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A STUDY OF YOUNG WOMEN'S PERSPECTIVE ON THE PINK TAX

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ABSTRACT :

The gender-based price gap known as the "pink tax" occurs when goods and services targeted at women are frequently more expensive than equivalent options targeted at men. The fairness, awareness, and consequences of the pink tax are examined from the viewpoints of young women in this study. The study looks at how often young women experience price disparities based on gender and how social media and education affect how they perceive this problem. Surveys and qualitative insights are used in a mixed-method approach to evaluate consumer behaviour and views. The results show how knowledgeable young women are, how they feel about gender-based pricing, and how they would support legislative reforms. The study intends to add to the larger conversation about consumer rights and gender-based economic disparities by making suggestions for raising awareness and promoting fair pricing practices.

KEY WORDS: Feminine Products Pricing, Social Media Influence, Education and Awareness, Pink Tax, Gender-Based Pricing, Young Women's Perspective, Fair Pricing.

INTRODUCTION :

The "pink tax" is a term used to describe the additional cost that women often pay for products and services that are comparable to those designed for men. This pricing disparity is not an actual tax but rather an increase in price for items marketed toward women, often identified by their pink or pastel packaging. Research has shown that women's products, from personal care items like razors and shampoos to basic clothing, often cost more than similar products for men, despite having similar ingredients or designs.

The Pink Tax, often referred to as gender-based pricing, is the practice of charging more for goods and services targeted at women than for comparable or identical goods marketed to males. Numerous industries, including personal care, apparel, healthcare, and even financial services, are affected by this issue. Although the Pink Tax isn't a real tax levied by governments, it represents an economic inequality that disproportionately impacts women and gradually increases their financial burden.

In recent years, the Pink Tax has drawn a lot of attention as consumers and legislators have questioned its fairness and long-term effects. Due to their increased awareness of gender-based discrimination in the marketplace and their status as active consumers, young women in particular constitute a significant demographic impacted by these pricing inequalities. A number of things, including as education, social media impact, individual experiences, and cultural norms, influence how they view the Pink Tax.

By examining young women's awareness, attitudes, and the regularity with which they experience gender-based price disparities, this study seeks to understand their opinions on the Pink Tax. It also looks into how social media and education have influenced how they perceive this problem. This research aims to add to the current discussion on gender-based pricing and draw attention to the need for more openness and equity in consumer markets by learning more about the perspectives of young women.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE L

Hajar L Habbal, R Lemke, AJ Felkey 2020 This study analyses the marketing exposure of consumers. In order to provide evidence in favor of the idea that the Pink Tax gains from this mode of transmission, this study specifically links marketing exposure to gender, age, race, marital status, and marijuana use (as a stand-in for preferences for particular kinds of behavior). According to the results, there is a significant negative correlation between marketing exposure and education, as indicated by the number of hours a teen spends watching television each week.

Natasha Vajravelu, Anna Tuchman, and Sarah Moshary Science of Marketing, 2023 The study examined a contentious use of a standard pricing technique: gender-based price segmentation. It has allegedly led to the creation of a "pink tax," in which similar products marketed to men are less expensive than those marketed to women. Our results are in line with the ease of arbitrage in consumer packaged goods posted price markets. The effectiveness of the recently proposed and passed pink tax legislation, which requires price parity for significantly similar gendered products, is called into question by these findings.

Matilda Kardetoft 2020 The purpose of this thesis is to examine gender-based price discrimination in the Swedish hygiene product market, also known as the "pink tax. "The results lend credence to the notion that there might be a pink tax in the Swedish market. The biggest and most consistent regression revealed a 4.1 percent price difference between products for men and women. Therefore, it can be concluded that prices are not statistically equal because women typically pay 4.1 percent more for hygiene products.

Laura Nataly Barrera Bello Europa-University Viadrina Frankfurt, 2021 This paper investigates the attitude of German consumers toward higher prices charged to female consumers by randomly surveying them in two scenarios: one with the same price and the other with a higher price for the female version of the product. The interaction between Pink-tax and price fairness, and how gender mediates this perception, was tested through a within-subject factorial design experiment, with two variables, price as the independent variable and gender as the mediator. Following that, respondents were asked a series of questions about their perceptions of price fairness. The findings indicate that when presented with a higher price, women have a marginally stronger negative perception.

