

# Brand Consciousness among Teenagers in India: An Empirical Study

Pallavi\*, Rishi Raj Sharma\*\*

## Abstract

Adoption of new technology, availability of resources, and nuclear family structure have increased the importance of teenagers in the family purchase behaviour. Teenagers nowadays are very wise, so they are capable of taking the risk associated with different decisions. They are confident, strong, and independent. The present paper covers the identification of various factors that are affecting the brand consciousness among the teenagers. Further, the effect of the demographic variables on teenagers' decision-making process is discussed.

In this study, a sample of approximately 269 school and college students has been collected from the non-metro region such as Mathura, Agra, Shikohabad, and Firozabad in Uttar Pradesh. The data has been put in the SPSS 21.0 version for the calculation purpose. The data analysis techniques such as factor analysis and chi square analysis have been applied to meet the above-mentioned objective. The concept is very important to study as branded products' demand is increasing day by day resulting in a growing market. The results will be helpful to the marketers, to the policy makers of the corporate houses, and to advertisers in order to promote their products in an effective manner so as to reach the maximum number of teenagers.

**Keywords:** Buying Behaviour, Teenagers, Brand Consciousness, Purchase Behaviour, Buying Pattern

## Introduction

Teenage means adolescence at its outset. It is the time teenagers have little thoughts but active mind and the dream to compress the whole worldly pleasures in a one and half thousand gram of meat piece at the top which the sane and sorted elements calls 'brain'! This is the age when the teens are vulnerable to the everyday activities in their surroundings and they take high impression of even the trivial and menial things. This is just because of

the very nature of the 'consciousness of competing with their environment that reflects some distant element of the Darwinian theory of the fittest' survival. There are many factors that design the minds of these teenagers to become more and more brand conscious. Some of the pertinent ones are:

**Peer Pressure:** This is the biggest factor where a teenager is in a pressure of competing with their peers. Since this is the age when the ego or self-centrism is at the peak and when the teenage mind cannot afford to lag behind from a teenage of his/ her age. Also, they want to be a 'discussed' person in their group, thus they becomes more and more brand conscious to achieve this pleasure.

**Media Rush:** This is the techno centric era where the media is spelling unprecedented magic. And so, it's obvious to wrap the teenage mind in their trap. The rush for gaining the TRPs becomes possible with the teenage minds more than any other social entity. Thus they create a competition kind of environment where the teenage minds are made to become brand conscious.

**Social Networking:** With the advent of Internet, the status of media has gained new heights. Now the brands are no more limited to the 'idiot box' but is available on a mere tip of fingers and thus the great competition among the manufacturers has risen where they sell their product by applying their old but most promising trick of gaining the teenage minds in their favour.

**Failing Parenthood:** We think it as one of vital factors of the growing teenage brand consciousness. The age old acceptable cultural values have become a matter of the past where the parents used to instill the worth of things and not the worth of names or brand in their kid's minds. Nowadays, a lot of parents are those who themselves have witnessed and experienced this brand consciousness

\* Assistant Professor, GLA University, Mathura, Uttar Pradesh, India. Email: pallavi.dogra.123@gmail.com

\*\* Associate Professor, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, Punjab, India

in their life and thus fail to instill a sense of belonging in their offspring. Also the sense of 'showing rich' is another factor where the parents and families themselves make their teenagers to become brand conscious so to successfully pretend their family as higher than others in their social set up.

This brand consciousness has a downside too besides some positive elements. It just creates a market kind of thing where the selling and buying of products is no more limited to the needs, but to a greed of gaining the social recognition of brand users, where the youth in general and the teenagers in particular are the easy prey. Instead of focusing on the utility of the things purchased, teenagers are merely concerned about selecting hip and happening brand names.

Being managers of business in a fast developing society, we have the solution. We can change this silly trend. The next time a teenager is making a decision to buy a product of a well-known brand, we just have to let him/ her assured that he/ she is aware of its utility before selecting it. Let them know to pick the brands that best represent their personality, and not to buy something that's just not good more to show off in front of their peers only.

