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A survey on brand consciousness among youth versus elderly people in Chennai

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ABSTRACT

"A brand is a voice and a product is a souvenir" - Lisa Gansky. A growing economy and the resultant increase in purchasing power has made Indians more fashion conscious.With the increase in different brands in the market the consciousness for them has also been at the top. The non- active consumers have been converted into an Active Consumers. They do not compromise with the brand, after all brand matters at a large.There was a time when people only focused more on the price factor while choosing a product or service. But now, the scenario has changed. Today People have become Brand Conscious; they go for brands—starting from hair oil to footwear. The choice of selection depends on the societal and the esteem value the brand gives to them. The purpose of this paper is to assess Indian consumers' brand consciousness by examining their brand knowledge, purchase behaviour.

INTRODUCTION:

In a luxury brands survey conducted by The Nielsen Company, a global information and media research company, India ranked third after Greece and Hong Kong in the list of most brand conscious countries in the world. Over 35% of Indian respondents agreed they spend money on brands.[By Shilpi Priya ,Published: August 20, 2011Posted in: Knowledge base].

People have now very well understood about the brands present in the market. Brand awareness has made people to think and become conscious about the brand. Brand awareness means the extent to which a brand associated with a particular product is documented by potential and existing customers either positively or negatively.

A survey in 2008 indicated that India is among top 5 countries when it comes to Brand Consciousness. But it hardly represents the entire society outlook when it comes to consumption of products. A country where savings rate is very high (nearly 36%) and where top 10% percent of people hold 53% of the wealth of this nation and lower 20% own about 1%, it is hard to believe that brand consciousness is on the rise.

Due to increased social mobility, people are becoming highly brand conscious. Renowned brand labels on eatables, outfits, footwear's, and accessories give satisfaction to the conspicuous consumers. They are becoming more self-conscious, which raise the temptation in them to follow the craze of brand race. The street trends are getting down market and latest styles tagged with brand name are dominating the market.

This writing can be moved to different directions, for instance we can say signature wear raise the confidence level. The quality, comfort and style become major motivation for getting designer stuff and it gives a great boost to personal ego. If we move to another aspect, social pressure is a major factor for choosing branded things. Even some say, brand helps them to become style icon of their peer group. Stereotype shoppers today are highly brand obsessed. These snobs are mainly categorised into youth and the working class. Youth prefers or opts for brand because it gives them funky style or a chic look. Whereas working class is particular about using branded products so their personality can be enhanced and also gives them sophisticated and professional look.

Brands today had a great influence on the mind of people. They have ability to mould the thought process of people and at last they create a demand of their brand and gradually it becomes habit of consumer and then a necessity.

India is now flourished with branded shopping malls. KFC and McDonalds' can be seen crowded anytime. Branded shops like chemistry and diesel is no where less. People browse through the best shops to acquire the best.

Vatsala Pant, associate director, client solutions, The Nielsen Company, says that the overall awareness about designer brands has been aided by people travelling overseas. The number of outlets that these brands have opened up in the country in recent times is a testimony in itself of the increasing fashion conscious amongst Indians, says Pant. [By SiliconIndia | Monday, 11 July 2011, 04:52 Hrs]

Indians desire and do buy the luxury brands. They have a great money saving tendency to buy the best products. Brands like Gucci, Calvin Klein, Christian Dior and Adidas have been in demand among large number of Indians. The crowd in India is multiplying and the latest trends are followed by the people which makes branded products their sole thing in life. Especially when it comes to wardrobe they want branded labels as Indian's interest in fashion is touching the peak. Possession of the branded things has become a major priority.

Brand consciousness is on rise because it inherits within itself price consciousness. It is something which the Indian consumers are never going to part themselves from. It relates to a term in economics called price signalling, a higher price indicates the good quality of the product, and more often than not, a very low price does not entice the customer for the same reasons.

The consumers now to a certain extent have started differentiating between what every brand of a product has to offer, which tightens the competition because it's not only about that little puma on your shirt or the bitten apple on your phone.

So summing up the brand consciousness is on rise in Indian market and the premium brand can capitalise it if they can give themselves a certain depth in the market and reach out the middle class of our Indian society.

Literature review:

When consumers are exposed to a variety of choices, they can choose to use different brands at different times to communicate different identities to others and to themselves because the value of brands is the underlying meaning each brand carries (Elliott, 1994; Elliott & Wattanasuwan, 1998; Ligas & Cotte, 1999). In doing so, a consumer needs to attend to brand information (Nelson & McLeod, 2005). Therefore, the level of attention given to brand information relates to personal concerns. Such attention is termed brand consciousness.

