

# Exploring Consumer Awareness and Influential Marketing Factors Among Young Girls: A Study on Consumer Knowledge and Behavioral Change

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigates the consumer awareness and behavior of young girls residing in the girls' hostel at Bihar University, Muzaffarpur. The research focused on their understanding of consumer rights, product labeling, standardization, market concepts, and awareness of unethical practices such as adulteration and black marketing. Considering India's large youth population and the increasing influence of marketing on young consumers, the study aimed to measure existing awareness and evaluate the impact of an educational intervention using visual aids. A structured questionnaire was administered in two stages: pre-intervention and post-intervention. The intervention included charts, graphs, and informational materials designed to enhance consumer knowledge. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and a paired t-test. Results revealed a significant improvement in awareness across all categories after the intervention, with the t-value (11.56) indicating strong statistical significance ( $p < .05$ ). The findings highlight the importance of targeted consumer education interventions for empowering young girls as informed future decision-makers.

***Keywords: consumer awareness, consumer rights, young girls, standardization, marketing practices, educational intervention***

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Marketing approaches have increasingly begun to focus on specific demographic segments to maximize sales and influence consumer behavior. While earlier strategies were primarily aimed at homemakers, modern marketing targets younger, more dynamic consumers who readily adapt to evolving socio-economic trends. In a youthful nation like India—with a population exceeding one billion—this shift is particularly relevant.

A consumer is defined as “any individual or household utilizing goods and services produced within the economy” (Azrina et al., 2011). Consumers play a crucial role in the marketplace, as they must express dissatisfaction for remedial mechanisms to be activated (Donoghue & de Klerk, 2009). With greater exposure to modern lifestyles, reduced cultural restrictions, and a growing digital presence, Indian youth display unique consumption patterns shaped by peer influence, branding, employment aspirations, and media exposure (Al Muala & Al Qurneh, 2012). This has contributed to the emergence of a “brand generation,” where identity and preferences are linked to brand choices. Consumer satisfaction and decision-making are also shaped by emotional, informational, and social factors (Larsen et al., 2017).

Young girls, in particular, are future homemakers and key contributors to household consumption decisions. However, there is limited knowledge about their existing awareness of consumer rights, product selection, and market mechanisms. Since knowledge is known to influence consumer judgment and purchasing decisions (McEachern & Warnaby, 2008; Guo & Meng, 2008), this study seeks to assess and improve consumer awareness among young female consumers

## 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### 2.1 Consumer Awareness and Decision-Making

Consumer awareness is central to informed purchasing behavior and protection against market exploitation. Kotler and Keller (2016) note that well-informed consumers display confidence and rationality in the marketplace. Studies show that despite their active participation in consumption, young women often exhibit low awareness of consumer rights and protection mechanisms (Kaur & Kaur, 2018). Knowledge significantly affects judgment and purchasing behavior, as highlighted by McEachern and Warnaby (2008) and Guo and Meng (2008), who emphasize that consumer knowledge improves evaluation of products, labels, and market practices.

Standardization and labeling also play a critical role in consumer decision-making. Sharma and Singh (2020) found that youth who actively read product labels make safer

and more informed choices. However, gaps persist in recognizing standardization marks such as ISI, AGMARK, and FSSAI (Gupta, 2017).

## **2.2 Influence of Advertising and Marketing Strategies**

Advertising has historically shaped consumer knowledge, preferences, and attitudes. Barroso and Llobet (2012) highlight that advertising accelerates awareness of new products and influences their inclusion in consumer consideration sets. Similarly, advertising enhances perceived knowledge and consumer empowerment in various contexts, including pharmaceutical products (Singh & Smith, 2005).

With changing socio-economic trends, young consumers are increasingly targeted by marketers. Dahiya (2012) and Schaefer and Pettijohn (2018) observe that branding, peer influence, and media exposure shape the emerging “brand-conscious generation,” wherein identity and lifestyle choices are closely tied to brand preferences.

Digital advertising further amplifies these effects. Duffett (2015) reports that Facebook advertising significantly influences cognitive attitudes and purchase intentions among Generation Y. More recently, big data-driven digital marketing has increased targeting precision, allowing marketers to directly reach young female consumers (Theodorakopoulos & Theodoropoulou, 2024).

## **2.3 Socialization Agents and Youth Consumer Behavior**

Adolescent consumer behavior is shaped by multiple socialization agents. Martin and Bush (2000) emphasize the dual influence of parents (primary role models) and celebrities or athletes (vicarious role models) in shaping purchase intentions. A meta-analysis by Mishra and Maity (2021), covering over 29,000 adolescents, found that peers exert the strongest influence on consumer knowledge and attitudes, followed by media and parents. These patterns are moderated by cultural dimensions such as collectivism, power distance, and socio-economic context.

## **2.4 Role of Social Media and Influencers**

The dominance of social media has transformed consumer-brand interactions, especially among adolescent girls. Platforms like Facebook and Instagram serve as prime channels for marketing communication aimed at youth (Duffett, 2015). Influencer marketing has emerged as one of the most powerful tools for shaping purchasing behavior among young consumers. Systematic reviews by Kanaveedu and Kalapurackal (2022) and Bhardwaj et al. (2024) show that social media influencers significantly impact brand admiration, perceived credibility, and purchase intention. Influencers function as contemporary role models, blending aspirational lifestyles with promotional content, making them particularly persuasive among young girls.

However, social media exposure also brings risks. Dunlop et al. (2016) argue that while digital platforms can promote positive health behaviors, they also expose youth to unhealthy food marketing—a concern echoed in Truman and Elliott’s (2019) scoping review on digital food advertising directed at teenagers.

