
| RESEARCH ARTICLE**Cultural Influences and Consumer Learning in Shaping Behaviour: A Systematic Review of Evidence from Ethiopian (2016-2026)****Tefera Lagebo Sulamo***PhD candidate, in Marketing management, Jimma University***Corresponding Author:** Tefera Lagebo Sulamo, **E-mail:** lagebo2003@gmail.com**| ABSTRACT**

Consumer behaviour involves how individuals, groups, or companies select, purchase, use, and dispose of products and services. This systematic review examines the influence of culture and learning on consumer behaviour in developing countries, particularly Ethiopia and Africa. Drawing on business, psychology, marketing, and sociology, it analyses trends in peer-reviewed articles published between 2016 and 2026 to provide insights for marketers, educators, and future research on emerging markets. The study employed a literature review method based on the PRISMA 2020 framework to ensure transparency and accuracy. Researchers searched databases including Web of Science, Emerald, Google Scholar, and Scopus for relevant peer-reviewed articles from 2016 to 2026. After rigorous screening and selection based on predefined criteria, 35 studies were included in the analysis. Cultural factors such as norms, family influence, community values, and traditional beliefs significantly shape consumer attitudes and purchasing decisions. Consumer learning processes, including product experience, advertising exposure, and word-of-mouth, also influence knowledge formations and purchase intentions. The findings highlight key implications for marketers and educators in developing countries like Ethiopia and other emerging markets, while identifying gaps for further consumer behaviour research.

| KEYWORDS

Ethiopia, Emerging Markets, Consumer Behaviour, Cultural Influence, Systematic Review

| ARTICLE INFORMATION**ACCEPTED:** 04 May 2026**PUBLISHED:** 01 June 2026

1. Introduction**1.1 Definition and Influencing Factors:**

Consumer behaviour encompasses the processes by which individuals, groups, or organizations select, purchase, use, and dispose of products and services to satisfy needs and desires (Degefa & Werke, 2025). This field integrates insights from marketing, sociology, psychology, and economics to explain decision-making (Ewur et al., 2025). Key stages include need recognition, information search, and evaluation of alternatives, purchase, and post-purchase evaluation. External factors such as social influences, culture, and economic conditions interact with internal factors like motivation, perception, attitudes, personality, and learning to shape product attitudes, ad comprehension, and purchase preferences (Ezquerro et al., 2024; Fenta et al., 2024). In competitive markets, understanding these dynamics enables firms to develop targeted strategies that enhance customer satisfaction and competitiveness (Hart, n.d.).

1.2 The Role of Culture and Consumer Learning:

Cultural values profoundly influence brand perceptions, product priorities, and purchase decisions, necessitating culturally sensitive marketing strategies (Collection & Warning, 2010). Consumer learning, derived from product experiences, advertising exposure, and social interactions, fosters attitudes, emotions, and brand loyalty (Boada et al., 2025). The interplay is critical:

Copyright: © 2026 the Author(s). This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY) 4.0 license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>). Published by nicomarcinternationalpublishers.

cultural norms shape information processing, trusted sources (e.g., family, community), and evaluative criteria, ultimately guiding choices (Fenta et al., 2024; Otto et al., 2007).

1.3 Context: The Ethiopian market,

Ethiopia's rapid urbanization, rising incomes, and expanding consumer base evident in Addis Ababa's proliferation of brands present significant opportunities. Cultural emphasis on family consultations, community trust, and word-of-mouth dominates decisions, often overriding individual preferences. Concurrently, digital penetration accelerates learning through online ads and reviews, particularly in urban areas. Marketers must integrate these cultural and technological shifts to capitalize on evolving needs amid intensifying competition.

1.4 Research Problem:

While global studies affirm culture and learning as pivotal to consumer behavior shaping option evaluation, ad responses, and purchases via experiences, social endorsements, and traditions integrated analyses remain scarce in developing contexts like Ethiopia (Fenta et al., 2024). Existing research fragments focus on isolated factors (e.g., brand image, pricing, service), overlooking their interplay with strong familial, communal, and traditional influences amid economic growth, urbanization, and foreign brand influx. This gap leaves marketers without a holistic framework, hindering effective strategies. The present study addresses this by synthesizing how culture and consumer learning drive behaviour in Ethiopia.

