
BRAND CONSCIOUSNESS AMONG YOUTH - PERCEPTION, PEER PRESSURE AND THOUGHT PROCESSES

Shyam Sundar Kapri

Department of School of Management Studies,
Graphic Era Hill University, Dehradun, Uttarakhand, India 248002

ABSTRACT

Teenagers' influence on family spending has grown in recent decades due to changes in technology, increasing access to consumer goods, and the rise of the nuclear family. Teenagers nowadays are quite savvy, so they can handle the uncertainty that comes with making a variety of choices. They have self-assurance, power, and freedom. In this research, we examine how adolescents' brand awareness might be influenced by a number of different circumstances. The influence of these demographic factors on young adults' decision-making is also explored.

As the market for branded goods continues to expand, an understanding of this idea is crucial. Marketers, corporate policymakers, and advertising will all find the findings useful as they seek to push items to teens in the most efficient way possible.

Key words: Buying Behaviour, Teenagers, Brand Consciousness, Purchase Behaviour, Buying Pattern

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1. Introduction

'Brand' is likely a loanword from the Old Norse verb 'Brandr,' which meaning 'to burn. It was common practice to use a hot iron to permanently tattoo cattle with a unique identifier. A brand is an intangible asset in today's marketing world. It's anything that represents the product or firm in some way, whether it a name, a symbol, or both. The goal of a brand is to set one provider's wares apart from those of others in the market. The total of a product's intangibles, including but not limited to its name, packaging, price, history, reputation, and advertising.

A brand might be a name, sign, sign, color scheme, or slogan. The American Marketing Association (AMA), a well-respected and widely-connected marketing group, defines a brand as "a name, term, layout, symbol, or another feature that identifies a seller's product or service in some way from those of other sellers."

Currently, brands may be found everywhere. Whether it's the economy, society, culture, or even religion, we're constantly bombarded with the namesakes of many goods and services. A brand's worth or status is largely determined by the claims it makes about its products or services. A brand does more than just sell a product or service; it also fosters a sense of familiarity and trust between the buyer and the seller. Some of the most expensive Indian brands are TATA, Reliance, and Airtel.

2. Parameters Defining the Brand – Historical Perspective

Kapferer argues that a company's "brand name" may tell a lot about its values and goals. It's a great way to set yourself apart from the competition and have your product seen in the right light by the people you want to buy it. According to Kotler and Armstrong, "brands embody customers' thoughts and sentiments about a product and its performance - all that the product or service means to them."

In spite of offering the same product at the same price and quality, one company's sales may be much higher than those of the others. The cause might be the brand's intangible worth, such as its reputation. TATA is India's most well-known brand, and it has been for almost 150 years. Mc Donald's iconic yellow and red logo is instantly recognizable across the world. Comparatively, the crimson label on a bottle of the soft drink behemoth Coco Cola stands out in a crowd.

Because of widespread industrialization, many once-manufactured in small-scale workshops are now made in large-scale factories. In order to expand the concept of "brand" to that of trademark, companies stamp mass-produced goods with their emblems or insignia before sending them out the door. Signatures of prominent artists such as Leonardo da Vinci and Pablo Picasso on their works may be seen as an early form of branding.

In England, artisans such as bakers, goldsmiths, silversmiths, and others began stamping their wares with their name or mark as early as the 1200s, mostly to guarantee accurate weights and measures. Printing and papermaking guilds, along with others, employed distinctive symbols to distinguish their products and members throughout the Middle Ages.

Branding, whether of products or ideas, seems to have existed long before the birth of Christ, according to available historical records. Although brand and branding have only lately emerged as key research foci in the field of marketing, they have been around for almost as long as human civilization itself. There is evidence that potter's markings were used on ceramics as early as 1300 BC in China, Greece, Rome, and India. Cattle and other animals were branded as early as 2000 B.C. Branding products seems to have begun in Babylonia about 3000 BC, according to archaeological evidence. Similar to the rationale behind branding in contemporary marketing. In ancient times, it served as a means of establishing trust, guaranteeing product quality, proving ownership, imposing accountability on manufacturers, setting products apart, serving as a means of identifying, and fostering social

bonds. Marks and names were employed by Mesopotamian and Greek cultures to identify or signify their gifts, which were often liquids like wine or ointments, as well as inanimate objects like clay vessels or metals.

There are two main types of brands: experiential and psychological. The total of all of a consumer's encounters with and mental associations with the brand is its experiential component. The brand image is the mental representation of a product that consumers generate based on their knowledge and experiences with it. All of the intangibles that consumers bring to their associations with a product or service are included in the psychological dimensions. When thinking about convenient meals, Nestlé's Maggi 2 Minutes Noodle immediately comes to mind.

