

SCALE DEVELOPMENT FOR THE DECISION MAKING STYLES OF IRANIAN YOUTH

Fariba Lotfizadeh¹ and Fereshteh Lotfizadeh^{2*}

¹Master of Entrepreneurship Management, Department of Entrepreneurship, Tehran University, Tehran, Iran and

²Assistant Professor of Marketing, Department of Business Management, Zanjan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Zanjan, Iran

ABSTRACT: *The purpose of this article is to investigate the divergent approaches of Iranian couples towards purchasing activities. A questionnaire comprising 55 items was distributed among 400 couples in shopping centers in order to examine their Decision Making Styles. Analyses conducted included scale reliabilities and validities, as well as EFA and CFA were utilized. Seven Decision Making Styles among Iranian couples associated with their shopping patterns were perceived. The findings indicated that Decision Making Styles are culture-specific phenomena and differ among nations. While generally supportive of the CSI, the findings require more validation. The results can be employed to help enhance the effectiveness of marketers' and sociologists' strategies. The present research strives to clarify the Decision Making Styles of couples so as to provide marketers interested in the decision making profile of Iranian consumers with information and therefore enable them to construct their marketing attempts accordingly.*

KEYWORDS: Consumer Decision Making Style, CSI, Iranian Couples.

INTRODUCTION

Over the last three decades, Iran has undergone some changes, one of which an increase in population and civilization. Consequently, a large number of shopping centers have been built for consumers; moreover, new promotional actions and distribution channels have altered shopping behaviors.

It is also evident that a better understanding of the decision making behavior of Iranian couples will contribute to the fulfillment of the requirements of consumer research. The recognition of CDMS will enable marketers to render their offering distinct. This is particularly useful in the investigation of the standardization of multi-national marketing strategies. It has been suggested by Sproles and Kendall (1986, p.267) that recognition of decision making styles helps "to profile an individual consumer style, educate consumers about their specific decision making characteristics, and counsel families on financial management."

The bulk of research on DMS has been conducted on European and American societies and Asian countries have received less attention. Thus, this study focuses on the recognition of Iranian DMS. In addition, as Fan and Xio (1998) have specified, when compared with each other, CDM styles from different countries would contribute to the comprehension of the influence of market environment upon consumer DM styles. Therefore, this article assists marketers interested in Iranian DM styles in generating their marketing strategies. The theoretical framework for DMS and marketing for Iranian couples is given below.

As academic studies have become more and more popular among the youth, the importance of marketing to this sector has increased. Decision making styles are one of the many fundamental challenges which still exist in the field of marketing and consumer behavior. Apart from this challenge, attention to Iranian consumers has also been limited. Combining these two issues together, we strive to realize the decision making styles of Iranian consumers and how they differ from those of other nations.

So the present study aims at answering the following questions with an exploratory approach:

- 1- How do Iranian couples make their purchasing decisions?
- 2- Are the Iranians' decision-making styles different from those of consumers in other nations?

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Consumer Decision Making Style (CDMS)

Consumer decision making style can be explained as “a mental orientation characterizing a consumer's approach to making a choice” (Sproles and Kendall, 1986, p. 267).

The examination of consumers' decision making styles can be expressed in terms of a three-dimensional pattern: the psychographic/ lifestyle approach, the consumer typology approach and the consumer characteristics approach. In the latter, consumers follow unique decision-making behaviors to handle their shopping. Thus, providing a quantitative instrument was very useful for marketers' recognition and classification of consumer decision making styles. The origin of this approach can be traced back to Sproles' (1985) research. He measured general orientations towards shopping via an instrument comprising 50 items; principal components factor analysis using Varimax rotation explored six styles for consumers.

Sproles and Kendall (1986) improved this instrument to a limited scale consisting of 40 items. They introduced Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) with eight Consumer Decision Making Styles.

For the purpose of testing the generalizability and validation of CSI, Sproles and Kendall (1986) proposed the evaluation of CSI across different nations. Since its introduction, a series of studies has been conducted with the aim of assessing the generalizability of the CSI within a single country (e.g. Korea: Hafstrom, Chae & Chung, 1992; China: Fan & Xiao, 1998; Hiu, Siu, Wang & Chang, 2001; New Zealand: Durvasula, Lysonski & Andrews, 1993; India: Canabal, 2001; Iran: Hanzae & Aghasibeig, 2008; Germany: Walsh, Mitchell & Thureau, 2001; Walsh & Vincent, 2001; UK: Mitchell & Bates, 1998; South Africa: Radder, Li & Pietersen, 2006; Turkey: Gonen & Osmete, 2006; Kavas & Yesilada, 2007; Malaysia: Wan Omar et al. 2009; Taiwan: Hou & Lin, 2006; Brazil: Dos Santos & Fernandes, 2006) and across different countries (e.g. USA, New Zealand, India and Greece: Lysonski, Durvasula & Zotos, 1996; China and Macau: Ng, 2005; USA and Korea: Wickliffe, 2004).