1.5 The following research questions guide this systematic review:

1. Based on marketing and consumer behaviour research, influence Ethiopian consumers 'purchasing decisions?
2. How does consumer learning affect Ethiopian consumers' buying decisions?
3. Which consumer behavior theory explains the connection between consumer learning, culture, and purchasing behavior?
4. What research gaps exist in the literature on the impact of Ethiopian culture and consumer education on purchasing decisions?

1.6 Research Objectives

The main objective is to do a comprehensive evaluation of the body of research on how Ethiopian consumers' purchasing decisions are influenced by culture and consumer education.

1.7 The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To determine the cultural elements that affect Ethiopian consumers' purchasing decisions.
 2. To investigate how consumer learning processes impact consumer choices about what to buy.
 3. To examine how theories of consumer behaviour account for the connection between culture, consumer education, and purchasing behaviour.
 4. To pinpoint research gaps and make recommendations for future Ethiopian consumer behaviour studies.
- Contribution of the Study

This research enhances to the corpus of knowledge in several ways. First, it offers a thorough summary of the literature on consumer learning and cultural factors in the Ethiopian consumer market. The research provides a better understanding of the elements influencing consumer purchasing behaviour by integrating data from many studies through a methodical evaluation of pertinent literature. Second, by investigating how cultural values and learning processes combine to affect consumer decision-making in an emerging market setting, the study advances consumer behavior theory. This research expands the geographical and contextual scope of consumer behavior literature, which predominantly emphasizes studies conducted in developed countries, by focusing on Ethiopia. Third, the study gives good advice to Ethiopian marketers, businesses, and lawmakers. Companies can make marketing plans that fit with different cultures, make customers happier, and improve communication with customers if they understand how cultural norms and the way people learn affect their buying decisions. Finally, the analysis highlights areas that need more empirical research and points out important gaps in the current literature. These observations can help future researchers do more in-depth studies of how customers act and how businesses market themselves in Ethiopia.

2. Literature Review

With an emphasis on the roles of culture and consumer learning, this section offers a thorough overview of the body of research on consumer behaviour. Additionally, the analysis looks at consumer behavior in developing nations, paying particular focus to Ethiopia. Consumer behavior theory, cultural effect on consumption, consumer learning theory, the relationship between culture and learning, consumer behaviour in developing economies, and consumer behavior in Ethiopia are the six subsections that make up the literature.

2.1 Consumer Behaviour Theory

The Theory of Planned Behavior is really important when we talk about how people buy things. This theory was thought of by Ajzen in 1991. It tells us that what people think and feel what they believe others think they should do, and whether they believe they can actually do something all help us guess what people will do. Some other people, Engel, Blackwell and Miniard, thought of a way to describe how people make buying decisions in 1995. They said it happens in five steps: people realize they need something, they look for information and compare their options, they decide to buy something. Then they think about whether they are happy with what they bought. There are two ideas that are also really important. One is from Bandura (1977), he said that people learn by watching others and trying to do what they do. The other idea is from Bettman (1979) he said that when people make buying decisions, they think carefully about the information they have. All of these ideas tell us that people do not just make buying decisions based on logic. The Theory of Planned Behavior, the model of consumer decision-making, social learning theory and information-processing theory all show that what people think and feel and the people and world around them affect what they buy. Recent studies have improved these models by adding things like how people use technology, what people think is important and what people learn from experience. Hawkins and Mothers Baugh (2016) said that to really understand what people buy, we need to think about what's going on around them, like their friends and family, and what they believe in. Solomon (2018) said that consumer behaviour is affected by what people think about and how they feel about brands. Consumer behaviour is shaped by consumer behaviour. It is also shaped by the consumer behaviour people have when they buy things from brands they like.

2.2 Cultural Influence on Consumption

Culture really affects the way people buy things because it gives us a set of values and beliefs that we all share. Some researchers like Hofstede, found out that culture has an impact on what people like to buy and how they make their purchasing decisions. Hofstede said that individualism and collectivism are two Culture factors that affect what people prefer to buy. Culture factors like power distance and uncertainty avoidance also play a role in what people like to buy. For example people who value individualism really like to make their choices and do what they want.. People who value collectivism often listen to what their families and friends think before they make a decision. Culture is very important in this process. McCracken came up with the idea of "cultural meaning transfer" in 1986 to explain how companies can use Culture to make their products more meaningful, to people. Culture plays a role in this process of cultural meaning transfer. De Mooij from 2019 says that the culture we come from affects how we understand messages in advertisements and how we think a product is. In some countries that are still growing people often ask their friends and family for advice when they want to buy something. This is because what our family and friends think, our social status and what our community expects from us are very important to us. Cultural norms also decide how we do things not what we do. For example what we believe in. The customs we follow often affect what we decide to buy when it comes to food, clothes and things for our homes. In a place like Ethiopia, culture and religion play a role in how people spend their money whether they live in the city or in the countryside. The cultural things that affect what people buy are very important in Ethiopia. De Mooij and other people like Luna and Gupta, from 2001 have talked about this.