3. Teenagers and Brand Consciousness

When consumers easily remember and identify a brand, we say that brand awareness has been achieved. Consumers' minds automatically make mental connections between a product and its name, logo, jingle, etc. A customer's understanding of the product's category is greatly aided by the customer's familiarity with the brand. It also provides objective information on the standards of the offered goods and services. For instance, when you hear "soft drink," either Pepsi or Coke immediately comes to mind.

Adolescence is referred to as "teenage." Teenagers are at an age when they think little but have an active intellect and a desire to pack all the world's delights into the 1.5 kilograms of flesh at the top, the part of the body that the sane and well-ordered population refers to as the "brain."

As impressionable young adults, teenagers are particularly susceptible to the effects of their daily environments. This is because it is in people's "nature to compete with their surroundings, reflecting some remote part of the Darwinian notion of the fittest" to survive.

Teenagers' growing awareness of the importance of brands is shaped by a number of variables. Here are a few examples of relevant ones:

(i) Peer Pressure: This is the primary source of stress for adolescent boys and girls when it comes to fitting in with their friends. Given that adolescence marks the pinnacle of the individual's preoccupation with his or her own importance, it follows that a teen's developing brain cannot afford to fall behind that of peers. They are becoming more brand aware because they desire the social satisfaction of being a "talked" member of their group.

(ii) Media Rush: In today's tech-obsessed world, the media can spell any spell imaginable. It's a trap for impressionable young minds. More than any other group, teenagers' brains are able to adapt to the pressure to increase ratings quickly. As a result, they foster an atmosphere of competitive self-evaluation in which young people are conditioned to develop a strong identification with certain brands.

(iii) Social Networking: The rise of the Internet has elevated the media to new heights. With the proliferation of digital media, consumers can access their favorite brands at the click of a mouse, creating fierce rivalry among producers who all use the same tried-and-true methods to win over the hearts and minds of today's youth.

4. Parenthood Misconceptions

We see it as an important contributor to the rising adolescent brand awareness. Parental instillation of the value of things above the value of names or brands is a thing of the past, along with other traditional cultural beliefs. Many modern parents, having seen and experienced this brand awareness firsthand, are ill-equipped to give their children a feeling of community. There is also the pressure from parents and families for their teens to be brand aware so that they may present themselves as more affluent than they really are.

Although there are benefits to being familiar with a brand, there are also drawbacks. The young, and especially the teens, become easy victim in a market where the purchasing and selling of things is no longer restricted to the wants, but to a hunger of earning the social recognition of brand users. Teenagers don't think about whether or not an item will really serve a purpose before making a purchase.

We, as company managers in a rapidly evolving society, know what to do. Let's put a stop to this inane pattern. Next time a young person in your life is debating whether or not to purchase a product from a well-known brand, you may give them peace of mind by explaining why you think it would be useful to them. Tell them to choose labels that are a reflection of who they are as people, rather than splurging on a useless item only to impress their friends.

5. Being Brand Conscious as an Upcoming Fashion Trend

People's choices in brands reveal much about their personalities, values, and careers. It's easy to see why today's youth are so brand-conscious: everyone wants to fit in with the latest fashions and make a name for themselves. The Indian marketplaces have seen significant transformations, creating a challenging environment for even the largest of businesses. Competition has pushed prices down and expanded availability. People's fascination with well-known brands has evolved into a genuine desire to acquire and use these products. Big companies' efforts to build their brands and attract new consumers have led to a rise in brand recognition among young adults. Additional factors that contribute to teens' increased awareness of brands include advertising, sales, EMI, internet shopping, and discounts. Teenagers believe that by purchasing name-brand goods, they would attract the admiration of their peers, boost their social status, and establish themselves as the group's fashion leaders.

6. Challenges to Clothing Industry in the 21st Century

The textile and garment industry is relocating to this area due to a number of factors, including global currency swings, the size of the prospective market, and the availability of cheap labor. Located in the center of Asia, we are privy to the potential and difficulties of producing high-quality goods to satisfy the standards of emerging markets.

On May 27, 2011, SGS Hong Kong Ltd. hosted a conference to address the prospects and threats facing the fashion and textile industries. It offered the textile sector advice on how to adapt to fluctuating market circumstances, take advantage of opportunities, overcome competition, deal with novel issues, and so on.

Key topics including Asian regulatory changes, the global garment supply chain network, and procurement strategy were discussed by invited experts at the event. The conference was well received by its attendees, who represented the retail, supply chain, purchasing, and merchandising industries. We anticipate further partnerships with our fashion and textile sector partners who will provide fresh ideas (Rödingsmarkt, 2011).