A high level of brand consciousness, however, does not guarantee brand loyalty. By contrast, the concept of brand consciousness focuses on how important a consumer perceives brands to be when he purchases in general. The progression starting from a consumer's personality traits, through devoting different levels of attention to brands (i.e. brand consciousness) according to their personal concerns, to ultimately, composing their life stories, the third level of McAdams's framework. Life stories are an internalized integrative narration of an individual's past, present, and future (McAdams, 1996). The selection of brands becomes embedded in an individual consumer's life story. Consumers innately decode consumption cues (i.e. brands) in forming impressions of others as well as encode their own consumption selections to express themselves (Russel W. Belk, Bahn, & Mayer, 1982). Hence, self-brand connection is dependent on the entire constellation of brand associations, evolves through life stories, and can capture an important part of consumers' construction of self (Escalas & Bettman, 2003). It indicates that consumers attempt to form congruency between brand associations and self-images (Chaplin & John, 2005; Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001.

According to (W. Douglass Shaw & J. Scott Shoukwilcr, University of Nevada, Reno,1994) study explores brand choice behaviour of older Chinese consumers in comparison with the X-Generation (aged 18-35 years). Based on a survey of 23,174 respondents from five major cities on their purchase behaviour of 397 brands across eight categories of fast moving consumer products, have found that old consumers share many similarities of brand choice behaviour with the X-generation while some significant differences do exist. Theoretical and managerial implications of the findings are discussed. Older adults constitute a rapidly growing demographic segment, but stereotypes persist about their consumer behaviour. Thus, a more considered understanding of age-associated changes in decision making and choices is required.
The author's underlying theoretical model suggests that age-associated changes in cognition, affect, and goals interact to differentiate older consumers' decision-making processes, brand choices, and habits from those of younger adults. They first review literature on stereotypes about the elderly and then turn to an analysis of age differences in the inputs (cognition, affect, and goals) and outputs (decisions, brand choices, and habits) of the choice process. Past research suggests that consumers who have greater perceived control over a situation are more likely to evaluate the situation in a favourable manner.

In comparison with males, females shop more, and they search for more information when they make purchase decisions (Punj & Staelin, 1983; Cobb & Hoyer, 1985). It is assumed that females will pay more attention to brands and place more value on brand names.It is hypothesised that 16-17 year olds will be more brand conscious than 11-12 year olds or 20-22 year olds. In a previous study, parents have claimed that high school students are the most brand conscious (Liebeck, 1996).

Asia Pacific consumers are the most likely to be won over by designer brands with around three in five (61%) willing to pay more for designer products, higher than any other region, according to a new online study from leading global information and insights provider, Nielsen.

The Nielsen survey of more than 29,000 Internet respondents in 58 countries revealed that a staggering three in four (74%) Chinese consumers would spend more on designer goods, the highest globally, with India (59%) and Vietnam (56%) rounding out the world's top three.

Asia Pacific consumers are also drawn to high profile brands, with more than half (55%) saying they like to buy products of famous brands, compared to the global average of 47 percent. Among countries with highest percentage of consumers buying products of famous brands are: India (74%); Vietnam (73%); China (62%); and Philippines (51%) [Singapore business review, published on 2.7.2013]

Objectives of the study:

1. To know how important are branded products to both of the groups
2. To draw inference regarding the importance given to branded products and how well both the groups are informed about the brands.
3. To analyse the brand impact in buying behaviour of both the groups.
4. To examine whether unbranded products provide same satisfaction as branded products to both of the groups.

RESCEARCH METHODOLOGY

Questionnaire method and survey method was adopted for this study .Field work was carried out to collect the necessary data. People are asked unstructured questions according to a prepared schedule of questions. The information that was gathered through personal interview constitutes primary data and through books, internet and references are secondary data. Simple random sampling, judgment sampling and convenient sampling were used during the study for generating ideas.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

TABLE NO. 1 – AGE GROUP OF THE RESPONDENTS:

AGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
18-35	75	50%
ABOVE 35	75	50%
TOTAL	150	100%

Table 1 represents that out of 150 respondents 50% fall under youth category and the remaining 50% fall under the category of elder people. The above table was categorised according to the following assumption that below 11: child, 12-13: pre teens, 14-25: youth, 26-35: youthful adults, and above 35: elder people.

<u>TABLE NO. 2</u> – GENDER GROUP OF THE RESPONDENTS:

CATEGORY	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
YOUTH	36	39	**75**
ELDER	43	32	**75**
TOTAL	**79**	**71**	**150**

Table 2 represents that out of 79 male respondents 46% fall under the youth category and the remaining 54 % come under the elder group. Out of 71 female respondents 55% fall under youth category and remaining 45% come under elder group.