Pramesti Adenia Naura 2024 This study investigates how consumers view fair pricing for personal care items and how the pink tax affects their decision to buy. The study uses a mixed-methods approach, combining semi-structured interviews for qualitative insights and surveys for quantitative data collection. By providing insights for advancing more equitable pricing practices, this study will advance knowledge of gender-based pricing and its impacts on Indonesian consumers' behaviour.

RESEARCH GAP :

The lack of knowledge about how consumers view the pink tax, particularly across various demographics like age, gender, culture, and income levels, is a significant research gap. The majority of research does not examine how these groups perceive or respond to price disparities based on gender. Research on how the media and recent social movements affect consumers' perceptions of the pink tax is also lacking. A better understanding of consumer attitudes and possible areas for change may result from research into these areas.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM :

The continuation of gender-based pricing disparities, also known as the "pink tax," underscores a serious socioeconomic problem that disproportionately impacts women. A thorough grasp of how consumers view and react to the pink tax across different demographic groups, including age, gender, culture, and income levels, is lacking, despite the fact that it has been the focus of media coverage and policy discussions. Furthermore, little is understood about how social movements and media narratives shape these perceptions. The capacity to promote fair pricing practices, raise consumer awareness, and promote systemic change is hampered by this knowledge gap. Without examining these factors, attempts to lessen the pink tax might only be surface-level, ignoring the underlying factors influencing consumer behaviour and public perceptions of gender-based pricing disparities.

OBJECTIVE :

- To explore the role of education and social media in shaping young women's understanding of the pink tax.

HYPOTHESIS :

- **H$_0$1:** Education and social media exposure do not have a significant impact on young women's understanding of the pink tax.
- **H1:** Education and social media exposure have a significant impact on young women's understanding of the pink tax.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY :

The goal of this study is to comprehend how young female consumers view the pink tax, especially in light of Bengaluru demographics. It looks at how young female consumers perceive gender-based pricing disparities and how social movements and the media shape these attitudes and behaviors. The study examines important topics like the extent to which the pink tax is present in commonplace goods and services, how price differences affect female consumer choices, and the degree of awareness and perception among those living in the research area. Furthermore, the study explores how demographic variables such as age, gender, and educational attainment influence attitudes and buying patterns regarding the pink tax. Understanding how young female consumers react to gendered pricing and its wider effects on equality is one of the goals of the insights gathered.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY :

This study's primary data was gathered using a structured, English-language questionnaire. A five-point Likert scale was used in the questionnaire to gauge responses, guaranteeing a detailed comprehension of the young women participants beliefs and perspectives. The secondary data used in this study is sourced from a number of trustworthy sources, such as academic journals, research papers, and publications that discuss gender-based pricing disparities and consumer behaviour. The target population consists of 100 women participants from Bangalore. The study collects data from young Bengaluru women customers using a purposive sample technique. The non-probability sampling method was selected to guarantee that participants possess pertinent knowledge or experience with gender-based pricing disparities.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION :

Table 1.1 The Model Summary Table

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.333	.111	.096	1.0357

INTERPRETATION:

According to the model summary, the correlation between the predictors and the dependent variable is represented by the regression model's R-value of 0.333. The independent variables (social media awareness and the conviction that schools and colleges should teach young women about price differences) account for about 11.1% of the variation in the dependent variable (familiarity with the pink tax), according to the R-square value of 0.111. The model's adjusted R-square, which takes into consideration the number of predictors, is 0.096, suggesting a moderate level of explanatory power. The estimate's standard error, which gives information about the average difference between observed and anticipated values, is 1.0357.

Table 1.2 The Anova Table

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	15.661	2	7.830	7.300	.001
Residual	125.506	117	1.073		
Total	141.167	119			

INTERPRETATION:

The regression model is statistically significant, according to the ANOVA table, with a significance level (p-value) of 0.001 and an F-value of 7.300. This suggests that differences in familiarity with the pink tax can be adequately explained by the model as a whole. At least one of the predictors appears to have a significant association with the dependent variable, based on the low p-value.

