

Full Length Research Paper

Attitude of the youth and entertainment in Coimbatore City

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The spending pattern, attitudes and lifestyles of Indian 'young consumers' have great impact on marketers. These young people populate the future markets and have a tremendous amount of discretionary spending power today. Youth are occupying pivotal positions in the marketing sector duly compensated by higher style of living. The lifestyles and attitudes have brought about a distinct transformation in the entertainment needs when compared to those of the past. Youths in India are already having an enormous impact on the economy, on companies and on culture. Youths are 'the consumers of today, the growth engine of tomorrow'. This generational shift in attitudes is more important because this growth is growing so rapidly. By 2015, Indians under 20 will make up 55% of the population- and yield proportionately higher spending power. This research paper analyses the Values, Attitudes and Lifestyles (VALS) of youth in Coimbatore and its impact on the share of pocket towards entertainment activities.

Key words: Value, attitudes, lifestyles, Coimbatore, entertainment.

INTRODUCTION

A visitor coming to Coimbatore would first note the changing face of Coimbatore with its towering constructions and flurry of activity. Coimbatore is the hub for industrial activities which are on the growth chart and with the establishment of the ITES, the scenario is very promising. High earning and high living is the current trend. The question is if these superficial changes have changed the mindset of the Coimbatoreans. The society and people of Coimbatore have not yet wholly embraced consumerism like all the other metros and big cities like Chennai and Bangalore. In spite of having a steady flow of IT professionals, students from other states and other job seeking migrates; the city has not improved much entertainment wise.

This lack of entertainment pushes the fun seeking young souls out during weekends and holidays. A visit to the Nilgiris hills or a bus ride to Chennai or Bangalore is

slowly becoming the norm. Consumerism today has gained immense ground in promoting a highly consumptive culture. Young consumers are being targeted as 'special' consumers and this impacts their thought processes and consumption patterns. Today, the demographics in favour of youth are enormous. Yes, India is a young country with a massive population below the age group of 35. While we can quibble about the size or the purchasing power, the size is still extremely interesting to a host of marketers both global and local. Yet, many entertainment centres like "Reload the Fun", an adventure games provider, has been beaten to the dust in their quest to crack the youth market. Probably, some of them are ahead of their time. A few others might have got their strategies wrong. But the time is right for many others to get in and stay in there. The best for this is to engage themselves with today's youth. So, through this research, a trial is made to understand the attitude of the Youth and suggest an entertainment that would best fit entertainment needs of the overall youth population in Coimbatore.

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The acronym VALS, (for "Values, Attitudes and Lifestyles") is a psychographic segmentation. It was developed in the 1970's to explain changing U.S. values and lifestyles. It has since been reworked to enhance its ability to predict consumer behaviour. Segmentation research based on VALS is a product of SRI Consulting Business Intelligence. According to the VALS framework, groups of people are arranged in a rectangle and are based on two dimensions. The vertical dimension segments people based on the degree to which they are innovative and have resources such as income, education, self-confidence, intelligence, leadership skills, and energy.

Consumers driven by knowledge and principles are motivated primarily by ideals. These consumers include groups called Thinkers and Believers. Consumers driven by demonstrating success to their peers are motivated primarily by achievement. These consumers include groups referred to as Achievers and Strivers. Consumers driven by a desire for social or physical activity, variety, and risk taking are motivated primarily by self-expression. These consumers include the groups known as Experiences and Makers. At the top of the rectangle are the Innovators, who have such high resources that they could have any of the three primary motivations. At the bottom of the rectangle are the Survivors, who live complacently and within their means without a strong primary motivation of the types listed earlier. The VALS framework gives more details about each of the eight groups.

Values and lifestyles, a system for grouping consumers according to psychological and sociological theories in order to predict their behaviour in the purchase decision process. VALS can aid in defining targets for creating new entertainment. The concept was introduced in 1978 by the California consulting firm of SRI International.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Attitudes of youth may be shaped by hedonic responses involving simple positive or negative states (Allen et al., 1992).

