A Study of Role of Social Identity of Generation Y in Shaping Brand Preferences

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Abstract:

The abstract provides a concise overview of the research study. In an increasingly competitive marketplace, brand preference is shaped not only by functional attributes but also by consumers' social identities, values, and lived experiences. This study examines the influence of social identity factors on brand preference among Generation Y (Millennial) consumers. The primary objectives of the research are to identify the key social identity factors influencing brand preference, analyse their impact on the brand choices of Generation Y consumers, and determine the most dominant social identity factor affecting brand preference.

A descriptive research design was adopted, and primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to Generation Y consumers in Amravati city. The study focused on social identity dimensions such as cultural background, religious beliefs, personal traditions, self-reflection, and personal experiences. Descriptive statistical tools were used to analyse the data.

The findings reveal that social identity significantly influences brand preference among Generation Y consumers. Cultural identity emerged as the most dominant factor, exerting a moderate to strong influence on brand selection for most respondents. Religious beliefs and personal traditions also influence brand trust and loyalty, though to a lesser extent. Positive personal experiences and self-reflection further strengthen brand loyalty and repeat purchase behaviour. The study concludes that brands aligned with Millennials' cultural values and identities are more likely to gain trust, loyalty, and long-term consumer engagement.

Keywords:

Social Identity, Brand Preference, Generation Y (Millennials), Cultural Identity, Religious Influence, Consumer Behaviour, Brand Loyalty, Personal Experience, Marketing Strategy

1. Introduction:

A brand is much more than just a logo, name, or symbol. It represents the complete personality of a product, company, or service. A brand includes its image, values, promises, and the emotional connection it builds with customers. While a companies may try to define what their brand stands for, a brand is ultimately shaped by what people think and feel about it. These perceptions are influenced by customer experiences, advertising, product quality, customer service, word of mouth, and online reviews. When people think about a brand, they often associate it with certain emotions or ideas such as luxury, affordability, trust, innovation, eco- friendliness. A strong brand stands out in the market because of its uniqueness, memorable identity, strong values, creative ideas, and its ability to consistently provide excellent service and care to customers. In essence, a brand creates a meaningful link between a business and its customers through its identity, reputation, and distinctiveness.

Brand preference occurs when consumers consistently choose one brand over others, even when competing products offer similar features or prices. This preference reflects a high level of trust, satisfaction, and emotional attachment toward the brand. Consumers tend to prefer brand they have had positive experiences with, believe offer superior quality, or feel emotionally connected to. Once a brand becomes a

favourite, customers are more likely to remain loyal and less willing to switch to alternatives. Brand loyalty it therefore a strong indicator that a brand has successfully met or exceeded customer expectations and has differentiated itself from competitors in a crowded market.

In today's highly competitive and dynamic marketplace, it is essential for businesses to understand the factors that influence consumers brand choices. Modern consumers no longer make decisions based solely on price or functional product attributes. Instead, many people choose brand that reflect their personal values, beliefs, personality, and lifestyle. One important factor influencing these choices is social identity, which refers to how individuals see themselves in relation to the social groups they belong to.

This study focuses on Generation Y, commonly known as Millennials, who were born between 1981 and 1996. Millennials grew up during a period of rapid technological advancement, with widespread access to the internet, smartphones, and social media. As a result, they tent to be well-informed, socially aware, and highly connected. Compared to previous generations, Millennials often have different expectations, attitudes, and purchasing behaviours. They value authenticity, social responsibility, personalization, and meaningful experiences. Today, Millennials represent a large and influential consumer group, making it crucial for businesses to understand what drives their brand preferences and purchasing decisions.

Social identity plays a significant role in shaping consumer behaviour. It refers to how individuals define themselves based on their membership in various social groups such as age, culture, profession, lifestyle, interests, or social class. These identities influence people's attitudes, choices, and behaviours, including the brands they choose to support or avoid. For Millennials, brands often act as symbols that express who they are and what they stand for. Choosing certain brands allows them to communicate their identity, values, and sense of belonging to particular social groups.

The purpose of this study is to examine how the social identity of Millennials influences their brand preferences. It aims to explore the relationship between Millennials self-concept and their buying behaviour, particularly how group identity, shared values, and lifestyle choices affect the brands they are attracted to.

