

# Application of Personality Theory on A Consumer's Behaviour

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**Abstract** - Personality is a common word which is used in our daily lives. The description of a person according to his attire and his looks, is what many people think personality is all about. Personality doesn't constrain itself just to looks, it has more to deal with. Psychologists say that personality is a pattern of moods, behaviour, thoughts, communication with in people and so no. They have given a lot of theories based on personality. Striving marketers have made use of these theories and have attempted to influence the consumer's behaviour based on their personality. This paper is based on Freud's division of personality structure in his psychoanalytic theory. It brings out how personality is influenced but age and to check if gender, personality and consumer behaviour are linked to each other. With the help of SPSS statistical tools such as Structural equation model and one-way Anova are used.

**Keywords** — Age, Consumer behaviour, Ego, ID, Personality, Superego

## I. INTRODUCTION

Personality is a common word which is used widely. Kendra Cherry has brought out the meaning of personality from its root word in her article "What is personality and why does it matter?". She mentions that personality from a Latin word *persona*, which refers to a theatrical mask worn by performers to project their different roles or disguise their identities. The outward look and the interaction between people are the two main things that people think when it comes to personality. Psychologists have come up with many theories of personality and personality testes. What exactly is personality? This is a question many individuals ponder upon. Personality has a huge influence on our behaviour, it can be both acquired or inherited. Personality cannot be put into a box by defining it. Philip S. Holzman in his article "Personality" has specified that there is no specific definition for personality which is accepted universally with the field. He brings out the two main concepts which revolved around definitions. The first part deals with the unwavering differences that is found between individuals and the second part consists of those qualities that make all individual alike. Philip also states that personality in general deals with an individual's feelings, moods, behaviour, his way of thinking, attitudes, his interaction among people and his opinions. Consumer behaviour deals with the feelings, thoughts and attitudes that his goes through during a purchase. Cultural factors, Social factors, Personal factors, Psychological factors and Economic factors are the five main factors that deal with a consumer's behaviour. While

buying a product there is a lot of thoughts running into a consumer's mind, whether to buy the product or not. Marketers have used this opportunity to manipulate the thinking ability and decision-making ability. Marketers have framed strategies based on how an individual respond to situations based on the personality theories. No two people are same but the basic personality depends on three components that Freud in his Psychoanalytic Theory had framed id, ego and superego. It deals with pleasure factor, decision making factor, moral factor and conscious. Consumer's selection of a product depends on his personality and the factors that affect personality are also clearly stated out in different personality theories. Now the marketers make use of these factors and have attempted to work them and manipulate the consumers. There are a lot of personality theories but for this survey Freud's Psychoanalytic Theory is used as it acts as a cornerstone for modern psychology. This survey is to find how for the markets have influenced and to find the relationship between personality and consumer behaviour.

### Objectives:

- 1) To find whether age has an influence on id, ego and superego.
- 2) To find the relationship between gender, id, ego, superego and consumer behaviour.

## II. METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Chennai, capital of Tamil Nadu which is a metropolitan city. It comprises of people from different parts of India and the world as well. It is exposed to wide culture due to the quality of the population. This is the main reason for selecting this city for this particular study. 300 samples were taken into consideration. By satisfying all the demographic factors.

## III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

One out of three parts of Freud's psychoanalytic theory are the id, ego and superego as the principal parts. He created a model of personality by intertwined the three parts. Freud in his theory describes that ID works on the pressure principle, Ego manages id and performs the executive function (behaving and thinking), Superego corresponds closely to conscience. It dominates both id and ego at times <sup>[1]</sup>

Smriti Chand in her blog has stated a definition of consumer behaviour according to Louden and Bitta. They define 'consumer behaviour as a decision process and physical activity, which individuals engage in when evaluating, acquiring, using or disposing of goods and services.' She has also listed out the characteristics of Consumer behaviour. She mentions that Consumer behaviour is influenced by various factors and undergoes a constant change as varies from consumer to consumer, region to region and country to county. She also indicates that the information on consumer behaviour is important to the marketers. <sup>[2]</sup>

In the article "Personality differences between the sexes are largest in the most gender equal countries" a blog from Physorg quotes a study which reveals that larger differences in personality are seen in countries with higher rate of gender equality. <sup>3</sup>

