

A STUDY ON DARK SIDE OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

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ABSTRACT:

In marketing consumer behavior play vital role. Many articles and journals published on marketing field. But most of the articles and journals taught about the positive side of the marketing and also explained the benefits of the marketing. Manufacturer, consumer and customer getting more benefits through the marketing. But at that same time marketing have negative side also. It is called as dark side of marketing. This study concentrates on dark side of marketing and consumer behavior. This study covers deviant consumer behavior, ethical issues in marketing, social responsibility in marketing. The aim of this study is to analyze the dark side of consumer behavior and to know what are the way its affect the life style and buying behavior of the consumer. This study is helpful to reduce the deviant consumer behavior in the society and also increase the social responsibility to consumer.

Key words: Deviant consumer behavior, Addictive behavior, Compulsive behavior, Impulsive behavior, ethical issues.

INTRODUCTION:

Most of the consumer behavior research has been aimed at improving firms marketing activities and increasing the effectiveness of consumers themselves. The outcome of this consumer research is marketers' point of view (i.e. brand loyalty, increase profit) or consumer point of view (i.e. information seeking and comparison of products).but less attention only given to understanding undesirable consumer behaviors. That is those that have negative impact for businesses and for society as a whole. This study concentrates on dark side of consumer behavior. It cover these are the topics

Deviant consumer behavior:

- Addictive, compulsive, Impulsive behavior.
- Consumer theft
- Underage drinking and smoking.

DEVIANT CONSUMER BEHAVIOR:

The behavior of the average consumer in an everyday consumption is normal. But sometimes consumer behavior is regarded as deviant if it is either unexpected by members of the society. Deviant behavior may be problematic to the consumer and society. Some types of deviant consumer behavior occur during the acquisition of the product and some types occur during product consumption. Deviant consumer behavior includes addictive, compulsive and impulsive

behavior, consumer theft, use of black markets and underage drinking and smoking.

	Deviant acquisition behavior	Deviant usage behavior
Physical/psychological abnormality	Compulsive buying	1.Addictive consumption <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smoking • drugs 2.compulsive consumption <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gambling • binge eating
Illegal behavior	Consumer theft Black market	Underage drinking, Underage smoking, Drug use

Consumer behavior may be deviant because it involves a physical or psychological abnormality or involves a behavior regarded as illegal such deviant behavior can be associated with the acquisition or usage of offerings.

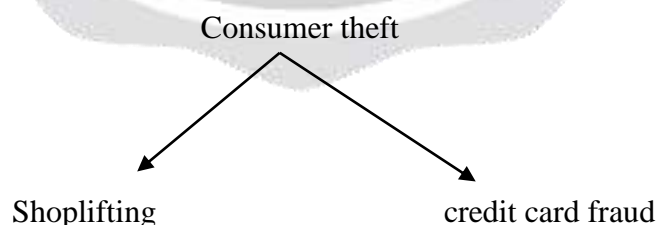
Addictive behavior is taking action as a result of a dependency. Addicted consumers feel a great attachment to and dependence on a product or activity and believe that they must use it to function (smoking).

Compulsive behavior is an inability to stop doing something .compulsive buying can be an emotionally involving experience. Consumers may engage in compulsive buying to feel a thrill, gain attention, or feel that they are pleasing some one else. But this emotional high may be followed serious financial and negative emotional consequences. (Gambling)

Impulsive behavior is non thoughtful action acting on impulse. Two specific types of impulsive behavior related to acquisition and consumption are impulsive buying and impulsive eating. An impulsive is a sudden urge to act as would happen when you find yourself doing something based on an emotional whim rather than on a reasoned, nonemotional analysis (eating habit).

Consumers can exhibit any of these behaviors with respect to acquisition or consumption with problematic outcomes if consumers do not make an effort to exert self – control.