Understanding this connection can help marketers and businesses develop more effective branding strategies that resonate with Millennials consumers.

By understanding the link between social identity and brand preference, companies can create stronger and more meaningful relationships with their target audience. Brands that align with Millennials values and social identities are more likely to gain trust, loyalty, and long-term support. This insight allows businesses to design products, messages, and experiences that truly reflect what consumers care about, helping them stand out and succeed in an increasingly competitive market.

2. Statement of the Problem:

Generation Y, or Millennials, are a generation that has been raised in a socially networked and technologically driven environment in which the concepts of identity and self- expression are highly important. Like all consumers, they also have a social identity based on things like family, friendships, culture, class, and their role within society whether they are students, businesspeople, or parents. These elements feed into the brands they choose, since Generation Y consumers tend to favour brands that express their own identity or are a way of conforming to their friends or some aspect of their own family and/or cultural identity. Social factors are important too, such as the technological brands for professionals and others suitable for parents. The significance of social factors here cannot be overemphasized, as it helps the companies create appropriate and appealing branding strategies. But the truth is, although Millennials constitute a very large number of consumers, exactly hoe social factors influence their preferences is not entirely clear, since each individual is different. The significance of this paper therefore lies in the fact that it seeks to examine the influence of social identity on the types of brands chosen by Millennials.

3. Review of Literature:

1. Ordun, G. (2015): "Millennial (Gen Y) Consumer Behaviour, Their Shopping Preferences and Perceptual Maps Associated with Brand Loyalty."

This study explains how Millennial consumers differ from older generations in their buying behaviour. Millennials value trendiness and modern brand image more than quality, loyalty, or prestige, largely due to

the influence of technology and social media. In contrast, older consumers focus more on functionality. Social networks also provide validation and status for Millennials.

2.   Morgan A. "Ilaw: "Who You Are Affects What You Buy: The Influence of Consumer Identity on Brand Preferences".

This study shows that consumer identity and self-concept strongly influence brand preferences. Marketing is more effective when brand messages align with how consumers see themselves, especially among minority groups. Even when identity-based marketing does not lead to direct preference, it successfully improves consumer engagement and message impact.

3.   Frank M. Bass (2011): "An attitude model for the study of brand preferences".

Bass highlights that brand preferences are closely linked to consumers' attitudes and beliefs about product attributes. The attitude model predicts brand choice better than other models. Although the direction of influence between attitudes and preferences is unclear, the study confirms a strong relationship between them in consumer decision-making.

4.   Richard Lee, Jane Klobas (2010): "The underlying social identities of a nation's brand".

This research examines how social and national identity influence brand preference. Older consumers prefer brands linked to national pride, while younger consumers are more influenced by peers and celebrities. The study suggests that celebrity endorsements are more effective for younger generations.

5.   Valerie Barker (2012): "A generational comparison of social networking site use: The influence of age and social identity".

This study compares how different generations use social networking sites and how these platforms influence social identity. Social media helps users maintain relationships and group belonging, even though passive participation like "lurking." These platforms play a significant role in shaping identity and intergroup relationships.

6.   Tom Postmes & S. Alexander Haslam (2005) - 'Social Influence in Small Groups: An Interactive Model of Social Identity Formation'

This study explains how social identity forms and operates within small groups. Identity is shaped through interaction between individuals and the group, influencing decision-making, group thinking, and behaviour. Social identity is dynamic and plays a key role in understanding group influence.

7.   Wei Shao, Sara Quach & Park Thaichon (2023) - "Ethnicity in advertising and millennials: the role of social identity and social distinctiveness."

This research investigates how ethnicity in advertising affects Millennial brand preference. Findings suggest ethnicity influences preferences, but results are inconclusive due to diverse samples. The study calls for further research across different cultures and demographic groups.

8.   Noble et al. (2009): "A study on the relationship between «brand relationship quality» and «personality congruence» across generation X and Y".

This study finds that consumer–brand personality congruence strongly improves perceived relationship quality among Generation Y consumers. This effect is especially strong in the fashion segment, showing that Millennials prefer brands that reflect their personality.