Furthermore, some researchers have examined the antecedents and consequences of consumer decision making styles, like these. Bauer, Sauer and Becker (2006) investigated the relationship between product involvement and consumer decision making style in Britain and Germany. Wang, Siu and Hui (2004) examined consumer decision making styles on domestic and

imported brand clothing in china. Shim and Koh (1997) analyzed the effects of socialization agents and social- structural variables on adolescent consumer decision making style. Zhou, Arnold, Pereira and Yu (2010) compared Chinese. Salleh (2000) examined consumer decision making style dimensions among distinctive product classes, in Malaysia. Kamaruddin and Mokhlis (2003) examined the relationship among consumer socialization, social structural factors and decision making styles across Malaysian adolescents.

Mitchell and Walsh (2004) analyzed the decision making style in Germany among male and female shoppers. Backwell and Mitchell (2006) compared the decision making style of 480 males and females in Britain. Finally, Hanzae and Aghasibeig (2008) showed that Iranian Generation Y males and females have divergent decision making styles. It can be concluded that previous research is indicative of variety in consumer decision making styles across countries, genders and cultures. Meanwhile, none of these studies have concentrated on spousal decision making styles. It is believed that Iranian couples may have a unique shopping pattern as well as certain distinctive characteristics in terms of their purchasing behavior.

This empirical research supports the following two objectives:

- 1- Proposing a revised Consumer Decision Making Style model more suited for Iranian;
- 2- Comparing the concluded styles with the results of previous research.

Iran's young population

Iran has a population of around 75 million, of which 49.6% are female and 50.4% are male. Iran's economy is the 18th largest economy in the world by Purchasing Power Parity (PPP). Although its economic infrastructure has experienced sustainable improvement over the two past decades, the country continues to be affected by inflation, and sanctions. Today, despite restrictions, Iran possesses a flourishing manufacturing industry, in the fields of automotive manufacture and transportation, construction materials, home appliances, food and produce, etc.

Iran has 21 million households, 18.4% of which are couples without children and 27.1% with only one child. Therefore, 45.5% of Iranians are two or three-person families.

Table 1- The profile of Iranian young people

Profile of Iranian people	Female	Male
Average age of Iranian	30.03	29.70
Average age of first marriage	23.4	26.7
Percentage of young people (between 15-24)	20.1%	19.9%
Percentage of young people (between 15-29)	31.7%	31.4%

Based on table 1, 63.1% Iranian are less than 29 years old. To explore decision making styles, Iran was chosen because of its young population. As a result, their consumption patterns may be different from previous researches done in USA or European countries.

In Iran, some babies were born after the 8 years of Iran-Iraq war. After the war, population boomed, and currently amounts to 15.5 million people. Sociologists and marketers have argued this generation has distinctive characteristics, since it grew up under different circumstances

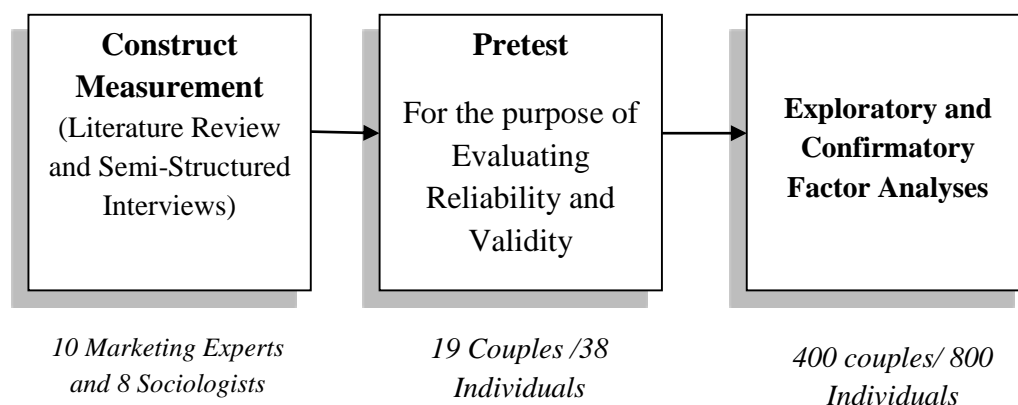
which influenced its lifestyle. It is stated that the youth express their personalities through their shopping behaviors. Based on previous research (Jin & Kim., 2003; Stole et al., 2004), they mostly prefers big shopping centers. Shopping means socialization, the sense of belonging and even entertainment to them. So it is obviously that Iran is a young country.

So an understanding and awareness of Iranian consumers, their decision making styles, purchasing motivations, and the impacts of these motivations, can facilitate the implementation of marketing approaches.

METHODOLOGY

To explore DM styles of Iranian couples, this study implemented a three-phase data collection method to recognize the CDMS in Iran. The aim of the first phase was to construct measurement, using literature review and expert interviews. In the second phase, a pretest was implemented to evaluate the reliability and validity of the questionnaire prior to extensive testing among couples. In the third phase, the collaboration of 400 couples (800 persons) from four big cities helped reveal their DM styles (Figure 1).