Table 1.3 The Coefficient Table

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	1.661	.295		5.626	.000
	Has social media made you more aware of the price differences	-0.017	.109	-0.014	-0.153	.878
	Do you think schools and colleges should educate young women	0.413	.109	0.335	3.783	.000

INTERPRETATION:

The coefficients table offers information on each predictor's unique contribution. When both predictors are zero, the predicted familiarity level is 1.661, as indicated by the constant (intercept) of 1.661 and the significant p-value of 0.000.

It is not statistically significant that the variable "Has social media made you more aware of price differences" has an unstandardized coefficient (B) of -0.017 and a p-value of 0.878. This implies that the familiarity of young women with the pink tax is not significantly impacted by social media awareness. There is a p-value of 0.000 and an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.413 for the variable "Do you think schools and colleges should educate young women about price differences?" This suggests a statistically significant positive link, meaning that respondents who think schools should help students learn about pricing variations are more likely to be familiar with the pink tax.

FINDINGS :

The results imply that although education and social media have an impact on young women's knowledge of the pink tax, their total influence is little. These characteristics account for just 11.1% of familiarity ($R2 = 0.111$), according to the regression analysis, which reveals a modest but favourable link (R = 0.333). Accordingly, other factors—like individual experiences and public discourse—might be more important. The standard error (1.0357) and modified R2 score (0.096) imply that people's views vary. Thus, more focused educational initiatives and awareness-raising activities are required to improve comprehension of price disparities based on gender.

The ANOVA results (F = 7.300, p = 0.001) demonstrate that social media and education have a considerable impact on familiarity with the pink tax, even though the model has a moderate explanatory power. While other factors might also have a role, this emphasizes the value of online debates and structured learning in increasing awareness.

The impact of education is significantly greater than that of social media. Social media awareness is not statistically significant (B = -0.017, p = 0.878), according to the regression results, however belief in teaching pricing disparities in schools is (B = 0.413, p = 0.000). According to this, exposure to social media by itself could not result in awareness, but formal education does promote a deeper understanding. Furthermore, the substantial intercept (1.661, p = 0.000) suggests that familiarity extends beyond these variables, most likely as a result of discussion in society or personal experiences. These

results emphasize that gender-based pricing talks should be incorporated into academic courses because social media might not be enough to foster thorough comprehension on its own.

CONCLUSION :

It recommends using case studies and interactive learning to raise awareness of the pink tax and incorporate gender-based pricing discussions into school curricula. Boost social media marketing with influencer partnerships and focused, fact-based content. Start campaigns to raise customer awareness through government programs, non-profits, and retail establishments. Encourage legislative measures that will increase fair pricing and price transparency. To strengthen knowledge outside of academic and digital venues, promote peer and community debates through workshops and forums.

In summary, although education and social media contribute to raising young women's knowledge of the pink tax, their influence is modest, underscoring the need for more concerted initiatives. It is imperative that schools and universities incorporate gender-based pricing talks into their curricula because doing so can greatly improve comprehension. The knowledge gap can also be closed by increasing social media's efficacy through focused awareness efforts and fact-based conversations. Change can also be accelerated by consumer advocacy campaigns and legislative measures that support price transparency. Last but not least, encouraging conversations among peers and the community will guarantee that awareness transcends scholarly and online settings. By putting these tactics into practice, a more thorough and knowledgeable comprehension of the pink tax can be attained, eventually enabling young women to be conscientious consumers.

LIMITATION :

- The study's geographic focus on Bengaluru may limit its ability to accurately reflect young female consumer perceptions in other areas.
- Consumer awareness and perceptions are the main focus of the study, which skips over the operational mechanisms or explanations offered by companies for gender-based pricing.
- Since the data was gathered within a certain time frame, longitudinal data that tracks changes in perceptions over time is not taken into consideration.
- The study uses self-reported data, which could contain errors or biases from participants.
- The results can't be applied to a wider population because they are based on a sample of only 100 students.

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