CONSUMER STYLE INVENTORY (CSI): A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

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Abstract:

Due to the competitive environment in which we find ourselves, modern marketing research places special emphasis on style of decision-making by consumers, in order to understand how a person purchasing decisions. Consumer Styles Inventory (CSI) developed by Sproles and Kendall (1986) was adopted as the theoretical framework in many previous studies that assessed the style of decisionmaking by consumers. Researchers have validated the inventory in different cultural and social contexts (Lysonski, Srini, & Zotos, 1996). Therefore, the inventory is recognized as a useful tool for understanding consumer orientation buyers. This paper focuses on presenting several studies from different cultures, which are based on the Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) developed by Sproles and Kendall in 1986. In the first part of the paper is presented Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) with its main style, part two includes a detailing of several studies that used this inventory in their research and the last part will conclude this paper with conclusions and recommendations.

Key words: decision process, consumer behavior, decision-making style.

JEL Classification: M30, M31, M39.

INTRODUCTION

The decision-making style of consumers is extremely popular among academics in marketing and behavioral sciences. Many previous studies have devoted considerable attention to consumer buying behavior and decision-making style by them. The decisionmaking style has been defined as "a patterned, mental, cognitive orientation towards shopping and purchasing, which constantly dominates the consumer's choices. [...] these traits are ever-present, predictable, central driving forces in decision-making" (Sproles, 1985, p. 79). In other words, Sproles (1985) suggests that consumers adopt a "shopping personality" which is relatively sustainable and predictable. Currently, consumers have multiple choices in making purchases, they are bound to its markets, adapting to the complexity of certain decisionmaking style and applying certain strategies (Hafstorm, Chae and Chung, 1992; Lysonski, Durvasula and Zotos, 1996; Mitchell and Bates, 1998). Over time researchers have identified several decision-making style of consumers including: seeking quality, new fashion search, information, comparison shoppers, out of habit or brand lovalty (Thorell, Becker and Engeldow, 1975 Maynes, 1976; Jacoby and Chestnut, 1978; Bettman, 1979; Sproles, 1979; Miller, 1981; Sproles, 1983). The purpose of this study is to examine the decision-making style of consumers present in several studies.

PRESENTATION OF CONSUMER STYLE INVENTORY (CSI)

As mentioned earlier, decision-making style is defined as "a mental orientation that characterizes consumer approach to make choices" (Sproles & Kendall, 1986, p.268). This concept of decision-making style of consumers is in analogy with individual personality in psychology. Basically, Sproles and Kendall have developed a marketing tool to better understand consumer buying style. They integrated three approaches to characterize the consumer style (Figure 1). The first is a psychographic and lifestyle approach, which used consumers' different personality characteristics, attitudes, opinions, values and choices (Wells, 1974). The second approach is related to consumer typology, which defines general types of consumers, such as: economic shoppers, ethnic shoppers, apathetic shoppers, storeloyal shoppers, problem-solving shoppers, quality shoppers, fashion shoppers, brand conscious shoppers and impulse shoppers (Bellenger & Korgaonkar, 1980). The third is the consumer characteristics approach, which focuses on consumer cognitive and affective orientations. According to Lysonski, Durvasa and Zotos (1996), the latter approach seems to be the most dominant and descriptive of the three approaches.

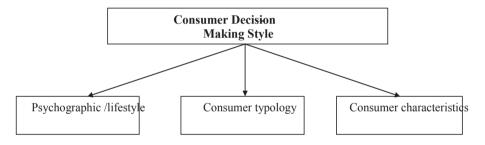
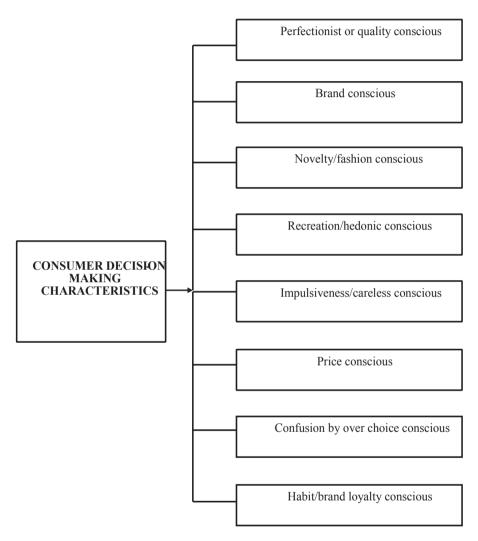
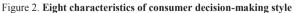