Figure 1- Methodology to Develop the CDMS model in Iran



First phase- Construct Measurement

The process of creating and evaluating an instrument hereby results from proposals by Churchill (1979). The initial phase is composed of indicators based on theories. After content analysis of those theories, a pool of items has to be made. The most important item from decision making style literature is Sproles and Kendal`s survey (C.S.I). The previous articles were studied over and over in order to identify similarities, dissimilarities and repeated terms for measuring DMS, until the researcher attained a sufficient level of knowledge about it. Finally, a pool of items was constructed for consumer decision making styles in Iran. These items were written based on theoretical conceptualizations offered in the literature as well as semi- structured interviews with 10 marketing experts and 8 sociologists.

Table 2- Semi-Structured Interview

<i>Question 1</i>	<i>What is your understanding of the Decision Making Styles?</i>
<i>Question 2</i>	<i>Which factors have influenced Consumer Decision Making Styles around the world? And which in Iran?</i>
<i>Question 3</i>	<i>What are the Iranian Decision Making Styles in your opinion? And what about the styles among Iranian couples in particular?</i>
<i>Question 4</i>	<i>What are the discrepancies of Iranian styles and those of other nations in decision making?</i>

A semi-structured interview approach was utilized based on a review of the related literature. Interviews ranged in duration from 20 to 40 minutes and face-to-face interviews were applied. With the interviewees' consent, all of their opinions were recorded in order to facilitate the explanation of the conversations and to enhance the accuracy of the findings (Eisenhardt, 1989). Due to the semi-structured nature of the interviews, open-ended questions were utilized to inspire the interviewees to exhibit their attitudes. To reduce researcher bias and enhance the reliability and validity of the study, assigned researchers examined the interview findings and documents several times, and a third, independent researcher double-checked them (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

Finally, some items were added, deleted, or edited several times until the pool of items seemed complete (for example, based on in-depth interviews with marketing experts and sociologists, "Health Seeking" was added as a decision making style for Iranians which is very similar to Sprole and Kendal's "high quality conscious" item). To measure face validity, the pool of items (60- items) was given to 20 consumers, which led to some adjustments in scale. For content validity, a group of 14 individuals consisting of marketing experts and marketing Ph.D. candidates, evaluated the 60 items three times (regarding whether the items were appropriate for relevant factors), whereby items deemed irrelevant and insignificant were removed. For content validity, CVR was calculated (for 14 experts, 71 % < Calculated CVR < 100%, while the acceptable limit for 14 experts is 51%). Finally, a questionnaire comprising 55 items was derived from the 60- item pool.

The scale was assessed using the five- point Likert scale (ranging from strongly disagree=1 to strongly agree=5); demographic items were related to a) gender; b) age; c) education and d) income.

Second Phase- Pretest

As an additional measurement, a pilot test was run prior to the initiation of the survey. The data were collected in the form of a printed questionnaire. For this purpose, 19 couples (38 persons) participated in the survey. They were selected from a mall which consists of 80 shops. In each sample, the respondents (wife and husband) were asked to complete questionnaires separately.

The results of internal consistency for 38 questionnaires distributed were Cronbach alpha= 0.740, and Guttman Split-Half Coefficient= 0.758, both of which were appropriate. In addition, the test-retest reliability was conducted with this sample within a 10-day timeout. The Pearson correlation was 0.750, an acceptable figure. The numeric results which show the appropriateness of scale, are given in Table 3.

Table3- Results of Pilot Test

	Number of items	Number of respondents	Cronbach alpha	test- retest	Guttman Split-Half
Results of pilot study	55	38 (person)	0.740	0.750	0.758

3-3- Third phase- Final Test

3-3-1- Sampling

In qualitative studies, sampling is usually methodical or definitive, since researchers select participants who are able to provide the best quality data on a special subject (Locke, 2001).

The sample for the study comprised couples from the biggest urban regions of Iran. For data collection purposes, a self- administered mall intercept survey was accomplished in 4 big cities in Iran, since mall intercept survey is considered a useful method for collecting data.

Some researchers like Bush and Hair (1985), Zafar et al., (2007), Michon et al., (2007), He et al., (2012) and many others, have proposed mall intercepting to be more accurate and reliable among managers and marketing researchers than other methodologies such as mail intercepting, phone surveys, etc. This is because shopping motivations are defined as the principal drivers that have brought the consumers to the marketplace; looking to satisfy their internal needs (Jin and Kim, 2003, p. 396). In fact, as He et al. (2012, p.650) argued “The mall intercept method has the advantages of getting access to relevant participants over a short period of time and having the opportunity to have personal contact with potential participants.” In this method, interviewers in a shopping mall, intercept a sample of couples and with their consent, collect data.

