

# Consumer Decision Making Style - Male Versus Female: A Study on Chattogram City, Bangladesh

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## Abstract

Genders play an important role to influence an individual's buying behavior activities all the time and it acts almost the same in any other region or cultures. This study has been conducted to identify whether there is any differences exist or not according to males' or females' decision making style. The questionnaire has been set by using Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) approaches ( $\alpha = 0.895$ ) to collect data from 133 respondents of Chattogram city, Bangladesh. The CSI has been used to identify consumer decision making style with its eight factors and 37 items. By analyzing the data it has been found that there is no significant difference in between male and female regarding their decision making style. As this study is limited to Chattogram city only, so the study has a broader scope to do further research by accommodating with more cities or countries that are culturally diversified.

**Keywords:** male, female, decision making style, consumer behavior, CSI

## 1. Introduction

In marketing research, consumer behavior is always a vital issue. It is impossible to do business without consumer and no benefit can be made. In this manner, numerous advertisers and analysts attempt to determine what factors affect consumers to purchase items or services. Solomon (2009) states that gender distinctiveness is a major factor of a consumer's self-conception. Gender can be defined as sexual identity. Both men and women also think they are not at odds with their cultures in the manner they act (speak) or devour (dress). But if the time changes, the culture changes, these gender roles will change by time over. In any case, it is very uncertain that the different gender will be consumed differently. Thus, many vendors have carried out a great deal of research on gender in order to see whether men and women are going to consume the same thing or difference. As per Zawawi, Wong, Busu, and Hamzah (2004) said that gender consists of standards between men and women that strengthen them both.

The social research regarding this topic has been done severally in various countries and regions. In these examinations, a few qualities observed to be comparative while others observed to be diverse at different nations "(Hafstrom Chae, & Chung, 1992; Durvasula, Lysonski & Andrews, 1993; Lysonski, Durvasula, & Zotos, 1996; Fan & Xiao, 1998; Hiu, Siu, Wang, & Chang 2001; Walsh, Hennig-Thurau, Wayne-Mitchell, & Wiedmann 2001; Tai, 2005)". Consumer styles for commodities and goods were investigated and conclude that styles can be defined as consumer properties in relation to commodity goods cannot be obtained (Bauer, Sauer, & Beeker, 2002).

From the above discussion, it has been observed that many research has been conducted over male and female but after technology improvement with the social network, it is now a new issue to identify the decision-making style of today's generation. As today's generation is far far different from earlier, so it would be a new finding for the company to know their decision-making style and on the basis of that, they could rearrange their offers to attract both male and female to make their purchase decisions.

## 2. Literature Review

Consumer behavior usually defined as choosing, utilizing and discarding items of an individual or organizational products and services (Blyth, 2013). Genders play an important role, which incorporates purchase behavior, in the human habit (Fan & Miao, 2012; Hasan, 2010; Seock & Bailey, 2008). Three approaches have been used to

identify the decision making styles of a consumer. First one is psychological graphic, the second one is based on the typology of a consumer, and lastly through consumer features. First approach to psychological / lifestyle concern the decision-making process regarding the psychological characteristics and lifestyle of the consumer (Lastovic, 1974; Darden & Ashton, 1974). Second approach places consumers according to their shopping styles in general categories (Westbrook & Black, 1985; Moschis, 1976). The third approach focuses on consumers specific rational and emotional guidelines related to decision making.

Sproles (1983) first identified the principal features and intellectual attributes of consumer decision-making. Later then Kendall and Sproles (1986) have developed an inventory of consumer styles that included 40 items. On the basis of CSI, the eight mental characteristics have been identified and analyzed to know the consumer decision-making style. They are perfectionism, brand awareness, recreation awareness, fashion awareness, price awareness, careless, confused by choice, habitual and brand loyal (Sproles, 1983b; Sproles & Sproles, 1990). Men and women are interested in various products according to Mitchell and Walsh (2004), and their preferring and getting those products are not the same.