9.   Nikhashemi, (2017): "Generation Y consumers' buying behaviour in fashion apparel industry: a moderation analysis".

This study shows that brand identity, self-expression, and emotional factors strongly influence Generation Y consumers' fashion purchases. While practical factors like price affect buying, symbolic factors shape attitudes. Country of origin was found to be unimportant in purchase decisions.

10.   Russell F. Korte (2007): "A review of social identity theory with implications for training and development".

This review explains how social identity influences learning and resistance to change. Individuals interpret new information through their group membership, which can limit acceptance of new ideas. Considering group identity rather than focusing only on individuals improves learning and change effectiveness.

4. Research Objectives:

1. To study the different social identity factors influencing brand preference.

2. To analyse the impact of social identity factors on brand preference of Generation Y consumers.

3. To determine the most dominant social identity factor that significantly affects brand preference of Generation Y consumers.

5. Research Hypotheses:

1. Null Hypothesis: The social identity of Generation Y does not significantly influence their brand preferences.

2. Alternate Hypothesis: The social identity of Generation Y significantly influences their brand preferences.

6. Research Methodology:

6.1 Research Design: This research is a descriptive research design, as it helps in tracing the extent to which the social identity of Generation Y influences their brand preferences and buying behaviour. The basis for this, therefore, will be to clearly describe and analyse the prevailing patterns, attitudes, and behaviour of Generation Y consumers rather than manipulating or controlling any variable that can affect them. It probes into how different factors of social identity, such as peer influence, lifestyle, self-image, and group association, influence brand loyalty and purchasing decisions.

By taking on a descriptive approach, it is possible to understand consumers natural behaviour and derive an in-depth analysis of Generation Y consumers affinity towards brands. The design facilitates an understanding of the process of how consumers identity affects consumption patterns, particular brands, and consumers long term connection with brands. It, in general, enables the achievement of the research purpose to acquire clear and meaning insights into consumers behaviour with brands, influenced by their identity.

6.2 Source of Data:

The study makes use of both primary and secondary data sources to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the research problem.

- **Primary Data Collection:**

Primary data is collected through a structured questionnaire administered to Generation Y individuals born between 1981 and 1996. The questionnaire is designed to gather information about respondent's social identity and brand preferences. Questions related to social identity focus on aspects such as social group's respondents feel connected to, their self-perception, lifestyle choices, peer influence, and sense of belonging.

- **Secondary Data Collection:**

Secondary data is collected from existing sources such as research papers, academic journals, books, relevant websites. These sources provide theoretical background, previous research findings, and conceptual clarity related to social identity theory, consumer behaviour, and brand loyalty. Secondary data supports the primary findings and helps in strengthening the overall research framework.

6.3 Sampling Design:

- **Universe:** All individuals in Amravati city belonging to Generation Y (Millennials) born between 1981 and 1996.

- **Population:** The target population for this study will include individuals of Generation Y with purchasing power.

- **Sample Unit**: The sample unit of this study will include individuals of Generation Y with purchasing power and who are active consumers of branded products.

- **Sample Sizes:** The sample size will include of 100 respondents who are active consumers of branded products and services.

- **Sampling Technique:** A stratified random sampling technique will be used to ensure representation across different social identities.

6.4 Data Collection Tools:

The main tools used for data collection in this study are questionnaire and surveys. These tools are effective for collecting quantitative data from a large number of respondents in a structured and consistent manner.

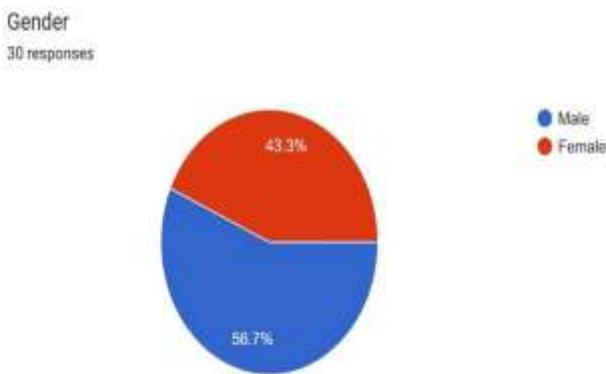**6.5 Statistical Tools Used:**

For data analysis, quantitative analysis techniques are

applied. Descriptive analysis is carried out using Advance Excel and Power BI, which help in organizing, summarizing, and visually presenting the data through charts, tables, and graphs. These tools enable easy interpretation of patterns and trends related to social identity and brand preference among Generation Y consumers.