### Why Youth are Brand Conscious is Upcoming Fashion Trend?

The kinds of brands people select define their societal, personal, and professional approach and status. The reason behind the brand consciousness of teenagers can be cited as everyone wants to look trendy, stylish and have a big name. The Indian markets have changed a lot; big brands are also facing a lot of trouble in terms of the stiff competition. Due to hard competition, they are now offering a wide range of prices and options. Earlier, people used to fascinate about the big brands, now they can buy and use them. The brand name set by big players are helping them to gain more and more customers which leads to the brand **consciousness** among the teenagers. The other reasons can be brand promotion, attractive offers and discounts, lucrative schemes, EMI, online shopping etc. which make the teenagers more brand **consciousness**. Teenagers think while selecting the branded products that they can attain the attention of their friends, become popular, and be style icon in their groups.

### Challenges and Opportunities of Clothing Industry in 21<sup>st</sup> Century

The 21st century brings Asia to the forefront. The worldwide currency fluctuations, the potentially huge market, the production of low labour costs – all contribute to the shift of the textile and clothing industry to this region. Staying in the heart of Asia, we see the opportunities and challenges to produce the right quality of products in order to meet the requirement set by different new markets.

A seminar had been organised by the SGS Hong Kong Ltd. on May 27, 2011 which discussed the challenges and opportunities of fashion and textile industry. It provided suggestions to textile industry how to face with the changing market conditions, handle opportunities, fight with the competition, tackle new challenges etc.

Experts in the area were invited to speak in the seminar and share with the audience information on key issues about Asian regulatory updates, global apparel supply chain network and procurement strategy. Participants including industry leaders from retailers, suppliers, buyers, and merchandisers gave positive feedback about the seminar. We are looking forward for future collaborations with our affiliates in the fashion and textile industry that bring new and innovative insights (Rödingsmarkt, 2011).

The purpose of the present research paper is to know the awareness level of the teenagers regarding the brand available in the apparel industry. According to the available literature, it has been seen that teenagers select those brands which are already known to them. The research will provide the important implications about the factors which impact the brand consciousness of the teenagers towards the branded products.

### Review of Literature

A lot of literature is available on the topic of the brand consciousness. Therefore, the previous studies have been reviewed in order to find the research gap.

Branded clothes are loved by people who want to look attractive and different. For these people, price doesn't make a big difference, uniqueness is the main concern for them (Hassan, Hurrah, & Lanja, 2014). There was a significant impact of public self-consciousness and self-

esteem on teenagers brand consciousness, which in turn affected their luxury utilisation motivations and brand loyalty (Giovannini, Xu, & Thomas, 2014). In case of teenagers, realistic and sober attitude is given by the family spending account. Also branded clothes were bought in order to maintain the social needs through performance of a selected product and quality (Santisi, Platania, & Hichy, 2014).

Perceived quality and emotional value positively influenced US brand clothing interest, as compared with non-branded local brands. Self-concept and the need for uniqueness affect the clothing interests of teenagers (Kim et al., 2009). As compared with the perceived quality of a US brand, brand consciousness is positively related to emotional value. Perceived quality negatively influences purchase intention while emotional value positively influences purchase intention toward a US brand (Lee, 2008).

Brand consciousness is different for males and females. Mohtar and Abbas (2014) discussed that female teenager is more influenced by social culture, fashion choices, freedom and confused over-choice as compared to male. Whereas male teenager are spontaneous customer, use the media sources while selecting the products and are more brand conscious. Female teenagers generally buy the western ready to wear clothes from the shopping mall rather than through e-commerce (Bhanot, 2015).

The companies need to segment their products according to gender as the choices are different. Segmentation helps marketers to design the marketing programmes. When the children start recognising the products they insist their parents to buy the products for them (Salim & Praven, 2010). Taking the case of males and females, the males are more fashion consciousness, more aware, confident, demanding resulting into the more brand consciousness (Bakewell, Mitchell and Rothwell, 2006). In Taiwan, for the selected sample women used branded products to create an identity. In the Taiwan's culture, there is importance of face which contributes to create identity among the young women in Taiwan (Wu & Chen, 2015).

Luxury fashion brands should focus on the low price range to inspire the consumers. Teenagers discuss with their friends, family, about the various brands which they purchased. If branded products will be in every price range, this will increase the brand turnover inviting more loyal customers (Giovannini *et al.*, 2014).