Men are likely to be specific, looking only for the object they wish (Meyers-Levy, 1989) while women were generally comprehensive, looking for plenty information and place exertion toward the item they need (Park, Yoon & Lee, 2009). Male buying processes are only a mission and searching for information is part and only a small amount of information is required to complete the purchasing process. Females are essentially unique in relation to men. They considered buying process as a delight and the search for information look as a joy, along these lines they are they are ready to search for information as much as they can (Park et al. cited 2009). Women like to buy items by novel-style that is funny and appealing while men want to buy is a popular and costly branded item (Yang & Wu, 2007). Consumer surveys are considered as assessment options for consumer purchase decisions. The decision-making process may be affected by consumer reviews, as already mentioned. It has also demonstrated that it affects women more than men (Bae & Lee, 2011; Fan & Miao, 2012).

The present youthful guys are increasingly associated with shopping (Dholokia, 1999) and once the products that are considered for females are now produced as male products such as cosmetics, skin care, and fashion journals. Another study indicates men's view regarding shopping process as no pleasant and unwanted (Dholokia 1999), take less time and usually don't take accountability for the purchase of clothing and food than women (Cox and Dittmar 1995; Miller 1998), have less interest and are less sensitive to their friends' opinions, make quick and carefree decision-making (Shoaf, Scattone, Maureen, and Durairaj, 1995), make faster / reckless choices more frequently (Areni and Kiecker, 1993 ; Prince, 1993) and are more autonomous, more trustworthy, more internally driven, more competitive and ready to take hazards with cash in particular. This brings us to the idea that male buyer will have distinct decision-making characteristics from women. Even though customers have a comparatively coherent style of decision making (Sproles and Kendall, 1996), there has been a little study into the gender variations addressed in this article.

From the above discussion and research, the hypothesis for this research was determined:

*Null Hypothesis: Ho: Consumers' decision-making styles are different in case of male and female.*

Thus the main objective of this study is to identify either males' or females' decision-making styles are dissimilar or not.

### **3. Methodology**

This study is based on a survey. The survey was conducted over 150 customers though finally 133 (75 male and 58 female) was selected based on their fulfillment of data on a questionnaire. The survey was from a different location in Chattogram city, Bangladesh through random sampling to analyze their decision making style for both male and female. Marketing graduate student was responsible to do the survey and they have collected data in the month of January and February 2019 by visiting the customers personally.

Out of 40 items from eight factors of CSI has been surveyed over 12 respondents as for pilot survey and finally, 37 items have been selected based on their validity. The questionnaire was based on five points Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

### 3.1 Reliability Analysis

Table 1. Reliability analysis

<b>Reliability Statistics</b>	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.895	37

Pavot, Diener, Colvin, and Sandvik (1991) state that, when the value of Cronbach's Alpha is equal to 0.7 or over, the scale is measured as reliable. In this study, the Cronbach Alpha coefficient was 0.895 that indicate the internal consistency and reliability of the scale with our sample.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1 Demographic Analysis

Table 2. Demographic description of the sample

Demographic Variables	Frequency	Percentage	Demographic Variables	Frequency	Percentage
	f	%		f	%
<b>Age</b>			<b>Education</b>		
Less than 30	45	33.8	HSC	12	9.0
30-45	78	58.6	Bachelor's degree	37	27.8
46-61	10	7.5	Master's degree	84	63.2
<b>Occupation</b>			<b>Gender</b>		
Service holder	75	56.4	Male	75	56.4
Business man	14	10.5	Female	58	43.6
House wife	30	22.6			
Student	14	10.5	Total	133	100.0

From the demographic analysis, we see that the most of the respondents were from the age group 30-45 years (58.9%), service holder (56.4%) and master's degree holders (63.2%).

### 4.2 T-Test

Table 3. T-Test

Items	Means		Std. Deviation		2-tailed Prob
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
<b>Factor-1: Brand Consciousness</b>					
Shopping is not a pleasant activity	1.65	1.59	.762	.773	.618
Shopping is very enjoyable to me	2.92	3.14	1.160	1.146	.282
I enjoy shopping just for fun	2.36	2.45	.981	1.029	.615
Shopping in different stores is a waste of time	2.99	3.36	1.097	1.195	.062
I spend little time deciding on the products and brands I buy	2.17	2.45	.891	1.172	.127
<b>Factor-2 : Perfectionism</b>					
In general, I usually try to buy the best overall	2.33	2.40	1.004	1.042	.724