Figure 1. **Consumer decision-making style** (Sproles & Kendall, 1986) Source: Yao Zeng (2008), "An investigation of decision-making style of chinese college student online apparel shoppers"

In the context of consumer characteristics approach, Sproles (1985) developed a tool to profile the decision-making style of consumers. This instrument consisted of 50 items related to affective and cognitive consumer orientation towards commercial activity. Data collection was carried out on 111 women who were part of two licensed Universities of Arizona. Using factor analysis technique Sproles has found a number of common features of the decision-making style, namely: perfectionism, awareness of value, attention to brand, attention to what is fashionable, avoid shopping, saver. Subsequently, Sproles and Kendall (1986) refined this inventory and developed a smaller scale called the Consumer Style Inventory (CSI). This inventory included 40 items on the characteristics of the decisionmaking style of consumers. The instrument was administered to 482 students from five high schools in the Tucson, Arizona. This tool has established eight mental characteristics of consumer decisions, as shown in the figure below.





Source: Yao Zeng (2008), "An investigation of decision-making style of chinese college student online apparel shoppers"

These eight characteristics of decision-making style can be described as follows:

Characteristics of the	Description
decisionmaking process	
Perfectionist or quality conscious	It is a characteristic defined as the degree to which consumers carefully and systematically seek the best products in terms of quality and its desire to choose the best product when buying (Sproles and Kendall, 1986). This type of consumer has certain ideas about the best products and the consistent appearance of these products. In particular, product quality affect consumer decisions. Kim and Shim (2002) found that about 40% of buyers are classified as sophisticated buyers when it comes to quality. In their conception, quality is an important factor when purchasing apparel products. Therefore, quality consciousness is very important for
	consumer decision-making style.
Brand conscious	Sproles and Kendall (1986) define brand conscious as a consumer propensity to buy the most expensive and well known brands and products. Many consumers are interested in buying products that have a specific brand like BMW cars, Channel dresses because the brand name is often associated with an individual's status (Wanke, Bohner, & Jurkowitsch, 1997). Buyers who pay attention to brand believe that these brands have a much better quality. Brand influences has proven to be an important element in the process of buying (Cleaver, 1985; Sproles & Kendall, 1986). Familiarity with brand name positively influence consumers' purchasing intentions (Hafstrom, et al., 1992). Park and Stoel (2006) suggested that creating and promoting brand familiarity is a strategy to increase purchase intentions of the online apparel shopper.
Novelty/fashion conscious	Is defined as an feature of the newest, most modern, and exciting product, as well as the desire to buy trendy products (Sproles & Kendall, 1986). The researchers stress that fashion is an important factor in consumer decision-making (Gutman & Mills, 1982; Kim & Shim, 2002; Sproles & Kendall, 1986).

Table 1. Description of the process of consumer decision making (Sproles and Kendall)

Recreation/hedonic conscious	Is defined as those consumers who gain pleasure
Recreation/neuonic conscious	0 1
	from the shopping experience, which includes
	spending leisure time in stores and shopping just
	for fun (Bellenger & Korgaonkar, 1980; Sproles
	& Kendall, 1986). Bellenger and Korgaonkar
	(1980) found that almost 70% of consumers
	enjoy shopping in their leisure time. Once they
	examined the nature of retail recreational
	shopping, they also found that recreational
	shoppers were actively involved in information
	collection and participated in a greater amount of
	impulsive purchasing. Attractive window
	displays are an essential source of information
	relevant to decision making by recreational
	shoppers. Bloch, Sherrell, & Ridgeway (1986)
	suggested that for consumers looking store
	6
	windows is

	primarily a leisure activity for fun.
Impulsiveness/careless	Sproles and Kendall (1986) defined price consciousness as
conscious	"an awareness of the best value, buying at sale prices or the
	lowest price choice" (p. 273). While most consumers are
	affected by price when buying products, when a consumer
	is constantly seeking discounts, bargains and products at
	low prices, it is considered to be a price conscious shopper.
	Price significantly influences consumer choice and
	purchase decision (Bucklin, Gupta, & Siddarth, 1988).
	Janiszewski and Lichtenstein (1999) found that if all
	options products have the same level of benefits,
	consumers should buy products with lowest price. They
	also concluded that attention to price is an important factor
	in the decision making process. In addition, Kim and Jin
	(2006) found that consumers who pay attention to price,
	buy more frequently than other consumers.