7.   Data Analysis and Interpretation:

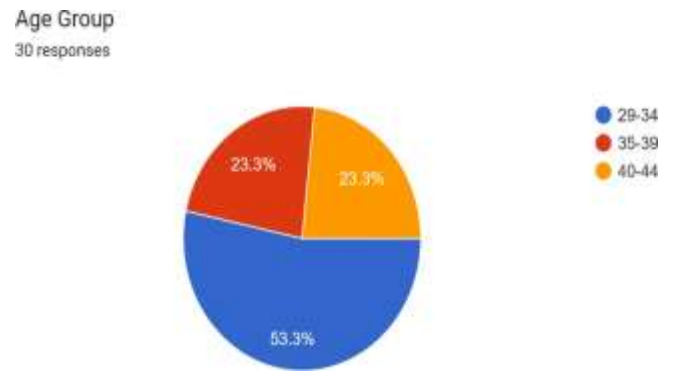### 7.1 : Table showing gender wise distribution of respondents

Sr. No	Gender	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Male	17	43.3
2	Female	13	56.7
	Total	30	100

Gender
30 responses

Interpretation: The table shows that out of 30 respondents, 17 (43.3%) are male and 13 (56.7%) are female. This indicates a higher participation of female respondents compared to male respondents in the study.

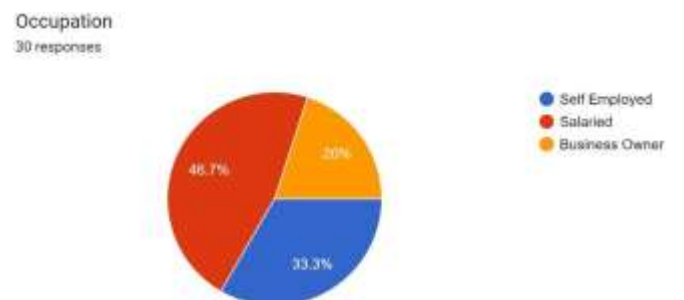### 7.2 : Table showing age wise distribution of respondents

Sr. No	Age Group	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	29-34	16	53.3
2	35-39	7	23.3
3	40-44	7	23.3
	Total	30	100

Age Group
30 responses

Interpretation: The age-wise distribution of respondents reveals that a majority of the participants, 16 respondents (53.3%), fall within the age group of 29–34 years. This is followed by the age groups of 35–39 years and 40–44 years, each comprising 7 respondents (23.3%).

7.3 : Table showing the different occupation of respondents

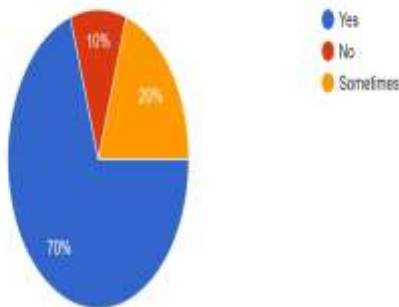| Sr. No	Occupation	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Self-Employed	10	33.3
2	Salaried	14	46.7
3	Business Owner	6	20
	Total	30	100

Occupation
30 responses

Interpretation: Out of the 30 respondents, the largest group consists of salaried employees, making up 46.7% of the total. This shows that nearly half of the respondents are working in salaried jobs. Self-

employed individuals account for 33.3%, indicating that about one-third of the respondents earn their income independently. The remaining 20% are business owners, which is the smallest group among the respondents.

7.4   : Do you follow your own traditions as well as the shared rules expected by your society?

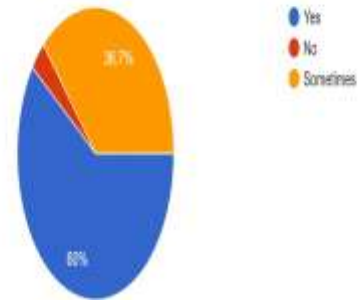| Sr. No	Option	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Yes	21	70
2	No	3	10
3	Sometimes	6	20
	Total	30	100

1. Do you follow your own traditions as well as the shared rules expected by your society?
30 responses

Interpretation: Most respondents (70%) consistently follow both their personal traditions and societal rules, while 20% do so occasionally and 10% do not. This indicates that the majority value balancing individual practices with social expectations, reflecting alignment between personal values and societal norms.