<u>TABLE NO. 3</u> – BRAND AWARENESS OF THE RESPONDENTS:

CATEGORY	ADVERTISEMENT	FRIENDS	DESIGNERS	MALLS	TOTAL
YOUTH	38	21	6	10	75
ELDER	42	22	5	6	75
TOTAL	**80**	**43**	**11**	**16**	**150**

Table 3 represents that out of 150 respondents majority of the respondent's i.e.53% are aware about the brands through advertisement followed by 29% through colleagues and friends, 11% through malls and remaining 7% through designers.

<u>TABLE NO. 4</u> – RESPONDENTS PREFERENCE OF BRANDED PRODUCTS FOR BASIC NECESSITIES:

CATEGORY	YES	NO	TOTAL
YOUTH	30	45	75
ELDER	32	43	75
TOTAL	**62**	**88**	**150**

Table 4 represents that out of 150 respondents 59% of respondents doesn't prefer branded products for basic necessities and the remaining 41% prefer branded products for basic necessities also.

TABLE NO. 5 – RESPONDENTS RESPONSE FOR INCREASE IN INCOME MAKES PEOPLE MORE BRAND CONSCIOUS:

CATEGORY	YES	NO	TOTAL
YOUTH	70	5	75
ELDER	63	12	75
TOTAL	**133**	**17**	**150**

Table 5 represents that out of 150 respondents 89% of respondents say yes, that increase in income leads to more brand consciousness.

TABLE NO. 6 – RESPONDENTS RESPONSE FOR COUNTRY OF ORIGIN AFFECTING PURCHASE DECISION:

CATEGORY	YES	NO	TOTAL
YOUTH	64	11	75
ELDER	8	67	75
TOTAL	**72**	**78**	**150**

Table 6 represents that out of 150 respondents 89% of youth respondents prefer country of origin before making purchase decision whereas only 11% of elders prefers the same.

TABLE NO. 7 – RESPONDENTS RESPONSE FOR COMPARISON OF WEBSITES BEFORE MAKING PURCHASE DECISION:

CATEGORY	YES	NO	TOTAL
YOUTH	61	14	75
ELDER	18	57	75
TOTAL	**79**	**71**	**150**

Table 7 represents that out of 150 respondents 80% of youth respondents compare brands through websites before making purchase decision whereas only 20% of elders prefers the same.

CHI- SQUARE TESTS:

TABLE NO. 8 – INCOME AND BRAND CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE RESPONDENTS:

INCOME	YES	NO	TOTAL
LESS 25000	10	27	37
25000-50000	38	32	70
ABOVE 50000	35	8	43
TOTAL	**83**	**67**	**150**

HO – There is no significant relationship between income and brand consciousness of the respondents

HA – There is a significant relationship between income and brand consciousness of the respondents

OBSERVED	EXPECTED	{O –E}^2/E
10	20.5	5.4
27	17	5.882
38	39	0.025
32	31	0.032
35	24	5.041
8	19	6.365
TOTAL		**22.745**

CALCULATED VALUE	22.745
TABLE VALUE	5.991

Since calculated value is greater than the table value HO is rejected. So there is a significant relationship between income and brand consciousness of the respondents

TABLE NO. 9 – AGE AND BRAND CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE RESPONDENTS:

CATEGORY	YES	NO	TOTAL
YOUTH	45	30	75
ELDERS	39	36	75
TOTAL	**84**	**66**	**150**

HO – There is no significant relationship between age and brand consciousness of the respondents

HA – There is a significant relationship between age and brand consciousness of the respondents

OBSERVED	EXPECTED	{O –E}^2/E
45	42	0.214
30	33	0.272
39	42	0.214
36	33	0.272
TOTAL		**0.972**

CALCULATED VALUE	0.972
TABLE VALUE	3.841

Since calculated value is lesser than the table value HO is accepted. So there is no significant relationship between age and brand consciousness of the respondents.

TABLE NO. 10 – AGE AND COUNTRY OF ORIGIN AFFECTING PURCHASE DECISION OF THE RESPONDENTS:

CATEGORY	YES	NO	TOTAL
YOUTH	64	11	75
ELDERS	8	67	75
TOTAL	**72**	**78**	**150**

HO – There is no significant relationship between age and country of origin affecting purchase decision of the respondents.

HA – There is a significant relationship between age and country of origin affecting purchase decision of the respondents.

OBSERVED	EXPECTED	{O –E}^2/E
64	36	21.777
11	39	20.102
8	36	21.777
67	39	20.102
TOTAL		**83.758**

CALCULATED VALUE	83.758
TABLE VALUE	3.841

Since calculated value is greater than the table value HO is rejected. So there is a significant relationship between age and country of origin affecting purchase decision of the respondents.

<u>TABLE NO. 11</u> – AGE AND RESPONDENTS RESPONSE FOR COMPARISON OF WEBSITES BEFORE MAKING PURCHASE DECISION:

CATEGORY	YES	NO	TOTAL
YOUTH	61	14	75
ELDERS	18	57	75
TOTAL	**79**	**71**	**150**

HO – There is no significant relationship between age and respondents response for comparison of websites before making purchase decision.