The goal of this study is to determine how well-informed teens are about the various clothing brands on the market. It has been observed in the existing literature that adolescents prefer well-established brands. The study's findings will have significant consequences for understanding the elements that shape adolescents' attitudes toward branded items.

7. Review of Literature

US-brand clothes was more appealing than unbranded local products because of their higher perceived quality and emotional worth. Teens' fashion preferences are influenced by their sense of identity and the desire to stand out (Kim et al., 2009). Emotional value is correlated with both brand awareness and the perception of a US brand's quality. A consumer's desire to buy a U.S.-made brand is adversely affected by their impression of the product's quality, but their impression of the brand's emotional worth is favourably affected (Lee, 2008).

There is a wealth of scholarly resources accessible on the issue of brand awareness. As a result, the literature has been analyzed to identify the gap in knowledge.

People who care about their appearance often purchase name-brand clothing. Uniqueness is more important than cost for this demographic (Hassan, Hurrah, & Lanja, 2014). Teens' brand awareness, which in turn influenced their reasons for using luxury goods and their loyalty to certain brands, was significantly impacted by their level of public self-consciousness and self-esteem (Giovannini, Xu, & Thomas, 2014). The family budget helps teens have a sober and practical outlook on life. Brand name clothing was also purchased because of the reliability and high quality it provides (Santisi, Platania, & Hichy, 2014).

Men and women think about brands in different ways. adolescent girls, according to Mohtar and Abbas (2014), have more cultural, sartorial, libertarian, and perplexing over-choice influences than adolescent boys. Teenage boys, on the other hand, are impulsive buyers, media consumers, and brand loyalists. Teenage girls prefer to shop for western ready-to-wear items in physical stores rather than online (Bhanot, 2015).

Because men and women have diverse preferences, businesses should market to them separately. Marketers can better tailor their campaigns thanks to segmentation. Once kids learn to recognize a brand, they often demand to have it purchased for them by their parents (Salim & Praven, 2010).

By comparison, men have a higher level of brand awareness, fashion consciousness, self-confidence, and demand (Bakewell, Mitchell, & Rothwell, 2006). Women in Taiwan employed name-brand merchandise as part of their personal branding strategies. Young women in Taiwan place a high value on their appearance because of its cultural significance (Wu & Chen, 2015).

Agra, Mathura, Shikohabad, and Firozabad, all outside of the metropolitan region, provided the information. The data was collected using a random sample from inside the quota sampling by age group of teens. Students in both higher education and secondary education were given questionnaires to fill out for the research. In all, 269 completed surveys were returned. Information was gathered during the months of December 2016 and January 2017. The students were given an explanation of the research's goals so that genuine replies could be gathered from them. They were given instructions on how to complete the survey during a classroom presentation.

Students at schools and universities were individually given questionnaires to fill out while they were in class. Questions on age, gender, and degree of education were included in the study instrument. Part B of the survey included 26 items inquiring into respondents' knowledge of the brand, their preferred characteristics in branded goods, the motivations behind their purchases, the social and performance benefits of wearing name-brand clothing, and the social standing signified by wearing name-brand clothes.

8. Future Scope

The textile and clothing sector in India is second only to the information technology sector (Bhanot, 2015). The Indian economy and market are evolving with the rest of the globe. Customers in India are increasingly conforming to Western living norms. This inclination for certain brands may be attributed to familiarity with those companies' global prominence, as well as to self-interest, awareness, and convenience.

India has 356 million young people between the ages of 10 and 24, making it the country with the youngest population according to the United Nations' 2014 report. Therefore, it is crucial to analyze the impact of brand awareness on teens in a nation with a large young population.

The parameters for switching brands include understanding the brand, status symbols, product quality, characteristics connected to non-acceptance for non-branded products, and price, as well as the influence of reference groups, qualities for final purchase, society-related attributes, performance-related attributes, and pricing. Branded clothing choosing is also heavily influenced by demographics. Therefore, the chi-square test was used to analyze the impact of demographics. According to the findings, there is no correlation between age and gender and the purchase of name-brand clothing.

Competition in the Indian market has intensified dramatically because of the arrival of global companies. Almost every popular product line is now widely available in India. Given India's large youth population, understanding how to pique their interest in designer threads is crucial. As such, the current article is crucial for marketers as it sheds light on what considerations are most crucial when designing campaigns and products for Indian adolescents.

9. Conclusion

The study does not fully account for all relevant factors. To begin, there is the matter of the sample itself. Due to the limited size of the current sample, we cannot draw any firm conclusions from these findings. The second is the consideration of other factors. It might be

helpful to survey some youngsters on their feelings about branded clothing by using some of them as examples.

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