Through using media to connect, communicate, and build community, young people can simultaneously learn to assess the real from the false and, instead of allowing media to control them, control the media to share the knowledge, experience, and strategies that will allow them to grow up to be healthy responsible, and safe. Children and youth spend more time using media than they do engaged in any other activity (McCrindle, 1981).

Most markets are nowadays so segmented and overstocked that, to sustain or enhance their positions firms are obliged to focus more tightly on their customer portfolio. Hence maintaining consistent purchase behaviour of a brand for a long time becomes a strategic goal for firms to preserve their business and their profits. The consistent purchase of a brand depends on the

consumers perceived benefits related to keeping on this relationship with the brand (Abdelmajid, 1998).

The learning environments which a child is exposed are also assumed to contribute to the increase of aggressive behaviour and attitudes. Media violence as one of specific learning condition is believed to be a potential contributor to the growth of antisocial behaviour in children and youth (Azarian, 2009).

Exposure to violence in video games is associated with lower empathy and stronger proviolence attitudes leading to desensitization to violence in youth (Funk et al., 2004). The power of the electronic media in the 1990s has made the 1960s archetype of how political/civic socialization takes place among youth outmoded. Social studies educators have to revise the old perception of learning and take into account the extensive direct and indirect effects on youth of electronic media. Not only do the electronic media shape perceptions of young people, but there is plenty of evidence that the mature population, including teachers and parents, are affected as well (Hepburn, 1998).

Even though individuals in a specific demographic category share some common characteristic, such as age, sex or income, the psychographics of these groups—their values, motivations and beliefs—are not homogeneous. There are multiple motivations for a behavior, and people in a specific demographic category have a wide range of attitudes. And so there is difference between attitudes and perceptions even among youth (Morgan and Levy, 2003).

The power of youth today is evident in its large numbers, tendency to consume and in its ability to influence larger household decisions. There are three aspects that influence today's purchase decisions of the youth— uniqueness, contemporariness and of course, value equation. The new generation is a generation of spendthrifts as against the old generation of 'thrifths'. At the same time, youth consumers are also looking at the 'value' equation in every purchase. This is probably the reason why they buy products that are well priced but buy them more frequently (Pinakiranjana, 2008).

The youth segment has an influence on consumer spending far in excess of its numerical strength. Youth have always been a prime target for marketers. More so in India now, as two-thirds of the population is below 35 years of age. The youth are "trysumers" (consumers who are willing to try new products) of the Indian market—a group that can play a pivotal role in any marketing campaign (Priyanka, 2009).

The youth market is viewed as a difficult group to connect with and sell to, based on the fragmented media landscape and young people's keen ability to identify and reject marketing messages that lack credibility. Successful brands marketing to youth have a foundation in or association with key interests and drivers among youth: music, sports, fashion, video gaming and technology, among others (Soney and Nagaraj, 2010).

Millennials, who were born between roughly 1980 and

1994, have grown up with more choices and more selectivity in the products and services they use, which is why they do not have, for example, a generational music. They are impatient and goal oriented, learn by doing, and are used to instant feedback. They think it is cool to be smart and have friends from different ethnic backgrounds. They want flexibility — in the classroom and in their lives (Sweeney, 2007). Participation in a community of practice involves developing that community's ways of doing, being, caring, and knowing, and that this way of doing/being/caring/knowing is organized by and around a way of thinking. That is, practice, identity, interest, understanding, and epistemology are bound together into an epistemic frame to be embedded in youth games (Shaffer, 2005).

METHODOLOGY

Keeping in view the various likes and dislikes of the present day generation, a research on the aspirations of the younger sections was taken up. A study in this connection was specially done in respect of the urban youth population in Coimbatore City as it is one of the cosmopolitan cities of India.

Tools to collect data

Primary data was collected from a well structured questionnaire, which was both personally administered and mailed. 100 respondents were chosen non- randomly from various places in Coimbatore City. For the purpose of studying values, attitudes and lifestyles (VALS), the respondents were asked a set of 15 statements on activities, interests and opinions (AIOs). The statements were rated on 5 point likert scale. Equal number of male and female respondents was chosen that is, 50 male respondents and 50 female respondents.