Consumer theft reflects a desire to steal things. Consumer theft divided into two types



Factors affecting consumer theft:

Three factors influencing in consumer theft economic need, few demographic variables and psychological factors

Theft:

- Temptation
- Ability to rationalize

Product, Purchase environment, Consumer

Temptation to steal:

The temptation to steal arises when consumers want products that they cannot legitimately buy.

Rationalization for stealing:

Consumers steal because they can somehow rationalize their behavior as being either justified or driven by forces outside themselves.

Black market:

Black markets represent situations in which consumers pay for items not readily available. These are called black markets because the sellers are unauthorized which means that the buying–selling process is usually illegal. Black markets for drugs, entertainment.

Underage drinking and smoking:

Addictions to alcohol and tobacco represent one form of deviant consumer behavior. Illegal use of these products by minors is another deviant consumer behavior. Underage drinking and smoking have consequences for the individual and for society.

Ethical issues in marketing:

Marketing contribute to other negative social outcomes, outcomes not only related to deviant behavior.

It is also related to four important ethical issues

- Advertising to children
- Marketing and obesity
- Advertising and self image
- Privacy concerns.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Behavior is generally defined as "deviant" when it differs from some norm or standard (Deutsch and Kraus 1965; Sarason 1972). These standards or norms are in the form of customs, manners, rules and regulations, laws, and mores. To the extent the individual's behavior deviates from such norms it is considered by society to be undesirable, unacceptable, or dysfunctional--i.e., deviant.

Implicit in this definition is the assumption that society prescribes criteria for its members' behaviors; and that relevant criteria are based on normative theories of human behavior, reflecting efforts on the part of some society's members to regulate the behavior of other members so that certain desirable consequences follow (Brim 1966). Deviancy then can also be defined in terms of frequency or degree to which the individual deviates from society's norms and prescribed behaviors. For example, an individual may exhibit a non-conforming behavior more frequently than others; or s/he may commit several types (number) of deviant behaviors.

Because the marketplace is not homogeneous in terms of individual needs, values and behaviors, consumers are not likely to always agree upon consumption norms (e.g., areas where smoking should be restricted). Furthermore, consumer behaviors which simply deviate from norms held by the majority of consumers and which are dysfunctional for society may not always constitute deviant consumer behaviors. Thus, for example, a person may deviate markedly from food consumption norms (e.g., being a vegetarian) or may engage in behaviors which may be

considered dysfunctional (e.g., impulse buying, materialism, brand loyalty) because such behaviors may not result in efficient allocation of resources (Aaker and Myers 1971; Maynes 1976). Yet, it could be argued that these behaviors would not be deviant because they may result in greater consumer satisfaction and shopping efficiency, and even economic well-being.

Robert K. Merton, a sociologist and author of an influential theory of anomie and the effects of accepted status goals on individual behavior, is believed to have made an important contribution to our understanding of the way in which deviant behavior develops (Deutsch and Krauss 1965, pp. 198-203). In his book, *Social Theory and Social Structure* (Merton 1957) he offers rich insights into the way in which such deviant behavior is produced by specific types of social structures. According to Merton, each cultural or social system defines legitimate goals for its members as well as legitimate means for attaining these goals (Merton 1957, 132-33). For example, in our culture, affluence is a near-universal goal, but fraud is not a legitimate means of attaining it. The socially acceptable means are often referred to as "institutionalized means" (Deutsch and Krauss 1965, p. 199).

When the integration of goals and means is lacking in a social structure of a culture, a state of "anomie" results and the individual may employ several modes of adaptation, two of which are associated with deviant behavior: innovation and rebellion (Merton 1957). Both Merton (1957) and Cloward (1959) stress the importance of social environment in the development of deviant behavior. For example, Merton observes that socialization among the middle class emphasizes the importance of rules and obedience; therefore, members of the middle class would be less likely to use innovative means of achieving culturally accepted goals. Rather, innovation is the typical mode of adaptation in lower-social classes where less stress is placed on the importance of rules. Similarly, Cloward (1959) emphasizes the social environment within which socialization to deviant behavior occurs, referring to (a) "appropriate learning environments for the acquisition of values and skills associated with the performance of a particular role" (p. 168), and (b) opportunities to perform the role once the skills are acquired.

