



Influence of Popular Culture on Consumer Behaviour of Youth in Sri Lanka

Swarna Ihalagama
University of Kelaniya

M. K. Ruwan Harischandra
ruwanharischandra@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

In Sri Lanka recently, youth antisocial behavior has become a serious national and worldwide concern: Due to adolescent antisocial behavior over the previous 20 years, the rule of law and the law are challenged: Quantitative and qualitative data are collected. Snowball theory was used to collect qualitative data. In addition to this, the behavior of randomly selected individuals is studied through participant observation. Data was collected by conducting consensus interviews with individuals.

According to police reports, ganging is a major issue. The previously mentioned organizational structure is well-known in urban areas, although it is less prevalent in rural areas. However, throughout the past two decades, the antisocial behavior of the youth has had a direct or indirect impact on Sri Lanka's popular culture. Additionally, juvenile gangs use a variety of tactics to trick and mislead victims of crime. Their actions are presented to the audience as vibrant and appealing visual images.

Keywords: *Consumer Behaviour, Popular Culture, Antisocial Behaviour, Qualitative, Sri Lanka*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Oxford encyclopedia states that the term popular culture was used in 1854. It was by John Heinrich Pestalozzi. In 1876, John Morley used this term for the first time in a public speech at Birmingham Town Hall (Browne, 2000).

The concept of popular culture is born with the social dynamics that came with the industrial revolution (Sugimoto, 2011). The dimensions created by rapid movements in the society are the root of this concept. The behavioral change and the related factors are the popular culture. Accordingly, the social stratum based on an industrialized society can be identified from this concept (Le Roy, 2001).

Due to the industrial revolution, the upper class of society was not represented by the aristocratic feudal group, but by the economically strong lower class (Otmazgini, 2008). Therefore, the powerful stratum was able to influence its lower strata and the lower strata began to imitate the upper strata. This pattern of imitation is known as popular culture (Fiske, 2010) By doing so, they tried to move to the upper echelons of society. As this is a movement towards a higher direction in society, it has imitative characteristics (Lown, 2000). Considering the Sri Lankan society, the change in attitude towards the English language and European asthma is illustrated.

However, the concept of popular culture remains popular among many people without any negatives. Due to its popularity, many people follow it. Due to this adaptation, various products entered the market through a context of high consumption (Geizon, 2009). The combination of that strategy has been introduced by the terms commercial culture. In this sense, popular culture is a combination of human behavior patterns that are adapted to the process of promoting the economic structure of a society in a specific time frame (Anjella, 1994).

Thus, a person who interprets popular culture through the social school theory can present a different interpretation. Material art, fashion, cyber culture, films, dramas existing in a certain society (Severin, 2001). Television, radio, other consumer goods

can all be considered as accessories here. Thus, the term popular culture is nurtured to fulfill the needs of the producer within a hyper-consumer society. By the middle of the 19th century this would become the ruling class culture or the official culture (Strianti, 2000). The Frankfurt school of thought has used this concept to describe the rise of fascism after World War II. They further point out that this concept undermines or dilutes the rise of a working class. This is not a separate force, but a fundamental part of the behavior of the members of the society (Lee, 2000).

Definitions related to this group have been synthesized into 06 categories (John Storey, 2019). Among them, it is also said that the opinions emerging from the people are against commercialism. And there is also the idea that something produced for the mass consumer is a commercial device presented for the benefit of the public without any compromise (Emma, 2000).

The study's geographic scope is considered to include the Western Province. Street traders and small- and medium-sized businesses who provide the black market for items are groups that are specifically targeted as data contributors. Here, there are two major groups into which the street vendors could be divided.

- Running their businesses on a temporary structure.
- Those who go from place to place without construction and run their own business.

There are similarities as well as differences between these two types. Furthermore, trade groups that agree with the legal framework as well as those that are against the legal framework were also monitored.

Narrowing the boundaries of the study, the focus was on the community that runs its own business illegally.

There are such informal commercial activities in various countries of the world (Freitag, 1989). The nature of the tactics used here is also different according to each society (Knight, 1998). These crimes range from simple theft to aggravated murder.

Their common feature is commercial motivation. This study primarily considers the influence of popular culture on illegal marketing and associated practices.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

What is illegal is defined by each state's legal system and court decisions. This study related to Sri Lankan society has been done by making a balanced comparison with the cases of other countries. America came to the aid of the ruling families of Panama. America offered to take care of the ruling families until the independence of Panama in 1968. Despite that, a sudden coup in that country ousted Anu Lufo Arias, the last person of a dictatorial class, and Omar Torrijos, who was not involved in the coup, became the head of state (Colby, 1995). After that, the ruler had to protect the Lumpan class concerning this political network. Illegal trade and racketeering are not just about drugs and weapons. These gangs are involved in customs violations, smuggling, criminal fraud, etc. These conditions have led to rapid changes in consumer behavior over the past two decades. (Economic and social statistics of Sri Lanka, 2018). The upper social class of Sri Lankan society uses people involved in illegal trade to achieve their interests. Therefore, institutions such as the police and prison have come forward to protect them. Therefore, institutions such as the police and prison have come forward to protect them.

2.1. Theoretical background

A person's behavior is determined by his motives and emotional impulses (Ajzen, 1991). In this way, the situation in everyday society will directly affect the behavior of the street trading community and those involved in illegal trading. And a person reaches a certain conclusion based on the amount of information or data he has. He executes that decision within his range of experience (Teng and Wang, 2015).