The persons using the branded products are perceived differently by the society. They are perceived as arrogant, lavish, ineffective, and superficial. A person without much branded goods is perceived as relaxed, sociable, and down-to-earth (Chan, 2006). Young adults using branded products are considered to be opinion leaders and fashion oriented, who usually have high budget so as to buy the branded products (Hsu and Chang, 2008). Higher income younger immigrants purchase high-priced branded products for status purpose. There is no impact of the education, culture, origin on their high priced branded products (Kwak & Sojka, 2010).

## Objectives of Research

- (1) To identify the various factors contributing for consciousness for branded products.
- (2) To assess level of significance difference among teenagers for branded clothes through demographic variables (age and gender).

## Research Methodology

### Sample and Data Collection

In this paper, a sample size of 300 teenagers was taken. Teenagers selected for the study were in the age group of 13-19 years (Parker, Charles, & Schaefer, 2004). The brand consciousness for 26 items was measured using a five point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1), with middle point as neutral (3). The scale reliability analysis shows the value of alpha value to be .78 which is an acceptable value and proves that present questionnaire is reliable to measure the desired objective of the study.

The data was collected from the non-metro areas which consisted Agra, Mathura, Shikohabad, and Firozabad. Random sampling within the quota sampling by the age of the teenagers was used to collect data. For the collection of data collection, questionnaires were distributed to college as well as school students. 269 fully filled questionnaires were received in return. The data was collected from December, 2016-January, 2017. The students were demonstrated the purpose of the study so that fair and true responses can be collected from them. In their classroom a presentation was given on how to fill the questionnaire. The questionnaires were personally distributed to the school and college students during their college and school timings. The research instrument consisted of questions relating to the demographics such

as age, gender, and education level. The part B of the questionnaire was consisted of 26 statements asking the respondents about the brand consciousness, personality liked attributes, attributes for personal purchase, society related attributes, performance related attributes, status symbol towards the branded apparels etc.

## Data Analysis & Discussion

### Demographic Analysis

The first part of the questionnaire consists of the questions relating to demographics of the respondents. In this present paper, respondents taken for the study were in the age group of 13-19 years. The teenager belonging to the age group of 13-16 years were 43.46% and those

who were in age group of 17-19 years were 56.5%. The females were 46.6% while male respondents constituted 53.4% of the sample. 54% were school students & 46% were college students.

### Factor Analysis

The collected data from the questionnaire was put into statistical software SPSS 21.0 version. The tests such as validity and reliability had been applied. The value for the cronbach alpha came to .857 and KMO came to be .803 that indicates adequacy of sample. After that, factor analysis was applied on the collected dataset. The important factors which were identified are listed in Table 1.

**Table 1: Summarised Results of Factor Analysis**

Sr. No.	Factor-Wise Dimensions	Factors Loading	Eigen Value	% of variance explained	Cumulative % of variance explained
<b>F1</b>	<b>Personally Liked Attributes</b>				
A	Recognition	.756	6.423	17.842	17.842
B	Culture	.710			
C	Conscious	.588			
D	Look Different	.522			
E	Impress	.519			
<b>F2</b>	<b>Influence by Reference Group</b>				
A	Media Rush	.780	2.441	6.781	24.624
B	Friends	.757			
C	Family	.752			
D	Environment	.506			
<b>F3</b>	<b>Attributes for Final Purchase</b>				
A	Fashion	.709	2.083	5.787	30.410
B	Prestige	.608			
C	Brand Name	.552			
D	Attract you	.502			
<b>F4</b>	<b>Society Related Attributes</b>				
A	Ambassador	.634	1.727	4.798	35.209
B	Society	.557			
C	Compare	.556			
D	Society	.548			
<b>F5</b>	<b>Performance Related Attributes</b>				
A	Foreign Brand	.689	1.537	4.269	39.477
B	Ignorance of High Price	.669			
C	Get value	.567			
D	Self confidence	.511			