While investigating the students' belief towards social media advertising, Thamaraiselvan Natarajan (2013) had Seven factors viz, Pleasure, Product Information, Social

<sup>[1]</sup> Clifford T. Morgon , Richard A. King , John R. Weisz , John Schopler , " Introduction to psychology" Seventh Edition, Tata McGraw Hill Education Private Limited , 37th reprint 2010 , ISSN-13: 978-0-07-462250-6 , ISSN-10: 0-07-462250-1 , Pg 577,578

<sup>[2]</sup> "Consumer Behaviour: Meaning/Definition and Nature of Consumer Behaviour", Article by Smriti Chand <http://www.yourarticlelibrary.com/marketing/market-segmentation/consumer-behaviour-meaningdefinition-and-nature-of-consumer-behaviour/32301>

<sup>[3]</sup> Derived from Physorg on 26/03/2019 at 10:30am. "Personality differences between the sexes are largest in the most gender equal countries", October 12, 2018, [University of Gothenburg](https://phys.org/news/2018-10-personality-differences-sexes-largestgender.html#jCp) <https://phys.org/news/2018-10-personality-differences-sexes-largestgender.html#jCp>

Image, Good for Economy, Materialism, Falsity. The study revealed that working people showed a negative attitude towards falsity of advertisements while a high positive attitude was shown towards the social role, good for the economy. Both students and working professionals have opined that advertisements are materialistic and have value corruption. The study suggested that advertisements should be designed with a consciousness of the society. <sup>4</sup>

## IV. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Wikipedia has quoted Corr, Philip J.; Matthews, Gerald (2009) definition of personality as the characteristic set of behaviours, cognitions, and emotional patterns that evolve from biological and environmental factors. Biological Factors, physical environment, psychological Factors, familial determinants, social class and cultural factors are few important factors that determine personality. Sigmund Freud is known as the father of Psychology. In his theory psychoanalytic, Freud has divided personality structure into three parts namely id, ego and superego. Id works on the pleasure factor and is mostly used due to unconscious behaviour triggered by the human desire. Ego is fully conscious self-image, it is a practical aspect. Freud characterized ego as working "in the service of the reality principle." Superego deals with a person's moral values it deals with the behaviour of a person. A has to have a balance in all these three aspects. Consumer behaviour has five main factors social, cultural, economic personal and psychological. All these factors work in hand with the three concepts of Freud. The type product, the urge to buy and ability to choose are all based on his personality.

## V. ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND FINDINGS

The study was conducted Chennai with the 300 respondents in total. The Maximum number of the respondents are in the age group of 25-34 (41%) and 17-24 (36%). 42% of the respondents are Male and the rest 57.3% of them are Female. 60% of them are single and the remaining are Married (40%). Majority of the respondents are private employees (46%) and students (22.3%). The respondents who have a monthly income of Below 20,000 (34.8%) were more in number and the income level of respondents between 20,000 – 40,000 (31.8%) is list second.

### A. Gender, Personality and Consumer Behaviour

Men's and women's basic personality traits appear to differ, on average, in several respects. For example, gender differences are seen much in characteristics related to emotions and behavior (2016). With the help of Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) a structural equation model

<sup>[4]</sup> Consumers perception towards Advertisement a study with special Reference to Chennai. By Chandra vathana nila,S, April 2015 Manonmaniam Sundaranar University. Pg 17& 18

(SEM) is created.

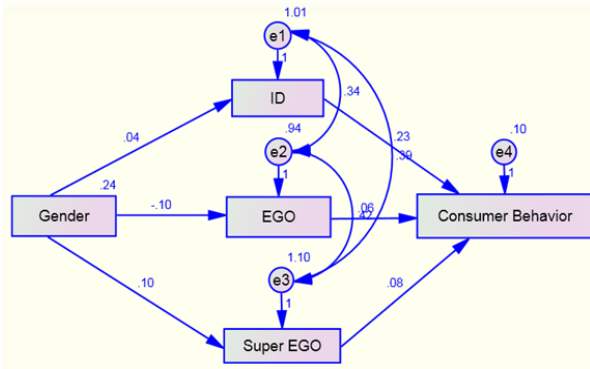


Fig 1: Structural Equation Model (SEM) based on standardised coefficient on Consumer Behaviour

Total number of variables in the model is 9 out of which 5 are observed and 4 are unobserved. The above model is considered fit as the P value is 0.263 which is greater than 0.05 which is the bench mark. Vales of GFI is 0.998, AGFI is 0.975, NFI is 0.996 and CFI is 0.999, all have satisfied their bench mark by being more than 0.09. RMR (0.01) and RMSEA (0.02) have also satisfied the bench mark by being less than 0.08. From this it proved that the model is a good fit.