The secondary data has mostly contributed in the area of literature review and also in framing certain questions in the questionnaire and gaining in an insight in the research topic. The data collection of secondary nature has been vastly contributed from various articles, journals and other publications.

Sample for the study

Non- random convenient sampling was followed where the researcher both personally distributed and mailed to 100 respondents chosen from various colleges, malls and hostels in Coimbatore.

Analysis

A paired sample t test was done for every one of the five categories to estimate the difference between the attitude of the males and females. An overall estimate was also taken to find out the favourite form of entertainment for the youth in Coimbatore. All the statements used were given weightage according to their significance to the respective category or orientation.

Family orientation

A family unit builds up a person's personality. Strong bond of family and good values are very important for an individual and his

development. Family is where our roots take hold and from where we grow. We are bonded as a unit, which prepares us for what we will experience in the world and how we react to those experiences. Values are taught at an early age and are carried with us throughout our life. A close family bond is like a safe harbour where we find refuge. The goals which a person set for his/ her life are very much dependent on the life he/ she have with the family (Table 1).

Hypothesis 1

There is a significant difference in the family orientation between the boys and girls. The significance value after performing paired sample t- test is 0.644. Therefore the hypothesis is rejected as the significance value is greater than 0.5. Both the sexes are family oriented (Table 2).

Variety seeking orientation

Variety seeking attitude is when consumers seek to try new activities not because it is expected to be "better" in any way, but rather because the consumer wants a "change of pace." This adventure seeking trend is spreading throughout the world. There is a wander lust yearning in all the youth. The lifestyle of the youth will be a big determinant as far as this attribute is concerned.

Hypothesis 2

There is a significant difference in the variety seeking orientation between boys and girls. The significance value after performing paired sample t- test is 0.312. Therefore the hypothesis is accepted as the significance value is less than 0.5. Males seek more variety than females (Table 3).

Fitness orientation

Size zero, perfect figures and six packs has become a common parlance. The terms "fashionable" and "unfashionable" were employed to describe whether someone or something fits in with the current or even not so current, popular mode of expression. Being fit and healthy is most definitely fashionable. Fitness bug is a rising approach among youth that has affected almost the whole society. Even the manufacturers are in a race to produce a whole lot of trendy and modern gadgets and clothes. Wearing fitting, trendy and designers' clothes have also become a great deal among youngsters.

Hypothesis 3

There is a significant difference in the fitness orientation between the males and females. The significance value after performing paired sample t- test is 0.705. Therefore the hypothesis is rejected as the significance value is greater than 0.5. Both sexes are fitness oriented (Table 4).

Technology orientation

Technical knowledge is the process by which society deliberately transmits its accumulated knowledge, skills and values from one generation to another. Technological expertise is very important in the present day life. Only a literate person can now adjust with the development of society. Getting educated makes man perfect and

Table 1. Psychographic dimensions of the respondents.

S/N	Statements
Family orientation	
1.	Joining my family for entertainment activities is an obligation for me
2.	I prefer to spend my leisure time at home
3.	I prefer to socialise with my family circle
Variety seeking orientation	
4.	I love to experience new activities, it gives me a thrill
5.	I prefer to hang out at a place having a homely atmosphere
6.	Getting an opinion from others before trying new things is better
Fitness seeking orientation	
7.	Physical fitness is very important and I make efforts to keep myself fit
8.	Participating in physical activities is too much effort
9.	Being fit increases my social status
Technology orientation	
10.	I feel handicapped in places with outdated technology
11.	Discussing about gadgets and latest technology in the market is a must
12.	Basic level understanding of electronics and other gadgets is enough
Money spending orientation	
13.	I do not believe in tomorrow, I live for today
14.	I am indulgent when it comes to entertainment activities
15.	I spend money on things that are not practical

Table 2. Hypothesis 1.