7.5   : Is your day-to-day life influenced by religious identity, like beliefs, rituals, and connection to a religious community?

2. Is your day-to-day life influenced by religious identity, like beliefs, rituals, and connection to a religious community?
30 responses

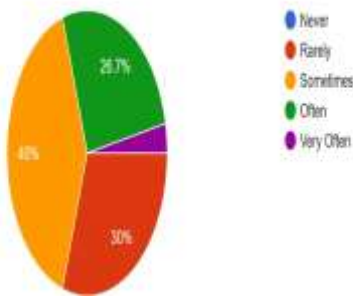| Sr. No	Option	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Yes	18	60
2	No	1	3.3
3	Sometimes	11	36.7
	Total	30	100

Interpretation: Out of the 30 respondents, 18 respondents (60%) said "Yes," indicating that their day-to-day life is influenced by their religious identity, including beliefs, rituals, and community connections. Only 1 respondent (3.3%) said "No," showing that very few people feel no influence at all. 11 respondents (36.7%) said "Sometimes," suggesting that religion influences their daily life to some extent but not always. Overall, the results show that religious identity plays a role in the daily lives of most respondents, either regularly or occasionally.

7.6   : How often do you consciously reflect on your own thoughts, feelings, and actions?

Sr. No	Option	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Never	0	-
2	Rarely	9	30
3	Sometimes	12	40
4	Often	8	26.7
5	Very Often	1	3.3
	Total	30	100

8. How often do you consciously reflect on your own thoughts, feelings, and actions?
30 responses

Interpretation: The table shows how often people think about their own thoughts, feelings, and actions. Most respondents reflect on themselves at least sometimes. Twelve people (40%) said they sometimes reflect, while 8 people (26.7%) said they do so often.
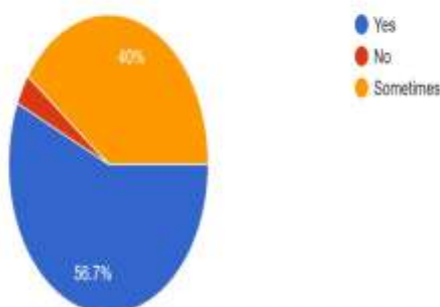
Nine respondents (30%) said they rarely reflect, and only 1 person (3.3%) said very often. No one selected never. This indicates that self-reflection is present among most respondents, but it is usually done occasionally rather than very frequently.

7.7   : Do you feel more comfortable buying brands that align with your cultural identity?

Sr. No	Option	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Yes	17	56.7
2	No	1	3.3
3	Sometimes	12	40
	Total	30	100

13. Do you feel more comfortable buying brands that align with your cultural identity?
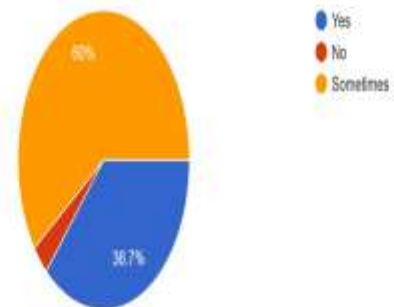30 responses

Interpretation: The table shows that many respondents feel more comfortable buying brands that match their cultural identity. Seventeen respondents (56.7%) said Yes, while 12 respondents (40%) said Sometimes**.** Only 1 person (3.3%) said No**.** This suggests that cultural identity plays an important role in brand preference for most people, either consistently or at least occasionally.

7.8   : Do your religious beliefs, practices, or values influence the brands you choose, trust, or remain loyal to?

Sr. No	Option	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Yes	11	36.7
2	No	1	3.3
3	Sometimes	18	60
	Total	30	100

14. Do your religious beliefs, practices, or values influence the brands you choose, trust, or remain loyal to?
30 responses

Interpretation: The table shows how religious beliefs affect brand choices. Most respondents are influenced by their religion at least sometimes. Eighteen people (60%) said Sometimes**,** and 11 people (36.7%) said Yes**,** meaning religion does influence their brand decisions. Only 1 person (3.3%) said No**.** This indicates that for most people, religious beliefs play a role in which brands they choose, trust, or stay loyal to, even if not always.