HA – There is a significant relationship between age and respondents response for comparison of websites before making purchase decision.

OBSERVED	EXPECTED	{O –E}^2/E
61	39.5	11.702
14	35.5	13.021
18	39.5	11.702
57	35.5	13.021
TOTAL		**49.446**

CALCULATED VALUE	49.446
TABLE VALUE	3.841

Since calculated value is greater than the table value HO is rejected. So there is a significant relationship between age and respondents response for comparison of websites before making purchase decision.

<u>TABLE NO. 12</u> – AGE AND BRAND EQUITY OF THE RESPONDENTS:

CATEGORY	YES	NO	TOTAL
YOUTH	49	26	75
ELDERS	52	23	75
TOTAL	**101**	**49**	**150**

HO – There is no significant relationship between age and brand equity of the respondents.

HA – There is a significant relationship between age and brand equity of the respondents

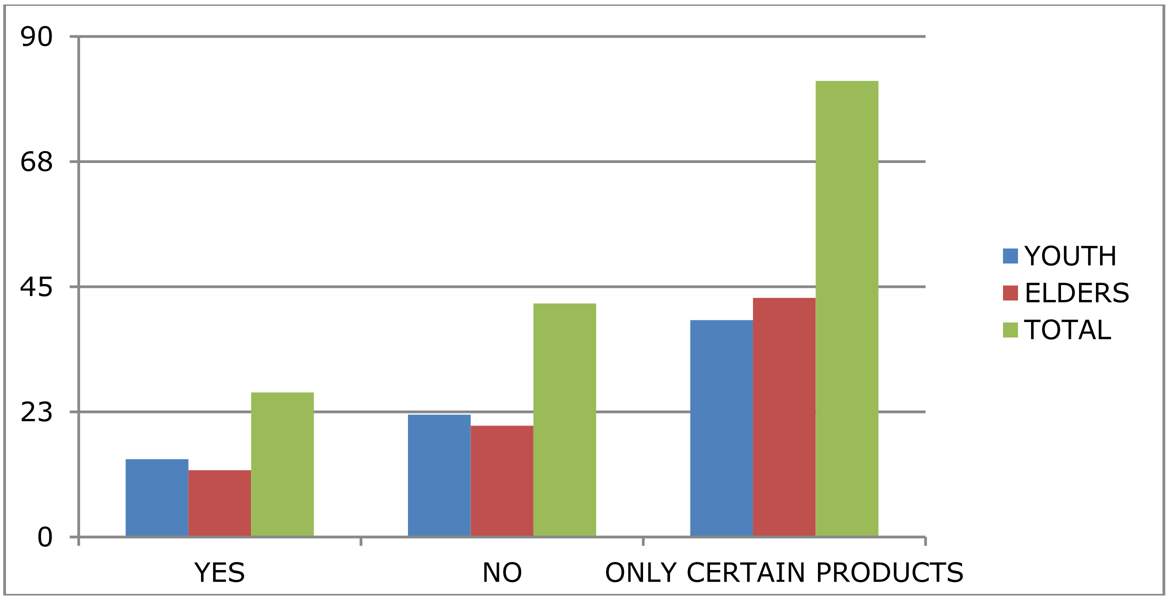
OBSERVED	EXPECTED	{O –E}^2/E
49	50.5	0.044
26	24.5	0.092
52	50.5	0.044
23	24.5	0.092
TOTAL		**0.272**

CALCULATED VALUE	0.272
TABLE VALUE	3.841

Since calculated value is lesser than the table value HO is accepted. So there is no significant relationship between age and brand equity of the respondents.