Paired samples statistics					
	Sex	Mean	N	Std. deviation	Std. error mean
Pair 1	Male	19.4000	15	14.14618	3.65253
	Female	21.2000	15	16.88279	4.35912
Paired samples correlations					
	Sex	N	Correlation	Sig.	
Pair 1	Male and female	15	0.558	0.031	

eligible. Gaming and many IT based games are gaining ground globally. The gaming culture has already set in many countries.

Hypothesis 4

There is a significant difference in the technology orientation between both sexes. The significance value after performing paired sample t- test is 0.654. Therefore the hypothesis is rejected as the significance value is greater than 0.5. Both sexes are technology oriented and seem to be showing interest (Table 5).

Money spending orientation

Shopping is the examining of goods or services from retailers with the intent to purchase at that time. To many, spending money and

shopping is considered a recreational and diversional activity in which one visit a variety of stores with a premeditated intent to purchase a product. Shopping is recognized as an addiction. Also referred as shopping addiction, "shopaholism" or shopaholics, these shoppers have an impulsive uncontrollable urge to shop. The Coimbatore society has a reputation of being conservative; through measuring the money spending attitude of the youth, we can judge how much it has changed.

Hypothesis 5

There is a significant difference in the money spending orientation between the males and the females. The significance value after performing paired sample t- test is 0.306. Therefore the hypothesis is accepted as the significance value is less than 0.5. Money spending behaviour is different in the boys and girls. Girls are a little

Table 3. Hypothesis 2.

Paired samples statistics					
	Sex	Mean	N	Std. deviation	Std. error mean
Pair 1	Male	20.6667	15	17.67026	4.56244
	Female	22.2667	15	20.89931	5.39618
Paired samples correlations					
	Sex		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	Male and female		15	0.667	0.007

Table 4. Hypothesis 3.

Paired samples statistics					
	Sex	Mean	N	Std. deviation	Std. error mean
Pair 1	Male	20.4667	15	20.41661	5.27155
	Female	22.8000	15	22.57116	5.82785
Paired samples correlations					
	Sex		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	Male and female		15	0.582	0.023

Table 5. Hypothesis 4.

Paired samples statistics					
	Sex	Mean	N	Std. deviation	Std. error mean
Pair 1	Male	22.6000	15	15.31946	3.95547
	Female	17.4000	15	17.12475	4.42159
Paired samples correlations					
	Sex		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	Male and female		15	0.321	0.244

more conservative and boys are more open to spending for entertainment (Table 6).

RESULTS

Men and women tend to have different attitudinal and behavioural orientations, based partly on genetic makeup and partly on socialization practices. As far as family orientation is considered, both the male and female youth in Coimbatore have strong family ties. Both sexes seem to share equal interest in technology and need to be fit. But when it comes to experience different variety of entertainments and spending patterns there is a significant difference between the males and females. The Youth in Coimbatore have responded that activities involving gaming closely followed by dancing are the

most favourite form of entertainment. The Coimbatoreans are still in a transition state. It will take a few more years for the society to embrace consumerism (Figure 1).

Conclusion

Based on the findings from this research, an entrepreneur intending to start a new entertainment venture in Coimbatore can design his design and entertainment house accordingly.

- (1) The venture should be a family entertainer, that is, it should appeal to all members of the family.
- (2) The upper and upper middle class citizens of Coimbatore have exclusive clubs to cater for their entertainment needs but there is a huge gap in entertainment

Table 6. Hypothesis 5.