7.9 *: After a positive personal experience with a brand, are you more likely to buy from the same brand again and recommend it to others?*
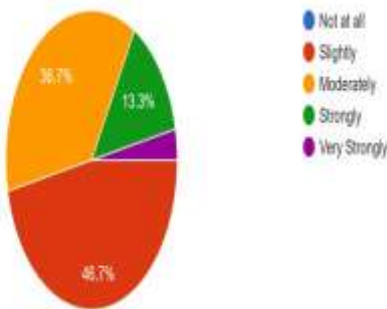
Sr. No	Option	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Yes	20	66.7
2	No	4	13.3
3	Sometimes	6	20
	Total	30	100

Interpretation: The table shows how a positive personal experience influences future brand behaviour. Twenty respondents (66.7%) said Yes, meaning they are likely to buy again and recommend the brand. Six people (20%) said Sometimes, and 4 people (13.3%) said No. This indicates that positive experiences strongly encourage repeat purchases and recommendations for most people.

7.10 : To what extent does your cultural background influence the brands you choose?

26. Do your religious beliefs or practices influence your brand choices (e.g., food brands, clothing styles, lifestyle products)?
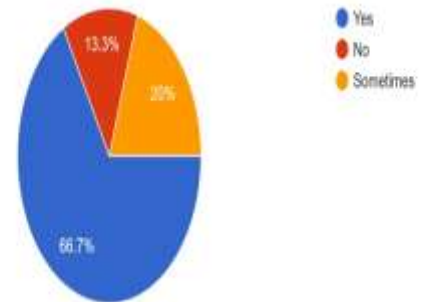
30 responses

Sr. No	Option	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Not at all	0	-
2	Slightly	4	13.3
3	Moderately	15	50
4	Strongly	9	30
5	Very Strongly	2	6.7
	Total	30	100

Interpretation: The table shows how much cultural background affects brand choice. Most respondents feel some level of influence: 15 people (50%) said Moderately, 9 people (30%) said Strongly, and 2 people (6.7%) said Very Strongly. Only 4 people (13.3%) said Slightly, and no one said Not at all. This means that for most people, cultural background plays an important role in deciding which brands to choose.

7.11 : Do your religious beliefs or practices influence your brand choices (e.g., food brands, clothing styles, lifestyle products)?

20. After a positive personal experience with a brand, are you more likely to buy from the same brand again and recommend it to others?
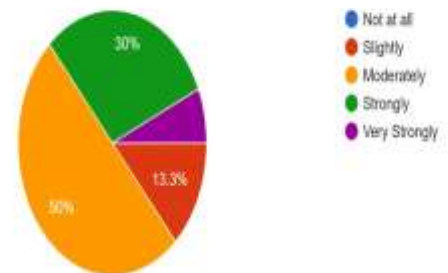
30 responses

Sr. No	Option	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Not at all	0	-
2	Slightly	14	46.7
3	Moderately	11	36.7
4	Strongly	4	13.3
5	Very Strongly	1	3.3
	Total	30	100

25. To what extent does your cultural background influence the brands you choose?
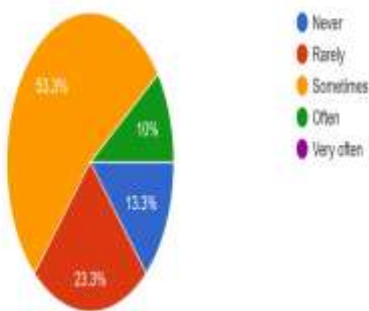
30 responses

Interpretation: The table shows how religious beliefs or practices influence brand choices. Most respondents feel some influence: 14 people (46.7%) said Slightly, 11 people (36.7%) said Moderately, 4 people (13.3%) said

Strongly, and 1 person (3.3%) said Very Strongly. No one said Not at all. This indicates that religion affects brand choices to some degree for everyone surveyed, though the level of influence varies.

7.12 : How often do you reflect on your own experiences and feelings when deciding which brands to use?