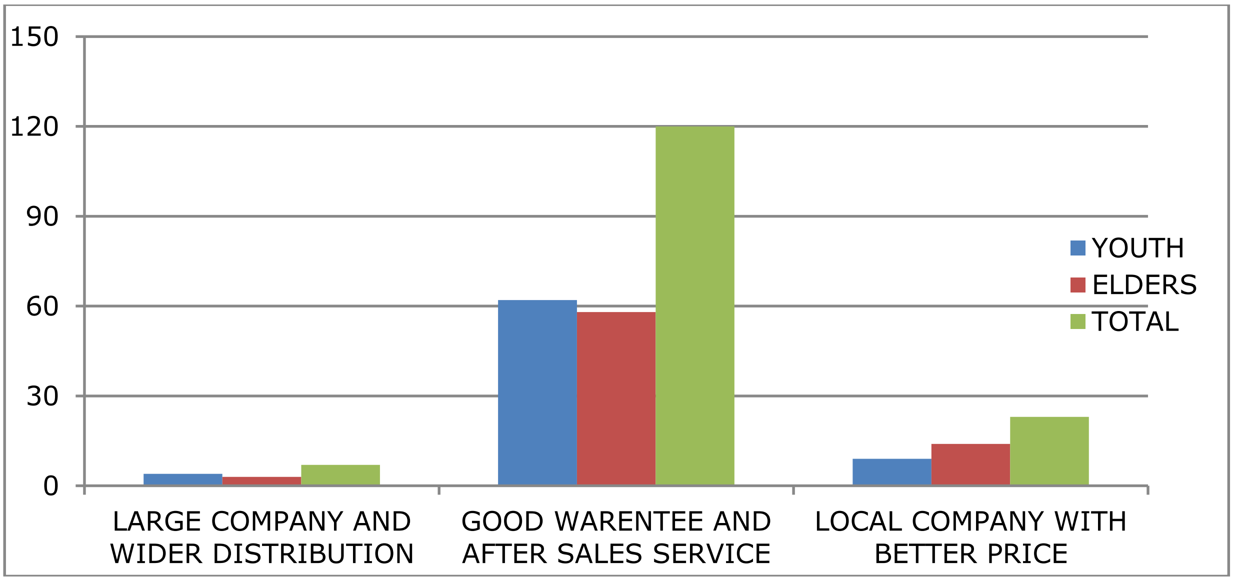
GRAPH NO 1: DO YOU BUY ONLY BRANDED PRODUCTS?

CATEGORY	YES	NO	ONLY CERTAIN PRODUCTS	TOTAL
YOUTH	14	22	39	75
ELDERS	12	20	43	75
TOTAL	**26**	**42**	**82**	**150**



GRAPH NO. 2: PRODUCT PREFERENCE OF THE RESPONDENTS:

CATEGORY	LARGE COMPANY AND WIDER DISTRIBUTION	GOOD WARENTEE AND AFTER SALES SERVICE	LOCAL COMPANY WITH BETTER PRICE	TOTAL
YOUTH	4	62	9	75
ELDERS	3	58	14	75
TOTAL	**7**	**120**	**23**	**150**



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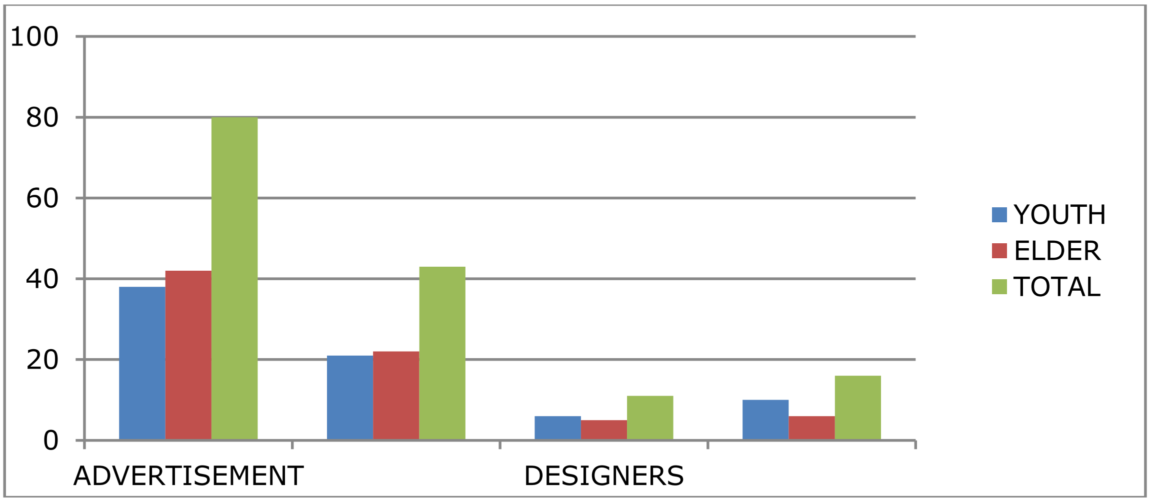
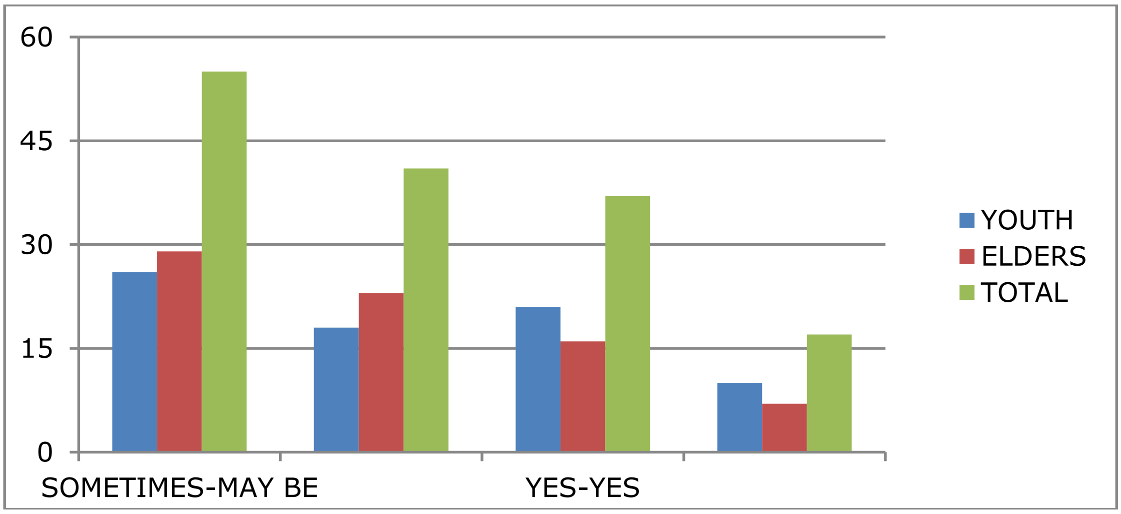