Paired samples statistics					
	Sex	Mean	N	Std. deviation	Std. error mean
Pair 1	Male	18.5333	15	18.74973	4.84116
	Female	16.2000	15	14.41329	3.72149

Paired samples correlations				
	Sex	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	Male and female	15	0.897	0.244

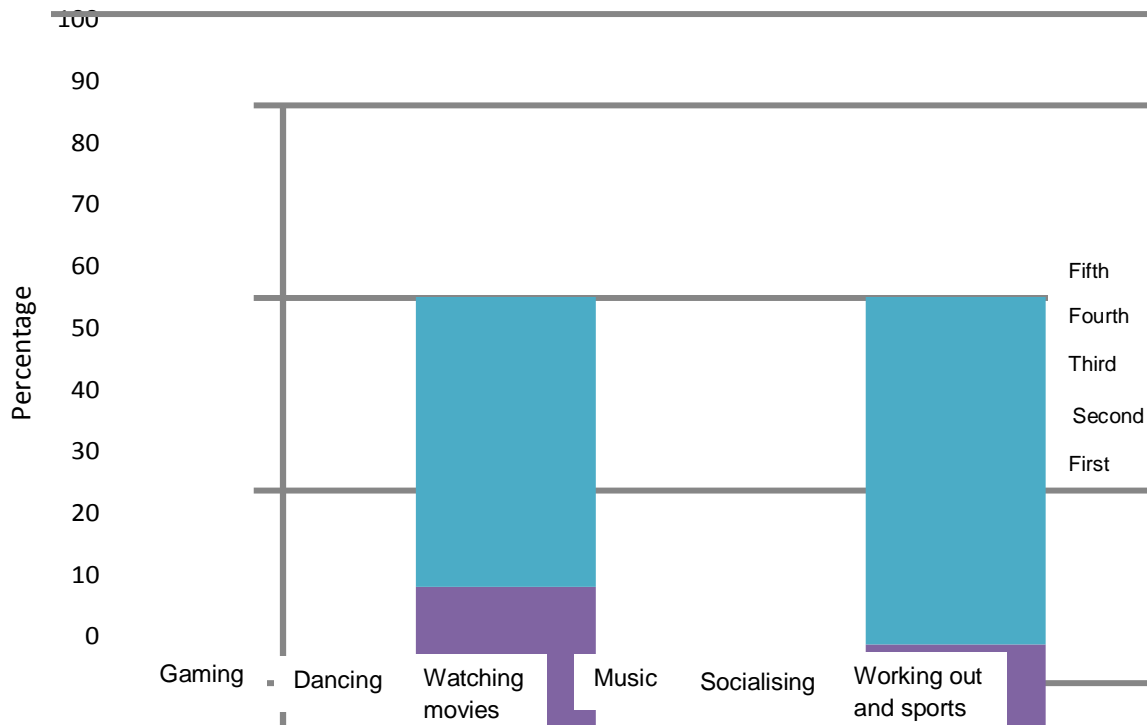


Figure 1. Favourite form of entertainment.

needs for the rest of the people. So an economical entertainment club with an appropriate balance of technology and fitness orientation has a high probability for success. That is, the club house can have a well furnished room, with the right set of gadgets and proper ambience for group gaming can be made available for the members.

(3) The male youth are more open to spending for entertainment, so this can be kept in mind while pricing the service and the female population seek more variety, this attribute has to be given importance while designing end bundling the entertainment venture.

(4) The youth of Coimbatore are highly energetic and geared up as lots of new entertainment and employment opportunities mushroom all over the city. Besides, marketers are moving their focus from metros like

Chennai, Bangalore which are almost saturated to cities like Coimbatore which are far more promising.

(5) The youth although dictated in their values and beliefs by strong family ties have a modern western lifestyle. The results of the survey are proof that they are giving more importance to physical fitness and designer clothes which is an indication that they are more self conscious and social status and standing is beginning to count. Any entertainment venture designed should be pricey, while being stylish and innovative with a variety of value offerings.

- (i) Pricey- Because the males have no qualms about spending.
- (ii) Stylish- As it is all about 'standing out' in the crowd.
- (iii) Innovative- To satisfy the youth's quest for adventure.

(iv) Variety- To draw the female population and the family crowd to an extent. Besides the entertainment venture could be a multiplex with combined gaming, fitness and a disco as well as a cultural event hall as these seem to be the most preferred entertainment activities.

Marketers must design and invest on such entertainment ventures after considering the changing preferences and value systems of the youth who make up a majority of their target population.

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