Sr. No	Option	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Never	4	13.3
2	Rarely	7	23.3
3	Sometimes	16	53.3
4	Often	3	10
5	Very Often	0	-
	Total	30	100

32. How often do you reflect on your own experiences and feelings when deciding which brands to use?

30 responses

Interpretation: The table shows how often people think about their own experiences and feelings when choosing brands. Most respondents reflect at least sometimes: 16 people (53.3%) said Sometimes, 3 people (10%) said Often, 7 people (23.3%) said Rarely, and 4 people (13.3%) said Never. No one said Very Often. This suggests that personal reflection influences brand choices for most people, but usually only occasionally rather than very frequently.

8. Finding of the Study:

1. The study finds that female respondents (56.7%) slightly outnumber male respondents (43.3%). This indicates higher participation of females in the study, suggesting that female perspectives are comparatively more represented in the collected data.

2. The findings reveal that the majority of respondents (53.3%) belong to the age group of 29–34 years. Respondents aged 35–39 years and 40–44 years form equal proportions (23.3% each), indicating that the sample is largely composed of individuals in early to mid-adulthood.

3. The study shows that salaried employees form the largest occupational group (46.7%), followed by self-employed individuals (33.3%). Business owners constitute the smallest group (20%). This suggests that salaried professionals dominate the respondent profile.

4. The findings indicate that a large majority of respondents (70%) consistently follow both their personal traditions and societal norms. A smaller section (20%) follows them occasionally, while only 10% do not. This reflects a strong alignment between individual traditions and societal expectations among most respondents.

5. The results show that religious identity influences the daily lives of most respondents. A total of 60% report regular influence, while 36.7% experience occasional influence. Only a negligible proportion (3.3%) report no influence, highlighting the continued relevance of religion in everyday life.

6. The study finds that self-reflection is common among respondents, with the majority reflecting either sometimes (40%) or often (26.7%). While 30% reflect rarely, none of the respondents reported never reflecting on their thoughts, feelings, or actions, indicating a general tendency toward introspection.

7. The findings reveal that cultural identity plays a significant role in brand comfort levels. Over half of the respondents (56.7%) feel more comfortable buying culturally aligned brands, while 40% experience this comfort occasionally. Very few respondents (3.3%) are unaffected by cultural alignment.

8. The study shows that religious beliefs influence brand choice for most respondents either sometimes (60%) or consistently (36.7%). Only a minimal percentage (3.3%) report no influence, suggesting that religion remains an important factor in brand trust and loyalty decisions.

9. The findings indicate that positive personal experiences strongly encourage brand loyalty. A majority of respondents (66.7%) are likely to repurchase and recommend a brand after a positive experience, demonstrating the importance of customer satisfaction in influencing consumer behaviour.

10. The study finds that cultural background

significantly affects brand selection. Most respondents report moderate (50%) to strong or very strong influence (36.7%). None of the respondents stated that culture has no influence, confirming its importance in consumer decision-making.

11. The findings reveal that religious beliefs influence brand choices to varying degrees for all respondents. While most report slight to moderate influence (83.4%), a smaller portion experiences strong or very strong influence (16.6%). This indicates that religious considerations subtly shape consumer preferences.

12. The study finds that personal reflection plays a role in brand decision-making for most respondents, with over half (53.3%) reflecting sometimes. However, frequent reflection is limited, as only 10% reflect often and none very often. This suggests that emotional and experiential reflection influences brand choices, but generally on an occasional basis.

9.   Managerial Implications:

This research will try to offer significant insights into the manner whereby the social identity of Generation Y, also referred to as Millennials, impacts their brand choices and behaviour. Generation Y is an important subset of consumers who possess specific attributes based on their lifestyle and value systems. Knowing how specific aspects of their social identity influence their brand choices can help professionals effectively interact with this demographic.

From a business point of view, the findings of this study provide valuable input for creating new marketing strategies that can be more effective and specific and cater to the needs of the target market. By realizing the importance of social identity in consumer behaviours , companies can create new products, messages, and marketing campaigns that are relevant to the beliefs and ideals of millennials. When brands stand for concepts of authenticity, sustainability, social responsibility, and communities, they will be easily identified with millennials and will result in emotional connections with them, which can be a key factor in this competitive market scenario.