In malls, Iranian couples were asked separately if they would like to voluntarily participate in the survey; moreover, the questionnaires were handed out during purchases separately.

This means participants were asked to complete questionnaire separately. For this purpose, 900 individuals (450 couples) were chosen randomly for the survey, but 100 questionnaires were found to have illogical answers and were therefore rejected. Finally, 800 usable questionnaires were collected, yielding a response rate of 88.8%. In the survey, the respondents were asked to refer to the recent shopping they did.

The age of the respondents ranged from 17 to 43, with the monthly income distribution (in Iranian currency RIAL) as the following: below 50,000 (22.5%); 50,000–330,000 (5.1%); 331,000– 450,000 (10.9%); 451,000–600,000 (12.4%); 601,000 –750,000 (16.4%); 751,000– 1,000,000(17.9%) and above 1,000,000 (14.9%). The educational distribution was as follows: diploma (32.9%), associates (22.6%), undergraduates (28.1%); graduate (6.9%) and Ph.D. (1%). 25% of the couples were living in Tehran, 25% in Shiraz, 25% in Isfahan and 25% in Mashhad.

Factor Analysis (EFA & CFA)

To refine and assess the construct validity of the measures, first EFA was conducted with SPSS 17 on decision making style scale items. The EFA with principal component method and a Varimax rotation was utilized for distinguishing and categorizing styles.

Furthermore, using LISREL 8.7, CFA was conducted for each one of the consumer decision-making styles and the results were indicative of satisfactory model fit with the data.

In this phase, some items with factor loadings under 0.4 and some items with cross loadings were deleted. As a result, 29 items remained. Using an Eigenvalue of one or greater criterion, seven factors emerged (See Table 4).

The Bartlett test of Sphericity and Keiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) were run to test the assumptions of factor analysis. For testing the appropriateness of factor analysis, Keiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was assessed. The KMO value indicates that patterns of correlations are relatively compact (KMO= 0.833), which is higher than 0.7 (the acceptable limit). The Bartlett test of sphericity tested the assumption that the variables are uncorrelated in the population. The result of Bartlett's test was highly significant (Chi- square =9257.292, df= 1485, Sig. 0.000). Therefore, factor analysis was appropriate (Hair et al., 2010).

Next, convergent and discriminant validity of the instrument were assessed and approved. If all of t-test for factor loading was significant at p-value <0.05 (Table 4), AVE > 0.5 and Composite Reliability (CR) >0.7, then the results would support the suitability of convergent validity.

To test discriminant validity, the variances extracted within constructs were compared with the square of the bivariate correlation between factors (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). In other words, the latent variables can be correlated; yet, their items and error items should be uncorrelated.

The internal consistency evaluated for the 7 styles is reported in Table 4.

Table 4- Results of Convergent and Discriminant Validity

	CR	AVE	Brand Consciousness	Health seeking/ High-Quality	Confused by over choices	Recreational and Hedonistic shopping Consciousness	Price and "Value for Money" shopping Consciousness	Prestige-Style seeking	Impulsiveness
Brand Consciousness	0.890	0.50	1						
Health seeking/ High-Quality	0.851	0.525	0.181	1					
Consciousness									
Confused by over choices	0.814	0.650	0.115	0.157	1				
Recreational and Hedonistic shopping Consciousness	0.890	0.575	0.284	0.101	0.192	1			

Price and “Value for Money” shopping	0.812	0.498	0.063	0.446	-0.1	0.099	1		
Consciousness									
Prestige- Style seeking	0.915	0.575	0.307	0.111	0.207	0.363	0.13	1	
Impulsiveness	0.788	0.614	0.065	0.209	0.183	0.120	0.261	0.079	1

For EFA, only factors with eigenvalues greater than one were considered significant and only items with loadings of 0.2 or higher were included. Table 5 shows the results of a seven-factor model for consumer decision making styles in Iran. Factors are named in line with Sproles and Kendall (1986) when they express similar decision making styles. Each factor consists of at least three items that indicate multidimensional scales.

After exploring seven decision making styles via SPSS, these findings were reaffirmed by CFA using LISREL 8.7.

The model provides a satisfactory fit to the data (Chi Square = 1077/25, P- value= 0.000; goodness- of- fit index (GFI) = 0.89, adjusted goodness- of- fit index (AGFI) = 0.87, confirmatory fit index (CFI) = 0.89, incremental fit index (IFI) = 0.89, root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.057, non- normed fit index (NNFI) = 0.88, normed fit index (NFI) = 0.85), which expresses the unidimensionality of the measures.

The aim of factor analysis of the 60-item scale was to conclude whether the factors recognized by previous studies were common to the Iranian couples` sample. As the outcome of exploratory factor analysis, 29 items were retained in this research and 26 items were omitted. The EFA indicated that the 29 items included in the questionnaire can be classified in 7 factors with eigenvalues ranging from 3.540 to 2.811.