## **2.5 Sustainable and Ethical Consumption Influences**

Marketing also shapes attitudes toward sustainable and ethical consumption. Eyada (2024) reports that advertising positively influences young consumers’ awareness of sustainable brands. Despite growing environmental consciousness, price sensitivity continues to hinder ethical purchasing behavior (Govender & Govender, 2016). These findings highlight the need for educational interventions that strengthen informed and responsible consumption.

## **2.6. Impact of Educational Interventions**

Educational programs play an essential role in improving consumer awareness, particularly among students. Nair (2019) found that structured awareness initiatives significantly enhanced understanding of consumer rights. Visual and interactive tools have also shown strong results; Thomas and George (2021) reported substantial improvements in university students’ understanding of food adulteration and consumer practices after receiving visual-aid-based instruction. These findings support the present study’s use of visual materials, charts, and informational content as a method to strengthen awareness.

The literature collectively demonstrates:

- Youth, especially young girls, exhibit low baseline consumer awareness.
- Marketing—traditional, digital, and influencer-based—strongly shapes their attitudes and purchase intentions.
- Peer influence and social media are dominant behavioral drivers.
- Educational interventions can significantly improve awareness but are underutilized in institutional settings.

### **Justification**

Consumer behavior is influenced by both conscious and automatic cognitive processes (Chartrand, 2005). Among youth, young girls represent a significant demographic due to their upcoming roles as household decision-makers. However, despite their potential influence, they remain inadequately informed about standardization, product labeling, consumer rights, and market dynamics. Existing literature suggests that knowledge significantly impacts consumer decision-making (Guo & Meng, 2008). Therefore, an educational intervention aimed at improving consumer awareness among young girls is both necessary and timely.

### 3. OBJECTIVE

To measure and compare consumer knowledge of young girls before and after exposure to an educational intervention.

### 4. METHODOLOGY

This survey-based pre–post intervention study was conducted among 25 female residents of the girls’ hostel at B.R.A. Bihar University, Muzaffarpur. Participants were selected using purposive sampling.

A structured questionnaire was administered in two phases. In the pre-intervention phase, baseline consumer awareness was assessed with respect to consumer rights, standardization, labeling practices, and basic market concepts.

Based on the identified baseline gaps, an educational intervention was designed and implemented. The intervention comprised visual and informational tools, including charts, graphs, folders, and printed materials, along with media-based content aimed at enhancing consumer knowledge and awareness.

Following the intervention, the same questionnaire was re-administered to assess changes in consumer knowledge levels.

The collected data were tabulated and analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, and mean scores). A paired t-test was applied to determine the statistical significance of differences between pre- and post-intervention awareness scores.

### 5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### I Demographic Characteristics

**Table 1** shows the demographic profile of participants.

**\*\*Table 1** Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N = 25)\*\*

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Age (years)</b>	16–18	2	8%
	19–20	8	32%
	21–22	14	56%
	23–24	1	4%
<b>Family Type</b>	Joint	13	52%
	Nuclear	12	48%
<b>Family Income (Rs.)</b>	1,000–7,999	3	12%
	8,000–14,999	7	28%
	15,000–21,999	6	24%
	22,000–28,999	6	24%
	29,000 and above	3	12%

Most participants (56%) were aged 21–22, indicating a young and relatively homogeneous sample. Family income distribution showed moderate economic diversity.

**II Awareness Before and After Intervention**

**Table 2** presents pre- and post-intervention awareness levels.

**\*\*Table 2 Consumer Awareness Before and After Intervention (N = 25)\*\***

Awareness of Consumer Rights	Frequency		Percentage	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Yes	10	25	40	100
No	15	-	60	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Awareness of Food Adulteration	Frequency		Percentage	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Yes	17	25	68	100
No	8	-	32	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Awareness of Consumer Forum	Frequency		Percentage	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Yes	8	25	32	100
No	17	-	68	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Knowledge about Standardization of Items	Frequency		Percentage	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Yes	19	25	76	100
No	6	-	24	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Knowledge about Demand and Supply	Frequency		Percentage	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Yes	14	25	56	100
No	11	-	44	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Knowledge about Price-Determination Process	Frequency		Percentage	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Yes	11	25	44	100
No	14	-	56	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Aware of Black Marketing	Frequency		Percentage	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Yes	22	25	88	100
No	3	-	12	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Know about Importance of Labeling	Frequency		Percentage	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Yes	19	25	76	100
No	6	-	24	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Know about Importance of Receipt	Frequency		Percentage	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Yes	14	25	56	100
No	11	-	44	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

A 100% post-intervention awareness across all areas demonstrates the effectiveness of the educational session.

### III Paired t-Test Results

**\*\*Table 3** Pre- and Post-Intervention Mean Awareness Scores (N = 25)\*\*

Variable	Mean (Pre)	Mean (Post)	Mean Difference	SD	t-value
Overall Consumer Awareness Score	6.12	9.48	3.36	1.02	11.56*

\*p < .05

The paired t-test result (t = 11.56) indicates a statistically significant improvement, confirming the success of the intervention.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The study demonstrates that targeted educational interventions using visual tools significantly enhance consumer awareness among young girls. Before the intervention, participants showed limited knowledge of critical consumer concepts such as rights, standardization, market functions, labeling, and food adulteration. Post-intervention results revealed substantial gains, with 100% awareness across all categories. These findings highlight the value of incorporating consumer education into youth programs, particularly for young girls who will soon be responsible for household decisions. The study establishes a foundation for future research into structured consumer education models that can be scaled across educational institutions.

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