Brim (1966) also discusses the acquisition of dysfunctional behaviors, norms and attitudes from a socialization perspective. According to Brim, the main responsibility (causal factor) for deviance lies in the ways in which society (through its socialization agents) has socialized the person. Brim emphasizes the socialization perspective not only in explaining the roots of deviance, but in prescribing its treatment as well. He suggests that society can treat deviance through resocialization, using techniques in line with the reasons for behavior.

Where ignorance is the cause, education; where lack of ability is the difficulty, improved training; where motivation is the problem, a planned and deliberately executed program of manipulation of rewards and punishments to reorient the individual to appropriate goals and behavior (Brim 1966, p.43)

The work of Sutherland (1937) also deserves attention. His theory offers insights into the development of criminal behavior and it has influenced efforts to resocialize criminals. Sutherland's differential association theory, which has much in common with learning theories of criminality (cf. Sarason 1972), argues that criminal behavior is learned the same way as behavior that conforms to the norms and expectations of society, with the criminal receiving reinforcement (usually from deviant peers) for behaving antisocially.

Finally, developmental psychologists (e.g., Erikson, Kohlberg) have offered insights into deviant behavior by suggesting that deviant behavior may be the result of the person's inability to engage in moral reasoning because of incomplete cognitive development (Kohlberg 1976). However, unlike sociological theories, developmental theories explain behavior primarily at earlier stages in the life cycle.

Antecedents of Deviant Consumer Behavior. Maturation can help us understand certain aspects of development and change in dysfunctional consumer behaviors. Kohlberg (1976), for example, has focused our attention on adolescence as a period of moral growth during which a person develops the ability to engage in moral reasoning. During this period the youth is expected to lose the ego-centric orientation developed during childhood and to begin considering relevant others and society. Beginning in early adolescence the child becomes increasingly concerned with the mandates of society and the internalization of the belief that morality is defined by law and moral codes. This process is believed to be completed by the time the adolescent has entered adulthood, at which stage the importance of laws and rules to the functioning of society have been completely internalized. Social class has also been linked to delinquency and dysfunctional behaviors. Theory suggests that children from upper classes are more likely to obey society's rules than their lower-class counterparts (Merton 1957). Research also has found that low educational level and poor educational achievement among young people are related to the tendency to seek danger on-the road (Maki, Tallqvist and Prigogine 1975) .

Hess (1970) cites broken homes as an antecedent factor contributing to delinquency. According to Hess, children in families where parental attention and warmth are lacking are more likely to become alienated and commit behaviors not approved by their parents. The presence of both parents is expected to enhance the likelihood of receiving parental support; parental absence may deter it, leading to alienation and delinquency

Deviant Socialization Processes. Theoretical explanations for the reason "significant others" may be deviant socialization agents can be found in Sutherland's (1937) differential association theory, Linden and Hackler's (1973) affective ties theory, and Klemke's (1982) deviant socialization hypothesis. Although these writers are not very explicit with respect to specific types of socialization agents involved, all of them include peers as potential deviant socialization agents.

The influence of peers is contingent upon a host of interpersonal and antecedent variables. For example, sociologists have stressed the importance of the nature of the relationships youths have within their immediate social networks and within the larger social structure (Cohen 1955; Cloward and Ohlin 1960; Empey 1978; Hirschi 1969; Matza 1969; Polk and Schafer 1972). As a social system, the family appears to play a significant role in defining the extent to which peers affect the youth's involvement in delinquent activities. Reliance on peers may also be a function of the amount of time the youth spends with his/her parents. In families where parents, especially mothers, dedicate their time to outside careers, youths tend to gravitate toward nonfamilial peer groups. Specifically, in homes where one or both parents are frequently absent the child is likely not only to become more dependent on peers but also to become more alienated, a condition which may lead to performance of activities disapproved by parents, including delinquent behaviors (Sebald 1968). In fact, the somewhat limited data available on social, psychological, and behavioral correlates of youthful drinking and driving problems indicate some association

between feelings of rebellion, hostility and alienation and increased numbers of traffic violations and accidents (Cameron 1982).