2.2. Legal Effect

There are various legal provisions regarding street vendors and persons engaged in illegal trade. Local authorities do not follow up other than collecting money from the above first category of people. There is a lack of scientific research on such groups. Prof. Nandasena Ratnapala has done a study on people like widows and prostitutes. But it is from an anthropological perspective. There has been no quantitative and qualitative research on the lack of law and law enforcement and the lack of updating of the law.

3. METHODOLOGY

Qualitative data as well as quantitative data will be collected for this research. Data were collected in several ways to represent both main groups of the research population. Individuals from the two groups (no.182) are randomly selected and interviewed by the researcher himself. Other methods were used to avoid unbalancing the sample due to random selection. Simple technical tools were used to avoid the voluntary submission of facts by the data contributor. But revealing the identity of the data contributor was covered as an ethical matter. And the researcher has worked as an external observer so the relevant data contributors are not aware. Here, their language, performance, marketing strategy, etc. were observed. The snowball theory was used for further study regarding the identified special conditions. There, special attention was given to institutions such as ports or customs. The illegal release of goods from those organizations and the taking out of goods could be investigated. The researcher discussed this with the employees of the above organization. The behavior of the community in the vicinity of Colombo was studied in this study. The gang was made up of various organizations and they are in different ranks.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

A classification of collected data according to a hypothesis is called data analysis (Chavless, 1968). Thus, the collected data was analyzed according to the methodology presented above. The collected data were analyzed on the following assumptions. Education level of those involved in illegal trade or informal trade. Attitudes of those involved in illegal trade or informal trade. The influence of the popular culture of the period on marketing and its stimulation of illegal and informal trade.

4.1. Sample

Data has been obtained from a group of 182 representing both parties. Appropriate methods were used for that purpose.

The following problems may occur in data collection for this study.

- Inclusion of members outside the population in the sample.
- The sample is not proportional to the population.
- Misunderstanding of the problem process of the data collection.
- Errors in coding.
- Failure to obtain responses from certain members of the sample.
- Adequate measures were taken to mitigate these weaknesses.

4.2. Discussion

It is not possible to specify the people involved in illegal trade activities. Therefore, a relatively large sample has been selected.

Hypothesis 1 - Illegal trade is gang-based.

Observation

Illicit trade takes place in gangs. These gangs are formed based on a young age. Various gangs of this type are visible in various societies around the world. These gangs in Sri Lankan society are respected in the same way.

Several main factors influencing the emergence of these gangs have been identified.

- Personal characteristics
- Peer groups
- School
- Family
- Community

Those engaged in illegal trade activities belong to different age groups. They deal with their groups.

In this study, it was revealed that every group has a leader who is older than the rest of the members. Therefore, he suggests subtle strategies to evade law enforcement agencies. These strategies are unique to that leader. Sometimes they are experiences gained by observing the situations of his predecessors who were in danger.

The composition of these groups of people is diverse. There are several main reasons for engaging in business activities in women, men, religious or ethnic groups.

- Poverty
- Ignorance
- Environmental impact.

It is the main one. This is growing as a powerful social problem, and strategies to control it are shrinking. It is due to the existing weaknesses of the regime. (Wijewardana BVN201 5) foreign employment of the mothers is a key factor to persuade young become gangster and gradually they engage in illegal vendors.

Hypothesis 2 - The level of education of people engaged in illegal trade is low.

One of the factors that motivate people to engage in illegal trade is their low level of education. Due to the lack of understanding about the seriousness of one's actions and their illegality, there is a reference to illegal trade.

But these individuals are self-integrated through the dialogue within their group. The success of a task creates an incentive to continue such tasks (Dickin, 1969).

furthermore, white-collar illegal trades exist. People from this lower level are motivated to fulfill the needs of those people. The attitudes of each individual will be affected by that behavior. An attitude is a nature of reacting with consistency that can be passed as learned, which evokes emotional feelings (Klausmeier, 1975).

Hypothesis 3 - There is a connection between popular culture and illegal trade.

The basis of illegal trade is popular culture. Popular culture is used in the English language for the term popular society. Foreign culture is a synonym for it. Therefore, the purpose of this is to stabilize the trade.

Popular culture is how the capital of a society affects a person or institutions that produce goods in that society (Hennayake, 2001) Parsons, who presents the mechanical model of popular culture, shows social activities as mechanical cogs. Changes in one cog affect other factors (Parsons, 1953).

In this study conducted in Colombo, the mechanical nature was evident. Preparation of fake documents as required, obtaining approval from ethical institutions, the release of goods, etc. are among them. As a byproduct of an ongoing communication process (Raymond, 1989). Thus, there is an inter-communication process between the gangs. The process uniquely benefits groups (Baudrilladyd, 1998).

In this way, other visually similar products are produced for the popular products. One of the identified tasks of these groups is to prepare the market for them. They show that they got the products at a low price.

Their activities can be divided into two main groups.

- Physical environment
- Cultural environment

This included the natural environment, climate, etc. The physical environment is the tangible or visible condition characteristic of a specific society in a certain time frame. Different functions suitable for achieving commercial goals have a cultural orientation. Even different concepts are elements of it (Rocher, 1972).

5. CONCLUSION

Illegal street trading is a process fueled by pop culture. Its character is determined by the behavior of a particular religious society at a particular time. The illegality, procedure, etc. change from time to time. Illegal gangs often operate as gangs and each gang has a leader. Inter-relationships are maintained between gangs, implying the need for a specific program to raise individual economic status. Unemployment was identified as a major cause of this situation. This situation can be mitigated by developing individual attitudes and suggesting alternative sources of income.

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