Style1: This style depicts the characteristics of a consumer who is *brand-conscious*. Item loading on this factor reveals couples scoring high on this DMS are likely to purchase famous and best- selling brands that are also beneficial for health. They also think that a product sold at a higher price indicates better quality.

Table5 – Exploratory and Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Factors Labels and Statements	Eigenvalues	Cronbach`s Alpha	Factor loading	t
<i>Brand Consciousness</i>	3.540	0.632		
I have favorite brands I buy over and over			1.36	8.46
The well-known brands are best for me			1.49	8.76
I prefer buying the best-selling brands			1.12	8.03
The higher the price of a product, the better its quality			1.10	7.55
The useful products for health have well-known brands			1	-
<i>Health seeking /High-Quality Consciousness</i>	3.238	.640		

In general, I usually try to buy the product with certificate of health			1.08	10.07
I prefer buying the useful products for my health			1.09	10.08
The useful products for health have better quality.			1	-
I prefer buying the standard products			0.92	8.64
<i>Confused by over choices</i>	2.916	.689		
I shop quickly and buy the best product			-1.02	-8.53
There are so many goods to choose from that often I feel confused			1	-
I should spend more time deciding on the products I buy.			1.54	10.07
<i>Recreational and Hedonistic shopping Consciousness</i>	2.846	.721		
shopping is an enjoyable activities of my life			1.34	11.51
I enjoy shopping just for the fun of it			1	-
Shopping the stores is a pleasant activity to me			1.27	11.73
<i>Price and "Value for Money" shopping Consciousness</i>	2.801	0.609		
I look carefully to find the best value for the money			1.30	12.29
price is very important for me			0.60	7.95
Nice department and specialty stores offer me the highest prices.			0.57	6.74
Getting good quality is very important to me			1	-
<i>Prestige- Style Consciousness</i>	2.491	.643		
Fashionable, attractive styling is important for me.			1.57	8.15
It's pleasure to buy something new and fashion.			1.52	8.07
When it comes to purchasing, I think how appear with this product.			1	-
<i>Impulsiveness</i>	2.811	0.7		
When I am impulsive, buying the good products.			0.89	6.66
I have not only planning for shopping, but also buying any good product			1	-
I am buying the best products when I have planning			-1.01	-7.02

Style2: This style implies a *health seeking/ high quality conscious* consumer characteristic. Attributes in this DMS depict a consumer who is interested in acquiring high-quality products,

particularly in obtaining products containing quality certificates. Moreover, they believe that a quality product signifies benefit for health.

Style3: This style depicts the characteristics of a consumer who is *confused by over-choice*. High scorers on this characteristic see many products, brands and stores to choose from and the information overload about their choices causes confusion. They usually receive a great deal of information about different products, experience confusion and have a hard time making purchasing decisions.

Style4: This style describes the consumer as *recreational, hedonistically conscious*. Consumers who score high on this style view shopping as an enjoyable, pleasant activity and feel excited when roaming shopping centers on a shopping spree.

Style5: This style appears to measure a CDMS named "*price conscious*", or "*value for money*". Those scoring high on this style tend to get the best quality products for their money. They believe that products in nice department stores and specialty shops are expensive. In other words, the price of products is an important factor to them.

Style6: This style describes the attributes of a consumer as *prestige-style seeking*. Consumers with this characteristic enjoy fashion and purchasing modern products and think about how they would look with those goods. The judgments and attitudes of their friends and families are very important to them.

Style7: This style demonstrates an *impulsive* characteristic. High scores on this style can be attributed to a consumer who likes to shop on the spur of the moment and does not have any specific plan for shopping in mind.

DISCUSSION

One of the significant consequences of this study is the comparison made between decision making styles of Iranian couples on the one hand, and the CSI on the other, which revealed that the initial Sproles and Kendall's 8-factor model is not *entirely* consistent in other countries. The findings indicate that, similar to studies alike in different countries, while some CDMS characteristics are the same, the others are distinctive (Lysonski et al., 1996; Hafstrom et al., 1992; Durvasula et al., 1993) that shown in Table 5. In this research, five decision making styles discovered are similar to the original CSI factors (brand conscious, impulsive, price conscious, recreational conscious and confused by overchoice). This study has also demonstrated two new factors (health seeking/ high quality conscious and prestige-style conscious) for Iranian couples.