Price conscious	Impulsive/careless shopping is defined as making
	impulsive, unplanned and careless purchases (Sproles &
	Kendall, 1986). Bellenger, Robertson and Hirschman
	(1978) concluded that there are different categories of
	consumers who buy on impulse in different age groups.
	They found that almost 40% of consumers are impulsive
	and around 30-60 percent of all department store shoppers
	are unplanned. They also found that age groups under 35
	and over 65 years old show a larger percentage of impulse
	purchases. There are two different aspects of impulsive
	shoppers: the positive and the negative psychological
	aspects (Watson & Tellege, 1985). Consumers with
	positive emotions feel like rewarding themselves when
	they purchase impulsively. According to Beatty and Ferrell
	(1998), the consumer's positive moods influence shopping enjoyment and purchasing decisions. Negative
	enjoyment and purchasing decisions. Negative psychological aspects influence consumers' processing of
	persuasive messages, and persuasive messages usually
	produce negative modes when consumers are struggling
	with negative emotions (Bless & Forgas, 2000).
Confusion by over choice	Consumers can be overwhelmed by too much information
conscious	about the products and / or the choice of too many product
	categories (Sproles & Kendall, 1986). Because there are
	too many products and brands in both retail stores and
	online, consumers have difficulties when purchasing
	specific products. Moreover, consumers are confused by
	the different sizes, prices, qualities when purchasing a
	product (EvansCorreia, 1992; Fletcher, 1987; Foxman,
	Muehling, & Berger, 1990).
Habit/brand loyalty conscious	Typically, a consumer has favorite brands and stores out
	their purchases (Sproles & Kendall, 1986). Store
	attractiveness manages to convince customers to return to
	the same store. How consumers view store image has long
	been considered an important part of consumer
	decisionmaking (Baker, Lavy & Grewal, 1992).
	Psychological
	attributes related to environmental characteristics evokes
	an emotional response from consumers, and they create
	their feelings of excitement and fervor (Martineau, 1958).

Source: Yao Zeng (2008), "An investigation of decision-making style of chinese college student online apparel shoppers" and Anubhav Anand Mishra (2010) " Consumer decision-making styles and young-adult consumers: an indian exploration"

After entering the eight decision-making styles above, many researchers have used consumer behavior analysis tool inventory as the commercial behavior of customers. According to empirical studies conducted in different socio-cultural contexts, inventory items have been used in various factors and revealed additional models of decision making. Although few researchers argue that the general inventory has not been established by previous studies (Yasin, 2009; Canabal, 2002), most authors accept inventory as a measure of confidence for analyzing consumer purchasing behavior in different contexts around the world.

ADOPTION OF CONSUMER STYLES INVENTORY (CSI) IN SEVERAL CULTURES

Consumer Style Inventory Development (CIS) was an important step for research decisions by consumers. It has helped to provide a comprehensive foundation in terms of comparing the results with previous research (Hafstrom et al 1992; Durvasula et al 1993; Lysonski et.al. 1996; Walsh et al 2001). In addition, this tool has helped reduce conceptual differences, measurement and identification of differences in the decision making style in different cultures and countries. For example, Hafstrom, Hae and Chung (1992) examined the applicability of multi-cultural CSI developed by Sproles and Kendall (1986), using a sample of Korean students. They found that five of Sproles and Kendall styles identified were common in both Korean culture and in the United States, namely: brand conscious, quality conscious, recreation/hedonic conscious, impulsiveness and confusion created by the large number offers. At the same time, they suggested the existence of an additional factor such as

"time or energy conserving". This feature included parts of the original features of the study developed Sproles and Kendall (1986), specifically those related to brand conscious, habit/brand loyalty conscious. A year later, Durvasa, Lysonski and Andrews (1993) using a sample consisting of 210 students in New Zealand confirming a high level of reliability and validity of the scale. Lysonski, Durvasa and Zotos (1996) further investigated the applicability of multi-cultural CSI using samples from India, Greece, USA and New Zealand. The findings were quite similar to those of Sproles and Kendall (1986), their study confirmed seven of the eight characteristics of the decision-making process developed by Sproles and Kendal (1986). In this study, researchers concluded that the inventory seems to be more applicable in countries like the United States and New Zealand (which have a developed economy) than in Greece and India (which has a developing economy). Thus, their study suggested that decision-making style shaped in Consumer Styles Inventory may influence different cultures and different retail environments.