quality					
I make a special effort to choose the very best quality products	1.68	1.78	.701	.796	.462
I have very high standards and expectations for the products I buy	2.11	2.24	.967	.961	.426
Getting good quality is very important to me	2.63	2.88	1.112	1.186	.209
A product doesn't have to be exactly what I want or the best on the market to satisfy me	2.73	3.07	1.031	1.074	.070
I really don't give my purchases much thought or care	2.61	2.97	1.138	1.154	.081
I usually shop quickly, buying the first product or brand that seems	3.16	3.33	1.175	1.205	.421
<b>Factor-3: Brand Consciousness</b>					
The most advertised brands are usually good choices	2.83	2.62	.991	1.073	.254
I prefer buying the best selling brands	2.56	2.48	1.093	1.143	.693
The higher the price of the product, the better the quality	2.92	3.14	1.160	1.146	.282
Good quality department stores and specialty stores offer the best	2.99	3.36	1.097	1.195	.062
I usually buy well-known brands	2.33	2.40	1.004	1.042	.724
<b>Factor-4: Fashion Consciousness</b>					
I keep my wardrobe up to date with the changing fashions	2.63	2.88	1.112	1.186	.209
I usually have at least one outfit of the newest style	2.73	3.07	1.031	1.074	.070
Fashionable, attractive styling is very important to me	3.16	3.33	1.175	1.205	.421
For variety I shop in different stores and buy different brands	2.56	2.48	1.093	1.143	.693
It's fun to buy something new and exciting	1.65	1.59	.762	.773	.618
<b>Factor-5: Confused Over choice</b>					
There are so many brands to choose from that I often feel confused	2.36	2.45	.981	1.029	.615
I am confused by all the information on different products	2.17	2.45	.891	1.172	.127
The more I learn about products, the harder it seems to choose the best	1.68	1.78	.701	.796	.462
Sometimes it's hard to decide in which stores to shop	2.63	2.88	1.112	1.186	.209
<b>Factor-6: Price Consciousness</b>					
I look very carefully to find the best value for money	2.61	2.97	1.138	1.154	.081
I usually buy the lower priced products	2.83	2.62	.991	1.073	.254
I buy as much as possible at sale price	2.36	2.45	.981	1.029	.615

<b>Factor-7: Careless</b>					
I frequently purchase on impulse	2.33	2.40	1.004	1.042	.724
I often make purchases I later wish I had not	2.63	2.88	1.112	1.186	.209
I should spend more time deciding on the products I buy	3.16	3.33	1.175	1.205	.421
I carefully watch how much I spend	2.92	3.14	1.160	1.146	.282
<b>Factor-8: Habitual and Brand Loyal</b>					
I have favorite brands I buy every time	2.17	2.45	.891	1.172	.127
When I find a brand I like, I buy it regularly	2.11	2.24	.967	.961	.426
I go to the same stores each time I shop	2.61	2.97	1.138	1.154	.081
I regularly change the brands I buy	2.83	2.62	.991	1.073	.254
95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					

T-Test was used to see whether there are any differences exists or not over male and female and by the analyzing of the mean value, we see that there were not many meaningful differences. In all the 8 factors covering 37 items, surprisingly it has been seen that there are no differences in decision making style of both male and female.

According to Cohen (1988), If the value in the significant (2-tailed) is equal or less than .05, then there is a significant difference in the mean score and if the value is higher than .05 there is no significant difference between the two groups. As in my study, it has been seen that all of my significant value is much higher than .05 that states that the mean scores between the groups are not significantly different. So, the null hypothesis  $H_0$  has been rejected.

## 5. Conclusion and Limitations

In conclusion, gender always plays a significant role in their decision making style. They are the main factor that always affects their purchasing process. Consumer decision making style still is a big concern for the researchers and every time it reveals with some new issues that are always interesting. In this studies we have also found out the interesting issues that male and female have the same decision-making style whereas several studies have been found the opposite. From the study, we can also say that today's generation is not acting like their previous generations especially in their decision-making style.

This study has been conducted over Chattogram City only, like many cities of Bangladesh and as well as in other countries, there is huge cultural diversity and there may be different consumer decision making style exists. As Bangladesh has very low cultural diversity compared to other countries, therefore, the study has a broader scope to do further research by accommodating more cities in the different countries of the world. This study also has a limitation that it only considered the consumer shopping style but not the product categories. So, for further research in more countries and regions with their respective culture, this study may be used.

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