2.3 Consumer Learning Theory

Customers usually learn about products and services through advertising, social interactions, and trying the products themselves. East, Wright, and Vanhuele (2013) point out that learning affects attitudes, preferences, loyalty, and how much people know about a brand. For example, seeing ads often can make people more familiar and positive toward a brand, while recommendations from friends tend to build more trust. Social learning, especially by watching and talking with others, is very important in new markets, where people often depend on their networks to understand products. According to consumer learning theory, this knowledge builds up over time. Customers gradually develop mental frameworks that guide how they evaluate and choose products, influencing both everyday buys and more complex decisions. Marketers who understand how learning works can design communication strategies that raise awareness and help people accept their brand. Consumer learning is about how people collect information and experiences that influence their future purchases. They pick up knowledge by trying things themselves, observing others, or seeing ads and marketing messages. Foxall (2001) breaks learning down into two main types: behavioral learning, which covers methods like classical and operant conditioning, and cognitive learning, which deals with solving problems and making decisions.

2.4 Interaction of Culture and Learning

Consumer behavior is really affected by the way culture and consumer learning work together. The things that people trust to get information from how they look at information and how they decide if a product is good or not are all affected by the culture they're in. For example in some countries where people think about the group, not themselves people might trust what their family or neighbors say more than what they see in ads. Cultural norms can also make people more likely to do things that society thinks are okay. Research shows that people, in cultures learn to buy things in different ways. What people value in their culture can affect how they understand what companies are trying to tell them and it can also make influence and learning from experience more important in countries that are still developing. Consumer learning can also change how culture affects people by helping them learn things keep doing what they already do and balance old values with new ways of living. Consumer behavior is shaped by culture and consumer education in ways and consumer learning plays a big role in this.

2.5 Consumer Behavior in Emerging Markets.

Emerging countries are changing fast because of their economy growing quickly more people moving to cities and being exposed to brands from other countries. This means that people in these countries have their own way of buying things. They try to balance what they buy now with the values they learned from their culture. Some researchers, like Prahalad (2005) and Sheth, (2011) found out that what other people think, how much things cost, how easy it is to get them and if people trust them are all important when trying to understand why people buy things in these countries. When companies make plans to sell things in these growing areas they have to think about how different people're what they know and how they learn. For example in Africa people do not just look at what the company says about a product or what they know about the brand. They also ask their friends, family and community what they think. They like to learn from what happens to them and the people, around them. All these things affect what people buy if they try a brand and if they keep buying from the same brand. Emerging countries have their way of doing things and companies have to understand this to sell their products.

2.6 Consumer Behaviour in Ethiopia

Ethiopia is one of the growing markets in Africa, and the people of Ethiopia have a mix of traditional values and new modern ways of buying things. Some studies, like the ones done by Tadesse and Zeleke in 2016 and Molla and Licker in 2005, show that what people around them think, what their community thinks and what their family thinks are important when they decide to buy something. People in Ethiopia like to try out things and learn about new products and digital media. They also like to get suggestions from people they trust and buy things that are relevant to their culture. With more people moving to cities and technology getting better, new ways of learning about products have come up, like media, online ads and online shopping. Even with all these new things, the old cultural values still matter when it comes to what people buy and what they think of the things they buy. To really understand how people in Ethiopia make buying decisions, we need to look at how their culture and how they learn things work together. In short, studies show that how people learn and their cultural values work together to affect how they buy things. This is especially true in countries like Ethiopia that are still growing. These things affect how people find out about products, what they think about them and what they finally decide to buy. So it is very important to look at all the research done in Ethiopia and put it together to get a picture of how people buy things there.