There were scientists who applied decision-making style to study the environmental effects of trade in China. Wang et al. (2002) investigated Chinese consumer decision-making style on domestic and imported brand clothing. The authors found that seven characteristics of decision making, along with other consumer behavioral characteristics could be used to distinguish the outline consumers who prefer to buy domestic, imported or both types of clothing. Tai (2005) extended the ten characteristics relevant to women workers in China, and added four new features not present in the inventory developed by Sproles and Kendall

(1986). These features are: personal style consciousness, environmental and health consciousness, reliance on mass media, and convenience and time consciousness. Finally, Tai (2005) identified four distinct shopping characteristics among working Chinese females: active fashion chaser, rational shopper, value buyer, and opinion seeker.

Lu and Rucker (2006) compared students from China to the US in terms of purchasing clothing from a single store in relation to multiple sales channels. They identified as a barrier to the difficulty of assessing the quality internet shopping clothes. Factors such as, security, convenience, realistic image of the product and the product return policy are extremely important for Chinese students when deciding to purchase online products clothing. Moreover, the credibility of online retailers is the biggest concern for consumers in China (Efendioglu & Yip, 2004).

Cowart and Goldsmith (2007) used CSI to investigate the motivations of American students regarding online buying clothing products. Among the eight characteristics of inventory, they found: perfectionist or quality conscious, brand conscious, novelty conscious,

habit and brand loyalty conscious. Their findings showed that some features of the inventory were related to the frequency and money spent online for apparel products.

Studies have shown that the inventory has great applicability in different countries. For example, Canabal (2002) showed that the CSI has application in many cultures. In a study, which used college students as the target sample, Canabal (2002) adapted the CSI framework to conduct factor analysis to determine applicability of the CSI. Inventory was administered to adult male and female non-student shoppers, ages 18 and above in Germany, and six characteristics of the original eight included in the CSI were confirmed: brand consciousness, perfectionism, recreational/hedonistic, confused by overchoice, impulsiveness, and novelty/fashion consciousness. However, brand loyalty and price consciousness were converted into a "variety seeking factor" "Variety seeking was novel to Germany and replaced brand loyalty and price-value consciousness factors found in previous countries" (Walsh, et al, 2001, p. 73).

There have also been studies that have investigated the antecedents and consequences of consumer decision-making styles. For example, McDonald (1993) investigated the roles buyers in decision-making styles specifying consumer loyalty. Shim and Koh (1997) examined the effects of socialization agents and socio-structural variables taken on consumer decisionmaking styles of adolescents. Salleh (2000) examined consumer decision-making styles for different types of products. Wesley, LeHew and Woodside (2006) explored how consumer decision-making styles link to their shopping behavior. Cowart and Goldsmith (2007) explored the influence consumer decision-making styles in purchase online clothing by students. While, Kwan Yeung and Au (2008) studied the effects of lifestyle characteristics on consumer decision-making styles of trendy young Chinese. Yao Zeng (2008) investigated how Chinese students realize online shopping for clothing by investigating their decisionmaking style. Its results showed that some of the characteristics of the Consumer Styles Inventory (CSI) are related to the frequency of buying online clothing, as well as money spent online for purchase such products. Wanninayake Bandara (2014) explored the impact of consumer decision-making styles on their preference towards domestic brands in the context of the Czech Republic. The findings revealed that seven decision-making styles are appeared among Czech customers and fashion consciousness, recreational orientation, impulsiveness, and price consciousness of customers show a direct relationship with the domestic brand biasness.

In its original form, Consumer Style Inventory can not be generalized to different countries operate without some modifications. Hanzaee and Aghasibeig (2008) concluded that there is no universally accepted model for understanding consumer shopping styles and most of researchers have adopted to the Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) developed by Sproles and Kendall (1986) as a comprehensive instrument. The table below shows a comparison of decision making by consumers identified in several studies.