Table 5- Summary of Consumer Decision Making Style Studies in Various Countries (Lotfizadeh, 2013)

Authors	Year	Country	Sample (size)	Common DM Styles with CSI (Sproles and Kendall, 1986)	New styles
Sproles & Kendall	1986	USA	Students (501)	Perfectionism Brand conscious Novelty/fashion Consciousness Recreational-Shopping consciousness Price- Value Conscious Impulsiveness Confused by overchoice Habitual, brand loyal	-
Hafstrom, Chae & Chung	1992	Korea	Students (310)	Brand conscious Perfectionism- Recreational Shopping consciousness Confused by overchoice Impulsiveness- Habitual, brand loyal- Price- Value Conscious	Time-energy conserving
Fan & Xiao	1998	China	Students (271)	Brand conscious Quality Conscious Price Conscious	Time Conscious Information Utilization
Canabal	2001	India	Students (173)	Brand conscious High-Quality Conscious/Perfectionist Confused by overchoice Recreational Shopper Price/ Value-Conscious-	Impulsive/Brand Indifferent Time Conscious Dissatisfied/Careless
Mitchell & Walsh	2004	Germany	Consumers (455)	Brand conscious Perfectionism Confused by overchoice Impulsiveness, carelessness	Enjoyment-variety seeking Satisfying Fashion-sale seeking Time restricted Economy seeking
Bakewell & Mitchell	2003	U.K	Women (244)	Brand conscious Perfectionism Confused by overchoice Recreational Novelty/fashion consciousness Price/value consciousness Impulsive/careless	Time-energy conserving Confused time restricted Store loyal/low price seeking Store promiscuous

				Habitual, brand loyal	
Hanzaee & Aghasibeig	2008	Iran	Students (354)	Brand conscious Perfectionistic, highquality conscious Confused and carelessness by overchoice Fashion conscious Recreational, hedonistic Careless Habitual, brand loyal	Time-energy conserving Non- perfectionistic/ brand Indifference Low price seeking
Mokhlis & Salleh	2009	Malaysia	Consumers (386)	Brand conscious Confused by overchoice Quality consciousness Fashion consciousness Brand loyal	Satisfying Value seeking Time-energy Conserving
Mokhlis	2009	Malaysia	Students (419)	Perfectionism Confused by overchoice Novelty/Brand consciousness Recreational- Hedonistic Impulsiveness Habitual, brand loyal	Variety Seeking Financial, Time- energy conserving
Mishra	2010	India	Consumers (425)	Brand conscious Perfectionism Confused by overchoice Impulsiveness Price- Value Conscious Fashion consciousness Recreational Brand Loyal	Dissatisfied Shopping Consciousness Store Loyal

As shown in table 5, using students as samples has limited the generalizability of previous studies because most students do not work, therefore, have limited incomes. So all previous studies have suggested that future research should evaluate other consumer groups from the general public.

One of the essential modifications in this study which has helped overcome the shortcomings of previous works is the chosen sample group. Former researches have focused on students or females in general, whereas in this paper, we study 400 couples (800 people). Consequently, the results can reflect decision making styles of families and their attitudes.

Results show the most popular DMS among Iranians was “Brand Conscious”, meaning they are concerned with the make of the products. This result is particularly important for international firms who intend to enter the Iranian market. Currently a number of international firms have turned their attention to the brand- conscious characteristic of Iranian youth. Subsequently, Benetton Group, Massimo- Dutti, MANGO, YVES ROCHER, and Swarovski have opened a few branches in Tehran.

“Health Seeking/High Quality” conscious is another common trait among Iranians. They have high expectations towards the quality of products and constantly try to make the best choice. They are also concerned with their health. So they are buyers of products like sunscreen, water purifiers, air purifiers, orthopedic shoes, etc. Based on these two DMS-s, Iranians will be seeking health related products with famous brands. It is noteworthy that these consumers are brand conscious in order to reduce risk and obtain high quality. Through this method they seek to minimize unreliable events and health risk that may occur as a result of purchasing unfamiliar brands.

Some consumers enjoy shopping, but are also “Confused by Overchoice” consumers. Walsh et al. (2001) suggested that these shoppers seem to experience information overload and can't make optimal choices. To decrease the degree of this confusion, we recommend particular packages to assist consumers in making decisions rapidly; offering details, eliminating inessential information, and showing product manuals graphically.

The “Recreational, Hedonistic Consumer” trait demonstrates that these consumers enjoy shopping and meet this pleasure via their shopping trips. New shops and malls are very attractive for consumers with this trait. They buy new products more irregularly for excitement causes and not to meet essential needs. Consequently, their purchases may involve higher financial risks. This group is found to engage more extensively in retail shopping activities and spend more money when shopping. For attracting this group, merchandising new products is a very effective tool.

Moreover, the “*Price Conscious*” or “*Value for Money*” trait shows that young Iranians are ensure they are getting the best quality and value for the money paid. They carefully watch out their money spending, compare stores and seek low prices. Retailers targeting this group should provide a range of prices and offer their products on sale. And finally, impulsive buying is another common trait among the Iranian youth. Since a prevalent behavior of young Iranians is window shopping, some purchases occur unplanned. For attracting this group, decoration is an efficient tool.

One of the implications of this study is that marketers and consumer researchers should be conscious of the similarities and distinctions in consumer decision making styles. For Iranian, focusing on couples, marketers should strive towards launching a strong brand, and support it with high- quality products. Furthermore, as suggested by our findings, through the use of novel, fashionable, recreational and hedonistic products, marketers can impact the Iranian couples. Consequently, it is recommended that marketing communications contain an element of novelty and fashion and attract consumers by lustrous shops and modern departments.