F6		Parameter for Brand Switching			
A	Better Offer	.686	1.447	4.018	43.496
B	Purchasing Decision	.546			
C	Well known	.519			
D	Latest Trend	.512			
F7		Status Symbol			
A	Latest Fashion	.729	1.300	3.610	47.106
B	Social Networking	.85			
F8		Attribute for Knowing the Brand			
A	Awareness	.664	1.206	3.350	50.456
B	Comfort	.535			
C	Upper section	.535			
F9		Product Quality			
A	Durability	.672	1.096	3.046	53.501
B	Popularity	.507			
C	Teenager Perception	.592			
D	Quality	.558			
F10		Attributes related to Non- acceptance for Non- branded			
A	Importance	.660	1.051	2.919	56.421
B	New Style	.551			
F11		Price			
A	Price	.729	1.007	2.798	59.219

### Chi-Square Analysis

For the present study, only two demographic variables have been opted. The reason is the subject of the paper, where the teenagers had been selected. The income, marital status, smoking habits, spending habits, occupation etc. have no effect on the teenagers (Rajput, 2015; Kesharwani, 2012, Khanna, 2013, Bhanot, 2015).

#### Hypothesis 1

**H0:** There is no significant impact of gender on branded apparel purchased.

**H1:** There is a significant impact of gender on branded apparel purchased.

**Table 2: Chi square Results**

Value	df		Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.180a	1	0.359
Likelihood Ratio	1.921	1	0.276
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.21	1	0.425
No. of Valid Cases	269		

Since the sig value is less than .05 we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis. Therefore, from the analysis it can be concluded that there is no impact of gender on brand consciousness. The love for branded clothes is not affected by the gender. So, the study confirms that branded apparels choice is not affected by the gender.

#### Hypothesis 2

**H0:** There is no significant impact of age of teenager on branded apparel purchased.

**H1:** There is a significant impact of age of teenager on branded apparel purchased.

**Table 3: Chi square Results**

Value	df		Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.280a	1	0.412
Likelihood Ratio	1.789	1	0.376
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.87	1	0.321
N of Valid Cases	269		

Since the sig value is less than .05 we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis. Therefore, from the analysis it can be concluded that there is no impact of age of teenagers on brand consciousness. The love for branded clothes is not affected by the age of teenagers. So, the study confirms that branded apparels choice is not affected by the age of teenagers.

## Conclusion

In India, the apparel and textile industry is second after IT industry (Bhanot, 2015). The Indian markets are changing with the dynamic world. Indian customers are also adopting the global trends in their lifestyle. The reason for such taste and preference is awareness about the world wide famous brands, consciousness, self-interest, and easy availability. More passionate for branded apparels is the youth of the country. According to United Nations Report 2014, with 356 million 10-24 year-olds, India has the world's largest youth population. Therefore, in such a country where the population of youth is very high, it is important to study the effect of brand consciousness on teenagers.

The study selected 26 items upon which the brand consciousness of the teenagers was measured. The 26 items were classified under 11 important factors with the data analytical technique factor analysis. The outcome of factor analysis has identified the 11 different factors. Personally liked attributes are the most important factor as it explains the 17.842 % variance, followed by other factors viz. influence by reference group, attributes for final purchase, society related attributes, performance related attributes, parameter for brand switching, status symbol, attribute for knowing the brand, product quality, attributes related to non- acceptance for non- branded, and price.

The demographics also have strong effect on the selection parameter for the branded clothes. Therefore, in order to measure the effect of demographic chi square test was applied. The result stated that gender and age have zero effect on the selection of the branded clothes.

## Managerial Implications

Due to the coming of the international brands in the Indian market, the competition has increased to remarkable

extent. Today you can get any brand in the Indian market. Also, as the India has high percentage of the young population, there is strong need to know how to attract the youngsters towards the branded clothes.

Therefore, the present paper is very important for the marketers as it provides the insights about what are the important factors that marketers should keep in mind whenever they are targeting and serving to the Indian teenagers. Therefore, the study is very important from the marketing point of view.

## Scope for Future Research

In the study some parameters are not touched which still need more research. The first is the sample size. As the present sample is small, the results cannot be generalised and applied everywhere. The second aspect is inclusion and study of more parameters. Some of the examples of the branded clothes should be taken to know the preference of teenagers towards them.

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