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

To identify the characteristics of a behavior that makes it "deviant" instead of conforming or acceptable.

To identify what way the deviant behaviour influence in the buying decision of consumer.

To identify the negative consequence arises to the consumer through the deviant behavior.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY:

This study deals with the deviant consumer behavior. It includes addictive, compulsive, impulsive behavior. The addictive behaviour can be harmful to addicts and the society. The compulsive behaviour covers the compulsive consumption, compulsive gambling, binge eating. The negative outcomes of compulsive buying can be despoiling. The impulsive behaviour is also affected by the consumers' prevention or promotion focus.

These behaviors are affecting the consumers directly and indirectly. The study conducted in Chennai city. Chennai city has a huge population. The different category and cultural background people living in Chennai. The purchasing power of consumers is also high. The people's buying behaviour is mostly based on advertising and marketing. This study is helpful to the consumers to know the negative outcomes of deviant behavior.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This study deals with various negative aspects of marketing towards consumer behavior. This study was conducted in Chennai city. The data was gathered through the convenience sampling method from 100 respondents. A well-designed questionnaire was prepared for obtaining the information. The respondents were asked to mark on the five-point Likert scale.

DATA ANALYSIS:

Table 1: Demographic variables

	No of respondent	Percentage
Gender		
Male	30	30
Female	70	70
Marital status		
Single	40	40
Married	60	60
Education		
HSC	15	15
UG	30	30

PG	40	40
Others	15	15
Age		
Below25	22	22
26-35	33	33
36-45	24	24
Above46	21	21
Occupation		
Business	14	14
Private employee	43	43
Governmentemployee	27	27
Retired	9	9
Others	7	7
Family Income		
Below 5 lakhs	11	11
6-10 lakhs	45	45
11-15lakhs	36	36
Morethan16 lakhs	18	18

This table shows that demographic variables of respondents the classification based on gender, age, qualification, income, occupation.

Table 2: Addiction of shopping

Options	No.of.respondent	Percentage
Always	36	36
Often	27	27
Occasionally	13	13
Rarely	14	14
Never	10	10

This is table is helpful to find out the addiction level of respondents.

Table 3: Source of information

Source	No.of.respondent	Percentage
Advertisement	47	47
Friends	24	24
Relatives	17	17
Others	12	12

This table inferred that Advertisement, Friends, Relatives, Others motivating the consumer to buying.

Table 4: Factors stimulated to addictive buying

factors	No.of.respondent	Percentage
Happiness	73	73
Function of living	27	27

The respondents opinions about factors are stimulate to buying.Happiness and function of living mostly influenced in the buying decision of consumers.

Table 5: Impulse buying

Option	No.of.respondent	Percentage
Yes	68	68
No	32	32

The table indicates that 68 percentages of respondents have impulsive buying behavior.

Table 5: Factors influence in impulse buying

factors	No.of.respondent	Percentage
Low cost	25	25
Promotional scheme	16	16
Advertisement	24	24
First sight attraction	13	13
Salesman explanation	10	10
Easy credit	12	12

To find out from the respondents opinion so many factors influence in the impulsive buying behavior i.e low cost,promotional scheme,advertisement,first sight attraction,salesman explanation,easy credit.

CONCLUSION:

The study of deviant consumer behavior is very important in the marketing field. Because it is a negative side of consumer behavior.This behavior affects the consumer and the society. In India most of the people affect the deviant behavior for example: shopping, smoking, drunk and driven, binge eating, consumer theft.This study find out sixty eight percentage fall in impulsive buying behavior.This behavior create emotional and financial consequene. The consumers come out from this behavior through self control only.After come out this behavior the person lead their life wealthy and healthy.

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