presented in the below table, one can understand the labels RMR, GFI and AGFI. The root mean square residual (RMR) represents the average discrepancy between the sample observed and the hypothesized correlation matrixes. Its value range between 0 and 1; in a well-fitting model, this value will be very small less than 0.05, the 0.21 value in the above table means that the model explains the correlations with an average error of 21% which is above the 5% critical value, indicating the model doesn't well fit.

Table 4.1 Goodness of Fit Indices of Sproles and Kendall's 8-factored Consumer Decision-making Style Model

Fit indicators	Critical Value	Results
Goodness of fit index (GFI)	≥ 0.9	0.717
Adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI)	≥ 0.9	0.684
Root mean square residual (RMR)	≤ 0.05	0.21
Comparative fit index (CFI)	≥ 0.9	0.279
Normed Fit index (NFI)	≥ 0.9	0.249

Source: computed from own survey, 2018

To sum up, the above table depicts that; Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI), Root Mean Square Residual (RMR), Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and NFI were all fall out of their critical values indicating that CFA disconfirmed the eight model decision making styles of Sporless and Kendal (1986). This indicates that the current study doesn't support the original 8 model proposed by Sporless and Kendall (1986).

Exploratory factor Analysis (EFA)

The result from confirmatory Analysis indicates that the original 8 model is not confirmed by the present data. This resulted in the end of confirmatory factor analysis; the analysis is then framed as an exploratory factor analysis. A principal component factor analysis is used to explore a new set of variables in consumer decision making style that better describe the current data collected from consumers of imported and domestic products in SodoMerkato market. The same method was followed by initial Sporless and Kendall (1986) and other subsequent researches (see among others, Baoku *et al*, 2010; Bauer *et al*, 2006; Li *et al*, 2010).

Initially, all question items were factor analyzed, using principal component analysis with varimax rotation. The result indicates that there are twelve factors that best describe the decision making styles of the sample respondents with total variance explained 57.415. KMO value statistics for all items is .756 which is above the bare minimum 0.5. The KMO for each item are also above .5 revealing that the sample size is adequate. The Bartlett's measure test for this data is a highly significant p value is 0.00 ($P < 0.001$), and therefore the factor analysis is appropriate. Nevertheless, the determinant was 0.00 as indicated in the correlation matrix which was less than the necessary value of 0.0001 indicating the problem of singularity and multi Co linearity as suggested by (Field, 2009). Correlation and significance matrix is scanned to overcome this problem and clean the data by identifying items with majority of significance value greater than 0.05 and correlation coefficient 0.9 and above. The scan resulted in identifying question item 4, 5, 8, 11, 12, 24 and 37 having majority (about 21) insignificant correlation. There were no items with correlation coefficient above 0.9. The items identified are excluded from the analysis, resulting in 31 items remaining for analysis.

Factor analysis with principal component analysis was made with the remaining 31 items and in this time, the nine-factor solution was obtained. The results of the factor analysis are presented in table 4.2. The KMO and Bartlett's test requirements are both satisfactory. The KMO for all items is also above the bare minimum 0.5 as indicated in the diagonal of anti-image. The determinant is also .002 which is above 0.0001.

Table 4.2. KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.783
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1.961E3
	Df	465
	Sig.	.000

Source: computed from own survey, 2018

Table 4.3. Eigen value & Total Variance Explain Resulted from the Analysis

Comp onent	Initial Eigen values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumul ative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumul ative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumul ative %
1	5.077	16.376	16.376	5.077	16.376	16.376	2.917	9.409	9.409
2	2.512	8.102	24.478	2.512	8.102	24.478	2.799	9.029	18.438
3	1.581	5.101	29.579	1.581	5.101	29.579	1.990	6.421	24.859
4	1.503	4.848	34.428	1.503	4.848	34.428	1.759	5.676	30.534
5	1.363	4.397	38.825	1.363	4.397	38.825	1.618	5.221	35.755
6	1.302	4.201	43.026	1.302	4.201	43.026	1.541	4.970	40.725
7	1.274	4.111	47.137	1.274	4.111	47.137	1.511	4.875	45.600
8	1.090	3.516	50.653	1.090	3.516	50.653	1.308	4.218	49.818
9	1.033	3.333	53.986	1.033	3.333	53.986	1.292	4.168	53.986

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

The above table indicates that, the nine factor solution can explain up to 53.98 percent of the respondents decision making style, which is greater than the Sporless and Kendall(1986) result with eight factor solutions.

As such, items are grouped into appropriate factors based on their correlation. All question items are rearranged and grouped according to the factor they explain. The new nine dimension factor is obtained. Factor loadings less than 0.4 are suppressed for interpretation purpose as suggested by Stevens' (1992, in Fied , 2009). The factors are labeled based on the items they contain and based on the theoretical concepts. An effort has done to name in line with Sporless and Kendall (1986) and other subsequent studies when they imply similar decision making styles.

Table. 4.3. Rotated Component Matrixes (only items with item loading 0.4 or above are shown⁴)

	Component								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
v2	.753								
v9	.640								
v3	.632								
v1	.426								
v27									
v18									
v10									
v26		.659							
v33		.610							
v20		.563							
v16		.511							
v30		.506							
v34		.503							
v31	.467	.497							
v28									
v38			.708						
v32			.584						
v25			.462						

v17	.413		.414						
v22				.747					
v21				.637					
v36					.722				
v19					.474				
v13									
v29						.746			
v35						.538			
v7							-.712		
v14							.528		
v15								.788	
v6									
v23									.679
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. a. Rotation converged in 14 iterations.									

Conclusion

The result from confirmatory factor analysis reveals that the original eight model consumer decision making style suggested by Sporless and Kendall (1986) is not supported in the present study. The less empirical support of Sporless and Kendall (1986) model from Ethiopian context support (Steven *et al*, 1996) finding which states eight factor model of Sporless and Kendal (1986) decision making style is less supported in developing country. An Exploratory Factor Analysis is conducted following the non-confirmation of the model to find the factors that best fits the sample respondents.

Recommendations

The finding of this research has many implications for local manufacturers, marketers' retailers, and other players in the area. Some of the recommendations include; Retailers and marketers need to be trained and help consumers in providing reliable and timely information to help consumers overcome *information complication*. They better know the details of the product they are selling and able to present consumers with detail information regarding the features of the product like materials it made from, standard of the product and intended advantages that the product is made for. Providing price tag may also help to overcome information complication as it reduce price bargain. It is also advisable for local manufacturers to produce products of different standard and sale them at different price; they need to produce goods of high standard and sale at the higher price. This will help them to attract *brand conscious and prestigious consumers*. Making alliance with well -known international manufacturer will also help the local manufacturer to compete over the brand with foreign products.

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