3. Conceptual Framework

This study is about how culture and consumer behaviour are connected. It looks at how people learn about things and then buy them. The idea behind this study is to see how culture affects what people learn and how that affects what they buy in places like Ethiopia, where old customs and new ways of buying things are mixed together it is really important to understand how all these things are connected so we can see why people buy things. The study uses a theory, about consumer behavior to understand these connections.

3.1 Culture and Its Influence:

The culture of a society is made up of the values and beliefs that people share. It also includes the customs and behaviours that people follow this culture has an impact on how people think about things they buy and the messages they get from companies. What people think is acceptable is influenced by the people around them, like their family and friends and what the community thinks is important. People's beliefs and values also play a role. For example, in Ethiopia, in small towns, what people buy is often decided by what their family and community think. The culture of a place like Ethiopia influences what people buy and what they think is a source of information. The culture of a society is very important because it affects what people buy and what they think about the things they buy.

3.3 Consumer learning as a Mediating Mechanism:

The ways people learn from opinions and change their actions based on what they see, hear, and experience are called consumer learning. Direct experience, with a product, seeing ads, watching friends, and hearing from others are ways people learn. Culture

plays a role in learning. It affects how people see things and who they trust for information (Parikh, P., Aparo, N. O., & De Steur, 2022).

In some cultures, learning is a group activity where people watch and learn from each other. In cultures, people learn more from their own experiences through these learning systems customers get ideas, likes and dislikes that help them decide what to buy.

They learn what to expect from products and services.

Consumer learning helps shape their buying choices.

It is a part of how customers make decisions.

Customers use what they learn to make choices.

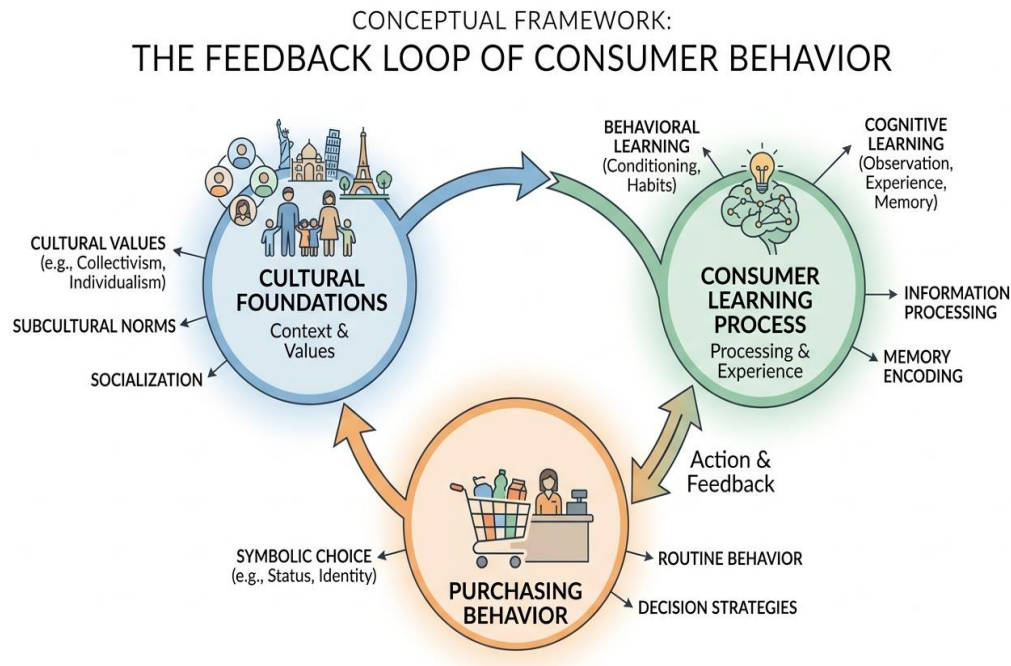
Buying Behaviour as an Outcome.

People buy things they use, and this is what we call their purchasing behaviour. This is the result of what people learn and the culture they come from. When people think about buying something they think about what brand they like and how they plan to use the product, and this is influenced by what they know, how they feel and what they think about the product. Their knowledge and feelings are shaped by where they come from and what they learned in school. It is very important for people who sell things to understand how all these things are connected because in countries like Ethiopia people buy things based on what their family tells them and what they see on the internet and social media. Purchasing behavior is really about what people do when they buy things and it is shaped by consumer learning processes and cultural influences so marketers need to understand purchasing behavior and how it works in places like Ethiopia, where purchasing behavior is a mix of old and new influences, like family and social media.