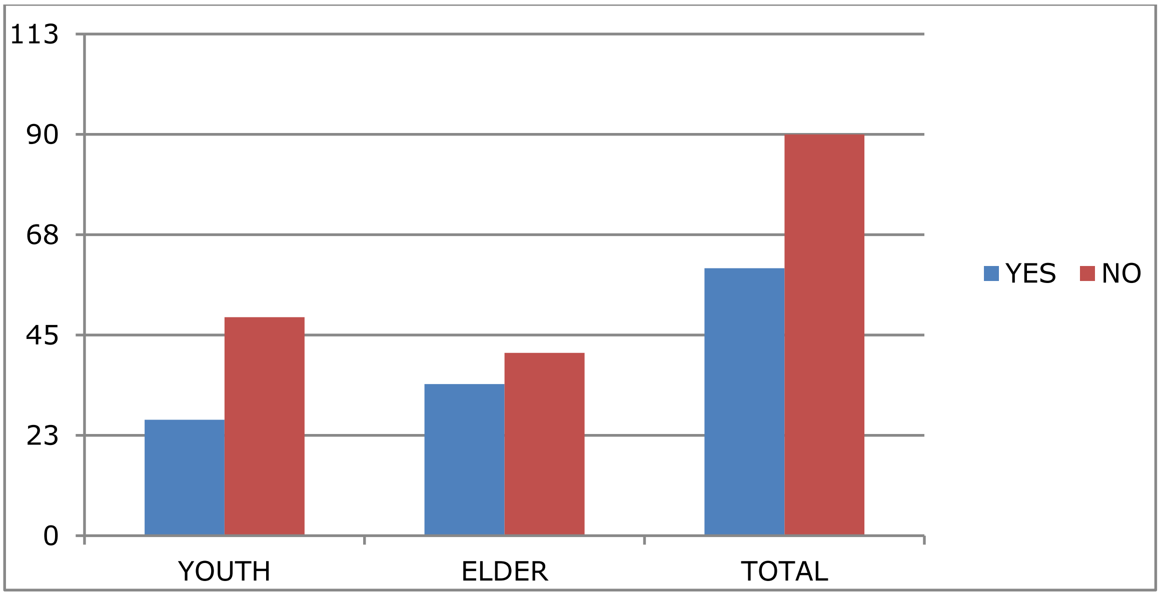
GRAPH NO. 4 – ARE POPULAR CELEBRITIES GOOD AMBASSADORS AND INVESTING IN THEM IS A GOOD STRATEGY?

CATEGORY	SOMETIMES-MAY BE	NO-NO	YES-YES	RARELY-NOT SURE	TOTAL
YOUTH	26	18	21	10	75
ELDERS	29	23	16	7	75
TOTAL	55	41	37	17	150