**ID, EGO, SUPEREGO and CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR**

Table of Correlation between the Factors

| Factors                   | ID | EGO    | Super EGO | Consumer Behaviour |
|---------------------------|----|--------|-----------|--------------------|
| <b>ID</b>                 | 1  | .351** | .368**    | .644**             |
| <b>EGO</b>                |    | 1      | .412**    | .392**             |
| <b>Super EGO</b>          |    |        | 1         | .438**             |
| <b>Consumer Behaviour</b> |    |        |           | 1                  |

The correlation has been used to find if there is a significant relation between ID, EGO, SUPEREGO. From the above table it is inferred that there is positive correlation between all the factors. The correlation between ID and EGO is 0.351, which can be written as 0.123 which indicates 12.3% of mild positive relationship between ID and EGO and is significant at 1% level. Relationship between ID and SUPEREGO is 0.368 or 0.135 which shows that, id and superego are positively related to each other but in a minor way 13.5% and is significant at 1% level. EGO and SUPEREGO are mildly and positively related by 0.412 or 0.1697 or 16.97% and is significant at

1% level. The correlation between ID and CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR is 0.644, which can be written as 0.415 which indicates 41.5% of positive relationship and is significant at 1% level. The connection between EGO and CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR is .392 or 0.154, there is a positive relationship of 15.4% and is significant at 1% level. SUPEREGO and CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR are related at  $(0.438^2 = 0.192)$  19.2% and is significant at 1% level of significance.

**B. Age and Personality**

Age and personality were compared to find how id, ego and superego are influenced at each age group. This comparison was made through a statistical software SPSS and the statistical tool ANOVA was used. The mean values are taken into consideration from the descriptive table in the output page. This can be interpreted as, when the mean values get higher it is known that there is a high rate of influence.

ID acts on pleasure principle and from the results it has been acquired that the age group of 25-34 (4.59) and 17-24 (4.45) have the highest mean value this is because the respondents in this age group are young and energetic. They tend to work on their unconscious mind. The age groups of 45-54 (4.34) and 34-44 (4.20) are least affected by ID.

EGO works on the principle of reality and acts as the link between id and superego. It was found from the results that he highest influenced age group is 45-55 (4.56) and then 35-44 (4.47). Respondents of these age group are in their adulthood and majority of them are in their parenthood. As per the study it found that these age groups are more practical and realistic in nature. The least influenced age groups are 17-24 (4.34) and 25-34 (4.37) the respondents are in their prime age and hence they often tend to neglect reality.

SUPEREGO aims for perfection and is the part that controls both id and ego. It deals with the moral values of a person. From the results it has been noted that age groups of 45-55 (5.44) and 55 and above are higher than the rest of the age groups. Respondents of these age group are more experienced and are matured, hence they are highly influenced by superego. Age group of 17-24 (4.73) and 25-34 (4.80) are the least affected by superego.

**VI. CONCLUSION**

Each individual is deferent from each other yet they fall under the one of these id, ego or superego. Everyone has these three parts in them, it's just which aspects dominates makes a difference. It is found that Age and Gender plays a vital role on personality. By the end of this study, it has brought to notice that there is a strong link between gender, personality and consumer behaviour as the Structural

Equation Model shows that the model is a perfect fit. When Age was taken into account it was discovered that the respondents of age group of 45-55 have well balanced personality. They have low level influence on id, high influence on ego and superego. While the respondents of age group 17-25 is dominated by ID and have the least values when it comes to ego and superego. Also, from the correlation table it has been found that the highest correlation is between id and consumer behaviour. Finally, it can be concluded that the respondents who are in the age group between 17-25 are easily targeted but the marketers due to their ID. This is when it gets easy for the markets to implement their strategies on the targeted group. Future studies can concentrate on the depth of how gender is influenced by the marketers and how far have the marketers influenced the consumers by their strategies.

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