3.4 Conceptual Framework Diagram:

The framework shows how the relationship works step by step: Consumer learning comes first, Culture and finally Purchase Behaviour. Consumer attitudes, conventions and values are shaped by Culture. This Culture affects how they view information and which learning resources they trust. Consumer learning helps people get information from preferences and make judgments based on experiences. This Consumer Learning changes how Culture affects what they buy. The result of these processes is how they buy things, which we see in brand loyalty, product preference and purchase trends. Consumer learning and Culture together shape Purchase Behavior.

Figure 1. A conceptual framework for consumer learning, culture, and purchasing behaviour.



4. Methodology

In order to compile empirical and conceptual studies on the impact of culture and consumer learning on Ethiopian consumers' purchasing behaviour, this study uses a systematic review technique. Researchers may obtain thorough insights and pinpoint research gaps in a certain topic by using systematic reviews, which offer a rigorous and transparent method for finding, assessing, and incorporating pertinent papers. The PRISMA 2020 (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) framework and other recognized principles are followed in this study to guarantee scientific rigour, repeatability, and transparency in the review process.

4.1 Research Design

One way to meet the study's aims was picking a systematic review setup unlike regular summaries, these follow clear steps - cutting down errors, covering more ground, and staying repeatable. Especially useful when pulling together findings about shoppers, culture, and learning spread across areas like psychology and ad fields. Focused on articles judged by experts, released from 2016 to 2026, so insights stay close to what's new. The core looked at work exploring how people learn as buyers, shaped by heritage, mostly set in Ethiopia or broader Africa.

4.2 Search Strategy

A fresh start came from scanning sources one by one, carefully, each step moved through major academic platforms - four in total.

Start digging through academic work on Google Scholar - covers plenty of fields at once. Jump between topics without hitting walls. One spot pulls together research that usually stays split up.

Peer-reviewed journals in social sciences show up on Scopus. Business topics appear there too. Marketing research lives inside this database alongside them. Articles must pass expert checks before entry.

Find cited works easily using Web of Science. This tool shows where articles get the most attention. High-impact journals often appear here first. Spot trends by seeing who references whom across fields.

Emerald Insight: for specialist marketing and management studies.

Besides keywords, the method included Boolean logic to shape searches. Here come a few samples showing how terms were structured in database queries.

"Ethiopia" AND "consumer behaviour" AND "culture"

"Buying behaviour," "consumer learning," and Africa

Ethiopia and "cultural influence" and "purchase intention"

"Marketing" and "consumer learning" and "culture".

4.3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The following standards were used to guarantee the quality and applicability of the included studies:

4.3.1 Criteria for Inclusion:

I am looking for information about what consumers learn the culture they live in and how they behave want to see studies that were done in Ethiopia or other African countries that're not as wealthy and have similar customs. Journal articles that were checked by experts and published between 2016 and 2026 are what I need. I am interested in research on consumer purchasing behavior this can be research that uses numbers, research that uses stories or research that explores ideas, about consumer purchasing behavior.

4.3.2 Criteria for Exclusion:

The following rules were used to make sure the studies we looked at were good and useful:

We wanted to look at research about what people learn as consumers, what their culture is and how they behave. We looked at studies that were done in Ethiopia or other African countries that are not rich and have similar ways of life. We also looked at papers that were checked by experts and were published between 2016 and 2026. We were interested in research that helps us understand why people buy things, whether it was a study with numbers a study with stories or a study with ideas. We did not look at research that does not talk about how people learn as consumers or their culture. We did not look at studies that were done in countries because they do not help us understand countries that are not rich. We did not look at opinion pieces, summaries of talks or papers that were not checked by experts. We used databases to find studies and make sure we did not count the same study twice.

4.4 Prisma Process

The selection, screening, eligibility evaluation, and inclusion of papers were guided by the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 criteria. The PRISMA flow validates the studies included in the final synthesis and guarantees openness in reporting the review process.

Figure 2: Study Selection Process PRISMA Flow Diagram

- * Google Scholar had 320 studies
- * Scopus had 140 studies
- * Web of Science which had 95 studies
- * Emerald which had 50 studies

So we found 605 studies in total.

After removing the repeated studies we had 515 studies.