The comparison of decision making styles of Iranian couples with the DMS of consumers from different countries contributes to the overall understanding of influencing factors (social, cultural and environmental) on CDMS. This study has made the first assay to measure DMS of couples in Iran. The cross- cultural examination enriches the body of knowledge of DMS on young adult consumers and provides insight into profiling Iranian couples` shopping behaviors.

According to previous research, the Y generation likes creativity, truthfulness and punctuality and prefers family to job (Weiss, 2003).

Young generations have brand awareness and preferences, but they are not loyal to brands. They enjoy purchasing new, popular products/brands and change them quickly for other ones.

They like communicating via the Internet for gathering information about products and brands. In addition, they love social network membership and the sense of belonging to important reference groups (Freestone and Mitchell, 2004). It is believed that this generation is a special consumer and therefore, makes meaningful changes in the marketing structure. Evidenced by this research, marketers are advised to create specific marketing strategies that best match young consumer in Iran.

Although involvement was not assessed in this survey, the issue still has an important effect on DMS.

REFERENCES

- Bakewell, C. and Mitchell, V. W. (2003), "Generation Y female consumer decision-making styles", *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management*, 31 (2), pp. 95-106.
- Bauer, H. H., Sauer, N. E. and Becker, C. (2006), "Investigating the Relationship between Product Involvement and Consumer Decision-Making Styles", *Journal of Consumer Behavior*, 5, pp. 342-354.
- Bush, A. J and Hair, J. F., (1985). An Assessment of the Mall Intercept as a Data Collection Method. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 22(2), pp. 158-167.
- Canabal, M. E. (2001), "Decision Making Styles of Young South Indian Consumers: An Exploratory Study", *College Student Journal*, 36(1), pp. 12-19.
- Churchill, G.A. Jr. (1979), "A Paradigm for Developing Better Measures of Marketing Constructs", *Journal of Marketing Research*, 16(1), pp. 64-73.
- Dos Santos, C. P. & Fernandes, D. V. D. H. (2006), "Evaluation of the Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) scale in the Brazilian context", *Revista de Administracao Mackenzie*, 7(2), pp. 11- 38.
- Durvasula, S., Lysonski, S. & Andrews, J. C. (1993), "Cross-Cultural Generalizability of a Scale for Profiling Consumers' Decision-Making Styles", *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 27(1), pp. 55-65.
- Eisenhardt, K. M. (1989), "Building theories from case study research", *Academy of management Review*, 14(4), pp. 532-550.
- Fan, J. X. and Xio, J. J. (1998), "Consumer Decision-Making Styles of Young-Adult Chinese", *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 32(2), pp. 275-294.
- Fornell, C. & Larcker, D. F., (1981), "Evaluating Structural Equation Models with Unobservable Variable and Measurement Error", *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18, pp. 39-50.
- Freestone, O. V. and W. Mitchell, (2004), "Generation Y attitudes towards E-ethics and internet- related misbehaviors", *Journal of Business Ethics*, 54, pp. 121-128.
- Gonen, E. & Osemete, E. (2006), "Decision-Making Styles of Young Turkish Consumers", *Journal of the Home Economics Institute of Australia*, 13(1), pp. 26-33.
- Hafstrom, J. L., Chae, L. S. & Chung, Y. S. (1992) "Consumer Decision-Making Styles: Comparison between United States and Korean Young Consumers", *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 26(1), pp. 146-158.
- Hair. F. J., Black, C. W., Babin, J. B., and Anderson. R. E., (2010), *Multivariate Data Analysis*, 7th edition, Prentice Hall, London.

