

Abstract

The study of consumer behavior is linked to the modern orientation of marketing which makes the consumer the first focus of any effective marketing strategy. This is why, it is necessary that the enterprise undertake the requisite research to study the characteristics of the consumer behavior and purchasing targeted to individuals including the study of how they are making their purchasing decisions and the factors that affect them.

Our research entitled “The impact of reference groups on the purchasing decision of the Algerian adolescent” aims at studying the purchasing behavior of the Algerian adolescent consumer and the influences exerted by the groups that he refers to in making his purchasing decisions. To fulfill this aim, we first studied these groups in a very detailed manner to find out more about them, their characteristics, and the factors that determine their role regarding the consumer. Since this role varies from one community to another, it was essential that a study be made on the reality of the reference groups in the Algerian society in addition to the consumer insight and his interaction with the role he plays. Second, we considered the study of the purchasing decision to grasp the way in which a decision is made and its influential factors whether environmental, psychological or social.

By analyzing the two previous elements, we were able to comprehend some aspects of the influence of reference groups on decision-making. We also dealt with the adolescent, his psychological state, his environment and the impact of the reference groups on him. The use of the field study sample that comprised 300 individuals allowed us to better understand the dimensions of this effect. We found out that the interaction had an essential role in determining the degree of this influence. The connection process also revealed to be important. We realized that the more positive was the interaction between the consumer and the reference groups, the stronger was the impact. On the other hand, each time there was a negative interaction, the influence was weak. Our study also reveals that the impact occurs only in one case: the lack of information on the product the consumer intends to purchase. In this case, he resorts to assistance from those who represent his reference groups in whom he has confidence in the credibility of the information they provide him. Thereby the consumer takes into consideration the opinions of his groups and adopts their desires and this influences his decision whether to choose a product or not.

Key words:

Purchase decision- Reference groups- Interaction- the impact of the reference groups- The adolescent.