Table 2. A comparison of characteristics making consumer decision identified in different studies

AUTHORS	CHARACTERISTICS
Sproles & Kendall (1986)	Perfectionist, Brand conscious, Novelty/fashion conscious,
	Recreation/hedonic conscious, Impulsiveness, Price-quality
	conscious, Confusion by over choice conscious, Habit/brand
	loyalty conscious.
Hafstrom, Chae & Chung	Novelty conscious, Perfectionist, Recreation/hedonic conscious,
(1992)	Confusion by over choice conscious, Impulsiveness,
	Price-quality conscious, Attention to time or energy conserving,
	Habit/brand loyalty conscious.
Lyonski, Durvasula &	Perfectionist, Brand conscious, Novelty/fashion conscious,
Zotos (1996)	Recreation/hedonic conscious, Impulsiveness, Confusion by over choice conscious, Habit/brand loyalty conscious.
Fan & Xiao (1998)	Brand conscious, Time conscious, Quality conscious, Price
	conscious, Attention to supply useful information.
Mitchell & Bates (1998)	Perfectionist, Price-quality conscious, Brand conscious,
	Novelty/fashion conscious, Confusion by over choice conscious,
	Attention to time or energy conserving, Recreation/hedonic
	conscious, Impulsiveness, Loyalty to the brand, Loyalty to shop.
Hiu, Siu Wang &Chang	Perfectionist, Brand conscious, Novelty/fashion conscious,
(2001)	Recreation/hedonic conscious, Price conscious, Confusion by
	over choice conscious, Habit/brand loyalty conscious.
Yao Zeng (2008)	Recreation/hedonic conscious, Perfectionist, Brand conscious,
	Price conscious, Quality conscious, Impulsiveness/careless
	conscious, Confusion by over choice conscious, Habit/brand
	loyalty conscious.
Mokhlis (2009)	Perfectionist, Brand conscious, Confusion by over choice
	conscious, Habit/brand loyalty conscious, Recreation/hedonic
	conscious, Impulsiveness, Attention to time or energy conserving,
	Attention to novelty, Attention to variety.
Safiek Mokhlis, Hayatul	Attention to fashion, Quality conscious, Impulsiveness/careless
Safrah Salleh (2009)	conscious, Recreation/hedonic conscious, Confusion by over
Amerika an INT I	choice conscious.
Anubhav Anand Mishra	Perfectionist, Quality conscious, Impulsiveness, Dissatisfaction
(2010)	with the process of buying, Price-quality conscious, Confusion by
	over choice conscious, Brand conscious, Novelty/fashion
	conscious, Recreation/hedonic conscious, Loyalty to the brand,
Wanninganak	Loyalty to shop.
Wanninayake	Recreation/hedonic conscious, Fashion conscious,
W.M.C.Bandara (2014)	Impulsiveness, Price conscious. Source: made by the author

Source: made by the author

Therefore, a number of researchers have tried to adopt CSI to profile consumers' decision styles in countries such as *India* (Canabal, 2002; Patel, 2008), *China* (Fan, Xio and Xu, 1997; Fan and Xio 1998; Hiu, Siu, Wang and Chang, 2001; Siu, Wang Hui Chang, 2001),

UK (Mitchell and Bates, 1998), *Germany* (Walsh, Mitchell and Thur, 2001; Walsh and Vincent, 2001), *South Africa* (Radder, Li and Pietersen, 2006), *Turkey* (Gonen and Osemete, 2006; Kavas and Yesilada, 2007), *Malaysia* (Wan Omar Mohd Ali, Abdul Rahim Hussin and 2009), *Taiwan* (Hou and Lin 2006), *Brazil* (Dos Santos and Fernandes, 2006), *Czech Republic* (Wanninayake Bandara, 2014), *Macedonia* (Ivan Damir Anic, Anita Ciunova Suleska, Edo Rajhi, 2010). All these studies confirm the variable portions of the original CSI factors, although none of them have reproduced all eight features of Sproles and Kendall (1986). These multicultural studies have concluded that there are four styles of consumers with greater applicability in different countries, namely: brand conscious, quality conscious, fashion conscious and recreational conscious.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We can say that, although the decision-making style of the consumer represents a relatively consistent pattern of cognitive and affective responses, culture has been proven to impact significantly on individual values and attitudes. Moreover, decision-making style varies by ethnicity consumer and the consumer behavior can be predicted by understanding the cultural personality of consumers (Safiek Mokhlis, Hayat Safrah Salleh, 2009). Dimensions and items included in the Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) must be tested before being used in a country or modified decision-making model features which take account of consumer behavior. In other words, we can say that the decision-making style is dependent on consumer culture. Future studies may apply Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) and the other populations and countries other than those listed in this paper. Most studies discussed in this paper were used as sample students and young adults, so that future research should pay particular attention to persons with another age group (eg, 40-60 years).

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