- Hanzaee, K. H. & Aghasibeig, S. (2008) "Generation Y Female and Male Decision-Making Styles in Iran: Are they different?", *International Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research* 18(5), pp. 521-537.
- He, H., Li, Y. and Harris, L., (2012), "Social identity perspective on brand loyalty", *Journal of Business Research*, 65, pp. 648–657.
- Hui, A. S. Y., Siu, N. Y. M., Wang, C. C. L. and Chang, L. M. K. (2001) "An Investigation of Decision-Making Styles of Consumers in China", *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 35(2), pp. 326-345.
- Hou, S. C. & Lin, Z. H. (2006). Shopping styles of working Taiwanese female. Proceedings, International Conference on Business and Information, Singapore, 12-14 July 2006.
- Jin, B., Kim, J. O. (2003). A typology of Korean discount shoppers: shopping motives, store attributes, and outcomes, *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 14(4), pp. 396 – 419.
- Kamaruddin, A. R. and Mokhlis, S. (2003), "Consumer Socialization, Social Structural Factors and Decision-Making Styles: a Case Study of Adolescents in Malaysia", *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 27(2), pp. 145–156.
- Kavas, A. & Yesilada, F. (2007), "Decision Making Styles of Young Turkish Consumers", *European Journal of Economics, Finance and Administrative Sciences*, 9, pp. 73-85.
- Lincoln, Y., & Guba, E. G. (1985), *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hill, CA: Sage.
- Locke, K. (2001), *Grounded Theory in Management Research*. London: Sage.
- Lotfizadeh, F. (2013), "Religion and Family Structure: Two Factors Affecting on Consumer Decision Making Styles in Iran", *International journal of Management and Business Research*, 3(2), pp. 107-119.
- Lysonski, S., Durvasula, S. & Zotos, Y. (1996), "Consumer Decision-Making Styles: A Multi-Country Investigation", *European Journal of Marketing*, 30(12), pp. 10-21.
- Michon, R., Yu, Y., Smith, D., and Chebat, J. Ch. (2007). The shopping experience of female fashion leaders, *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 35(6), pp.488 – 501.
- Mishra, A.A. (2010), "Consumer Decision-Making Styles and Young-Adult Consumers: An Indian Exploration", *İşletme Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 2(3), pp. 45-62.
- Mitchell, V.W. and Bates, L. (1998), "UK Consumer Decision-Making Styles", *Journal of Marketing Management*, 14(1-3), pp. 199-225.
- Mitchell, V. & Walsh, G. (2004), "Gender differences in German consumer decision-making Styles", *Journal of Consumer Behavior*, 3(4), pp.331-346.
- Mokhlis, S. & Salleh, H. S. (2009), "Consumer Decision-Making Styles in Malaysia: An Exploratory Study of Gender Differences", *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 10(4), pp. 574-584.
- Mokhlis, S. (2009) "An Investigation of Consumer Decision-Making Styles of Young-Adults in Malaysia", *International Journal of Business and Management*, 4 (4), pp.140-8.
- Ng, S. W. (2005) 'Shopping and Buying Decision on Consumers' Decision-Making Styles: A Cross-Cultural Study of the Youth Chinese and Macanese', In L. C. Huff & S. M. Smith (Eds.), *Conference Proceedings, Eleventh Cross-Cultural Research Conference*, Puerto Rico, USA, 11-14 December 2005.
- Radder, L., Li, Y. & Pietersen, J. J. (2006), "Decision-Making Styles of Young Chinese, Motswana and Caucasian Consumers in South Africa: An Exploratory Study", *Journal of Family Ecology and Consumer Science*, 34, pp. 20-31.

- Salleh, R. (2000), "The Analysis of Consumers' Decision-Making Styles Dimensions across Different Product Classes". Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, UK.
- Shim, S. & Koh, A. (1997), "Profiling adolescent consumer decision-making styles: Effects of Socialization agents and social-structural variables", *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 15(1), pp. 50-59.
- Sproles, G. B. (1985), "From Perfectionism to Fadism: Measuring Consumers' Decision-Making Styles", Proceedings, American Council on Consumer Interests, pp. 79-85.
- Sproles G. B. & Kendall, E. L. (1986), "A Methodology for Profiling Consumers' Decision Making Styles", *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 20(2), pp. 267-279.
- Statistical Center of Iran, (2011), "Iranian Census" available in <http://salnameh.sci.org.ir/AllUser/DirectoryTreeComplete.aspx>
- Stoel, L., Wickliffe, V. and Lee, K.H. (2004). Attributes beliefs and spending as antecedents to shopping value, *Journal of Business Research*, 57, pp. 1067-73.
- Walsh, G., Mitchell, V. W. & Thurau, T. H. (2001), 'German Consumer Decision-Making Styles', *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 35(1), pp. 73-95.
- Walsh, G., & Vincent, W. (2001), "German Market Mavens' Decision-Making Styles", *Journal of Euro-Marketing* 10(4), pp. 83-108.
- Wang Ch.L. Siu N.Y.M, Hui A.S.Y, (2004), "Consumer Decision-Making Styles on Domestic and Imported Brand Clothing, *European Journal of Marketing*, 38 (1/2), pp. 239-252.
- Wan Omar, M., Mohd Ali, M. N., Hussin, Z. & Abdul Rahim, H. (2009), "Decision Orientations Towards Shopping and Buying Among Young-Adult Malays in The Universities", *International Journal of Business and Management*, 4(7), pp. 26-30.
- Weiss, Michael, J., (2003), "To be about to be", *American Demographics*, 25(7), pp.28-36.
- Wickliffe, V. P. (2004), "Refinement and Re-Assessment of the Consumer Decision-Making Style Instrument", *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 11(1), pp. 9-17.
- Zafar, U.M., Ghingold, M. and Zainurin, D. (2007). Malaysian Shopping Mall Behavior: An Exploratory Study. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing*, 19(4), 331-348.
- Zhou, J. X., Arnold, M. J., Pereira A. and Yu. J., (2010), "Chinese consumer decision-making styles: A comparison between the coastal and inland regions", *Journal of Business Research*, 63, pp. 45-51.