We then looked at the abstracts and titles of these 515 studies

Removed 375 studies that were not relevant.

This left us with 140 studies, which we read in full to see if they were suitable.

We excluded 105 studies because

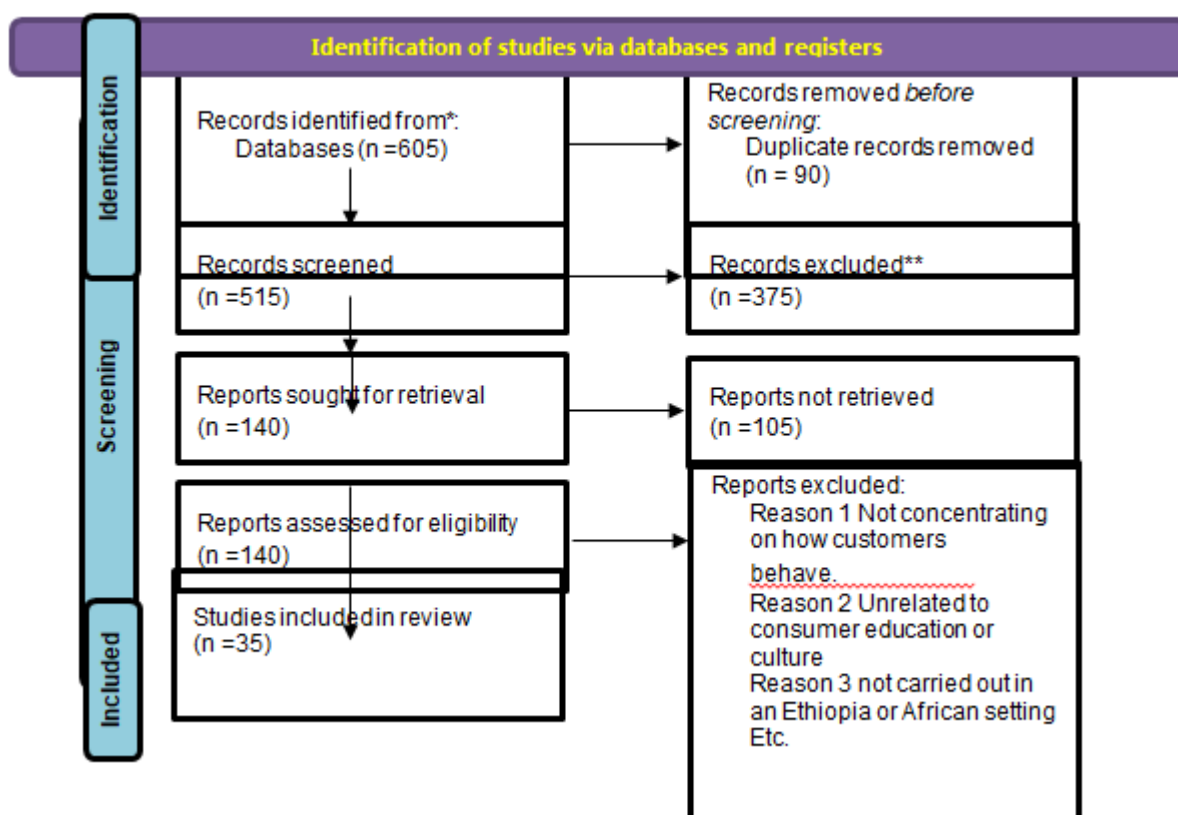
Due to the following reasons:

- * They did not focus on how customers behave
- * They were not related to consumer education or culture
- * They were not carried out in Ethiopia or Africa

In the end, we included 35 studies in our review.

These studies were about customer behavior, education and culture in Ethiopia or Africa.

Figure 2: Study Selection Process PRISMA Flow



4.5 Data Extraction and Synthesis

We looked at the information from the studies that were included. We used a special form to make sure we got everything. We wrote down the author, the year the place where the study was done the way they did the research the things they found, how people learned about things and what they concluded. We wanted to see how culture and teaching people about things affect what they buy. We found some patterns and similarities, and differences in the information, which helps us understand the topic well. We used a way of looking at the information to find ideas that kept coming up new things that are happening and things that we do not know much about yet. This way of looking at things is really good for putting together results from kinds of research like research that is just ideas, research that is based on talking to people and research that is based on numbers. It

helps us make conclusions that are based on facts and that are important for people who buy and sell things in Ethiopia, like the consumer marketplaces.