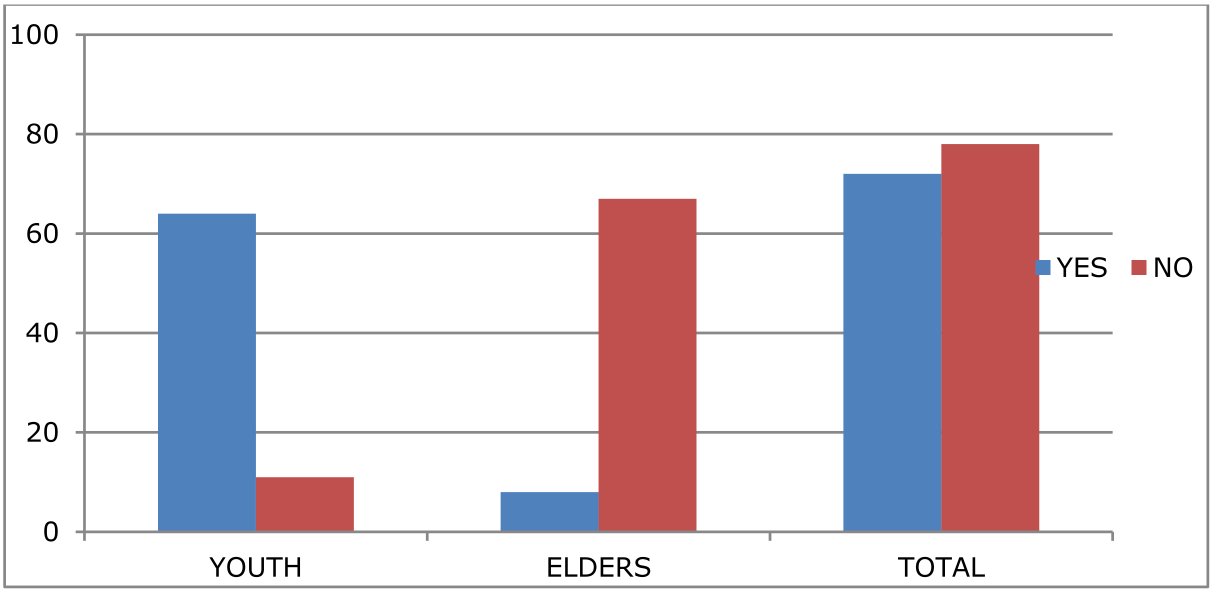
GRAPH NO. 5 –DO UNBRANDED PRODUCTS GIVE SAME SATISFACTION?

CATEGORY	YES	NO	TOTAL
YOUTH	26	49	75
ELDER	34	41	75
TOTAL	**60**	**90**	**150**



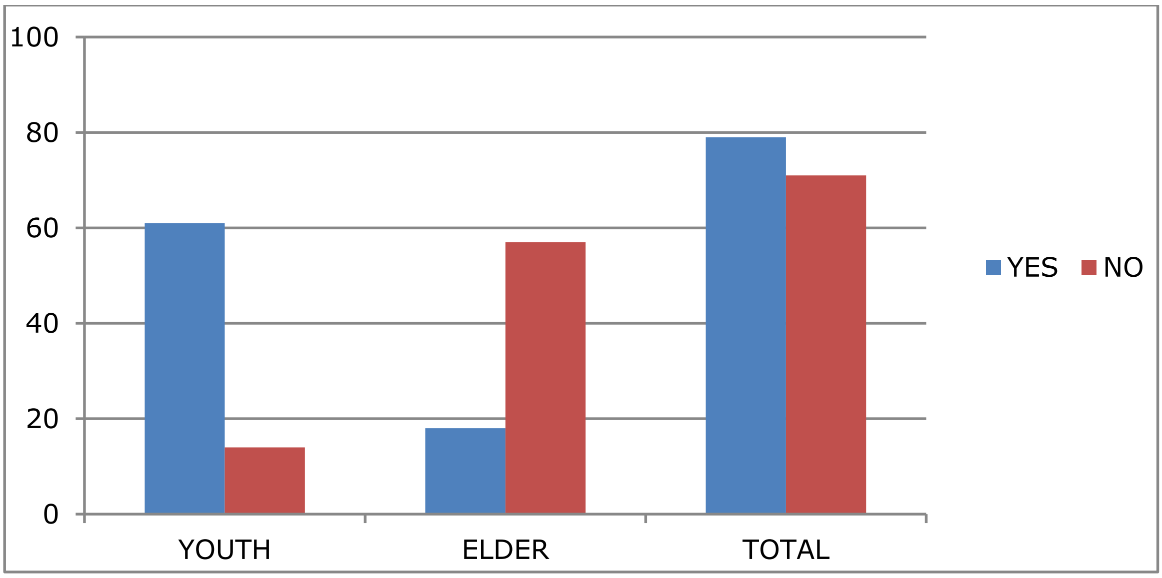
GRAPH NO.6 – COUNTRY OF ORIGIN AFFECTING PURCHASE DECISION OF THE RESPONDENTS:

CATEGORY	YES	NO	TOTAL
YOUTH	64	11	75
ELDERS	8	67	75
TOTAL	**72**	**78**	**150**



GRAPH NO.7 – RESPONDENTS RESPONSE FOR COMPARISON OF WEBSITES BEFORE MAKING PURCHASE DECISION:

CATEGORY	YES	NO	TOTAL
YOUTH	61	14	75
ELDER	18	57	75
TOTAL	**79**	**71**	**150**



FINDINGS FROM THE STUDY:

- Advertisement is the most popular medium that creates brand awareness amongst both the groups
- Both the groups don't prefer branded products for basic necessities.
- Youth and elders prefer brands; as increase in income people become more brand conscious.
- Around 89%of youth believe that the country of origin of the products have an impact in their purchase decision.
- Majority of elders purchase decision is not affected by the brands country of origin.
- Around 77% of youth compare shops or websites before purchasing products of different brands.
- Majority of elders [around 80%] of the respondents does not compare websites before making purchase decision.
- There is a significant relationship between income and brand consciousness of the respondents.
- There is no significant relationship between age and brand consciousness of the respondents.
- There is a significant relationship between age group and country of origin affecting purchase decision of the respondents.
- There is a significant relationship between age group and respondent's response on comparison of websites before making purchase decision.
- There is no significant relationship between age group and brand equity of the respondents.
- Both the groups believe that products from companies with good warrantee and after sales service is most preferred one.
- Youth and elders do not believe the idea of investing huge amounts of money on celebrities as a good strategy.
- When compared to youth ; elders more strongly believe that celebrities are not the only reason behind brand consciousness.
- Around 57 % of the elders get the same satisfaction from unbranded products when compared to branded ones. It is because of the quality of branded goods and the risk factor that lies in the unbranded goods make them more brand conscious.
- 54% of the youth doesn't get same satisfaction from unbranded products when compared to the branded ones and that is why they are more brand conscious.

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CONCLUSION:

One of the significant observations from the analysis is that both youth and elders are brand conscious. It is the income factor which plays a major role in creating brand consciousness. The above study has proved that income has a direct significant relationship with the brand consciousness of the respondents which means that increase in income leads to be more brand conscious. Though unbranded goods provide same satisfaction to an extent when compared to branded products it is because of the quality of branded goods and the risk factor that lies in the unbranded goods make the respondents more brand conscious. A brand aims to segment the market in order to differentiate supply and fulfil the expectations of specific groups of customers. Products cannot speak for themselves; the brand is what gives them meaning and speaks of them. Today, brands are considered to be among the greatest strengths of a company and the brand image is very important. It is what people remember, if they remember at all. Brand image is built with the logo, name and slogan all consistently speaking about the USP of the brand. Strong brands command premium, they do well during economic slowdown and can be extended to new businesses with ease. It has been aptly said, a great brand is tested by time, chiselled by contest and rejuvenated by relationship.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

A SURVEY ON BRAND CONSCIOUSNESS AMONG YOUTH Vs ELDER PEOPLE IN CHENNAI

NAME:

AGE:

SEX:

What is your family income?

a) Below Rs.25000 per month
b) Between Rs.25000 – 50000 per month
c) Above Rs.50000 per month

1. Do you buy only branded products?

a) Yes
b) No
c) Only certain products

2. What made you aware about these brands?

a) Advertisements
b) Colleagues and friends
c) Designers
d) Malls

3. Are you independent in making your purchase decision?

a) Yes
b) No

4. Do you prefer to buy branded products for basic necessity also?

a) Yes
b) No

5. Does selecting a particular brand give you a sense of satisfaction?

a) Yes
b) No

6. Do you think premium products cater to only the higher income segment?

a) Yes
b) No
c) Often
d) Can't say

7. Do you think with increase in income, people become more brand conscious?
   a) Yes
   b) No
   c) May be

8. Pick the right option
   a) You are only price conscious
   b) Your are only brand conscious
   c) You are both price and brand conscious
   d) Your are neither price conscious not brand conscious

9. You choose branded products because
   a) prestige
   b) fashion
   c) brand name
   d) quality
   e) they are impressive
   f) others--------

10. Do you think companies can reduce the price and still maintain a good quality?
   a) Yes
   b) No

11. Do you mind paying a few rupees more to get branded products?
   a) Yes
   b) No
   c) May be
   d) Often

12. Do you believe in products that are endorsed by your favourite celebrities?
   a) Yes
   b) No

13. Which of the following do you prefer?
   a) products from larger companies and wider distribution
   b) products from companies with good warrantee and after sales service
   c) products from local companies with better price

14. Does the country of origin affect your product purchase decision?

   a) Yes
   b) No

15. Are popular celebrities good ambassadors and its investing in them is a good strategy?

   a) sometimes, maybe
   b) No-No
   c) yes, yes
   d) rarely, not sure

16. Do you compare shops or websites while products of different brands?

   a) Yes
   b) No

17. Do you generally spend excess money on shopping than what you decide before the shopping experience?

   a) Yes
   b) No

18. What made you aware about these brands?

   a) Advertisements
   b) Colleagues and friends
   c) Designers
   d) Malls

19. Do unbranded products give you the same satisfaction when compared to branded ones?

   a) Yes
   b) No