From a research point of view, this research has contributed to the existing base with regard to consumer behaviour and social identity theory because it has generated empirical findings related to the role of identity-related variables in consumer purchases,

thereby forming a robust foundation for future research studies. Furthermore, this study can help fill the theoretical construct of social identity perceptions and actual consumer behaviours related to it because it deals directly with social identity theories.

On a macro-level, this study helps consumers as it heightens their awareness of how social environments, group memberships, and shared value systems impact them in light of their consumption behaviours. It also equips this generation of young people with the knowledge that will allow them to make educated and conscious consumption choices rather than following social dictates through unconscious consumption behaviours. On a macro-level, this particular study helps brands in several ways and equips them with valuable knowledge related to effective brand communication.

10.   Limitations of the Study:

There are limitations on how to interpret the results of this research.

1. The research only covers Amravati City: as a result, it is only relevant to Generation Y consumers based in Amravati City only and cannot be generalised to other regions or cultures of the country.

2. The research was conducted over the time period of the Academic Year 2025-2026. A one- year time frame does not allow for an extensive or long-term study of how consumers attitudes and brand preferences change with time.

3. The research is based on a relatively small sample size. A small sample size does not represent the diverse lifestyles and characteristics of the entire Generation Y consumer market therefore: the results will not represent a complete or generalised picture of Generation Y consumers brand preferences.

4. The research has only studied the social identity aspects of the consumers when looking for the reasons for brand preference. Although social identity is very important, there are other significant factors that must also be taken into account such as psychological and economic influences, Cultural influences and technology influences, the research only gives a partial view of what influences Generation Y consumer brand preferences.

11. Recommendations:

1. Extend research to include additional social identity dimensions, such as peer influence, social media engagement, and ethnic diversity.

2. Conduct cross-generational studies to compare how social identity affects brand preference among Millennials, Gen Z, and older consumers.

3. Investigate industry-specific or product-specific variations, as social identity may influence categories like fashion, technology, or FMCG differently.

4. Use mixed-method approaches combining surveys and interviews to better understand why and how social identity shapes brand loyalty.

12. Scope for Future Research:

The purpose of this research is to explore the effect of the social identity of Generation Y on brand choice: thus, providing valuable insight for both academics and industry practitioners. On a practical level, the results of the research will enable businesses to formulate more strategic, productive, and socially engaging branding strategies that complement the lifestyle, values, and community affiliations of this influential segment of consumers. By understanding how social identity plays a role in the decision-making process, businesses will be able to create an emotional bond with Generation Y and, thereby, strengthen brand relevance, loyalty, and market standing.

On the academic side of things, this study's findings support a better understanding of how consumers behave based on their social identities, while at the same time providing a means of expanding on previous research by examining how Generation Identity influences how we view brands and is related to how we consume brands. It also provides base for future research on intergenerational marketing and evaluating brands. The findings from this study will allow for comparing generations of consumers and cultural contests.

From a personal perspective, this study enhanced the investigators understanding and skills regarding consumer psychology, branding and market analysis. These skills will assist the investigator both when conducting academic research, when conducting professional marketing practice and when venturing into entrepreneurship, therefore aiding in making better and more strategic decisions when faced with real life situation.

13. Conclusion:

The study concludes that several social identity factors influence brand preference among Generation Y consumers. Cultural identity, religious beliefs, personal traditions, and self- reflection were found to play important roles in shaping brand choices. A majority of respondents follow their personal traditions and societal norms, and many feel more comfortable purchasing brands that align with their cultural and religious values. These findings confirm that social identity factors are significant determinants of brand preference.

The study concludes that social identity factors have a noticeable impact on the brand preference of Generation Y consumers. Cultural background exerts a moderate to strong influence on brand selection for most respondents, while religious beliefs affect brand trust, loyalty, and product choice to varying degrees. Positive personal experiences and self- reflection further strengthen brand loyalty and repeat purchase behaviour. Overall, Generation Y consumers tend to prefer brands that align with their values, beliefs, and lived experiences.

The study concludes that cultural identity is the most dominant social identity factor influencing brand preference among Generation Y consumers. Most respondents reported moderate to strong cultural influence on their brand choices, and none indicated the absence of cultural influence. Although religious beliefs and personal traditions also affect brand preference, their impact is comparatively less intense. Therefore, cultural background emerges as the most significant factor shaping brand preference among Generation Y consumers.

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