4.6 Ethical Considerations.

This study did not collect any data from people because it was a review of what is already out there, in public books and articles. The people who wrote those things were given credit for their work and their rights were respected. The review was done in a way that was fair and honest it followed the rules of doing research at a university. The review made sure to show what was found and how it was found, and it did what was right according to the rules of academic research.

Data Extraction						
Author	Year	Study Area	Method	Cultural Factors	Consumer Learning Factors	Key Findings
Kotler & Keller	2016	Global	Conceptual	Cultural values	Marketing communication	Cultural norms influence consumer purchasing behaviour.
Hawkins & Mothersbaugh	2016	Global	Conceptual	Social norms	Experience-based learning	Cultural and experiential factors shape buying decisions.
Solomon	2018	Global	Conceptual	Lifestyle and culture	Advertising exposure	Consumer learning affects brand loyalty and decision-making.
Schiffman & Wisenblit	2019	Global	Conceptual	Family influence	Information search	Learning and cultural environment influence purchase intention.
De Mooij	2019	International markets	Conceptual	Cultural identity	Media learning	Cultural differences affect product perception.
Tadesse & Zeleke	2016	Ethiopia	Survey	Family and social influence	Product experience	Cultural norms influence consumer preferences in Ethiopia.
Nwankwo & Gbadamosi	2017	Africa	Conceptual	Cultural traditions	Social learning	Cultural environments shape consumption behaviour.
Foxall	2019	Global	Behavioural analysis	Social context	Behavioural learning	Learning processes influence repeat purchasing behaviour.

5. Results

The results of the systematic review yield these findings from the 35 studies in the final analysis. The results are organized into four themes: social impact, marketing communication effects, consumer learning processes, and cultural variables. Summary tables outline key research, techniques, and conclusions for each theme.

5.1 Cultural Determinants

In Ethiopia and other emerging economies, culture exerts a significant impact on consumer purchasing behavior. • Social norms and customs: Numerous studies have shown how cultural customs and group expectations affect consumer choice (Tadesse & Zeleke, 2016; Molla & Licker, 2005). Products recommended by family or community networks are frequently given priority by consumers. • Religious beliefs: Consumption was impacted by religious beliefs, especially when it came to choosing goods that adhered to moral and ethical principles. • Cultural identity and legacy influence consumer choices and brand evaluation, with cultural values of status, reputation, and heritage (De Mooij, 2019).

Author	Year	Study Area	Method	Cultural Factors	Key Findings
Tadesse & Zeleke	2016	Ethiopia	Survey	Family influence, social norms	Family and community strongly influence product selection.
Molla & Licker	2005	Ethiopia	Survey	Traditions, cultural values	Cultural rituals affect brand choice and adoption.
De Mooij	2019	International	Conceptual	Cultural identity, heritage	Culture shapes perception of quality and status symbols.
Nwankwo & Gbadamosi	2017	Africa	Conceptual	Community norms	Community recommendations guide purchasing behaviour.

5.2 Consumer Learning Mechanisms

Consumer learning is really important because it helps people understand what they like and what they want to buy it lets people try things out, see what else is available and figure out what they like best. When people use a product, they get an idea of what it is and what it can do and that helps them make better choices next time. Seeing ads on television or online can also help people learn about products and companies. It can shape what they think of certain brands. People also learn from what they see their family and friends doing and from what people they respect have to say. When someone we trust tells us about a product, we are more likely to try it out and like it because we think that person knows what they are talking about, and that is a part of consumer learning. Consumer learning is important because it helps people make choices, and it is influenced by the people around us, like family and friends and, consumer learning is something that companies try to understand so they can sell more products.

Author	Year	Study Area	Method	Learning Mechanism	Key Findings
Solomon	2018	Global	Conceptual	Advertising, experience	Learning shapes brand loyalty and decision-making.
Foxall	2019	Global	Behavioral	Observational learning	Behavioral learning influences repeat purchases.
Tadesse & Zeleke	2016	Ethiopia	Survey	Experience, word-of-mouth	Product experience and family recommendations shape preferences.
Nwankwo & Gbadamosi	2017	Africa	Conceptual	Social learning	Observation and peer influence affect brand evaluation.

5.3 The Impact of Marketing Communication

Marketing communication influences customer behaviour through interactions with culture and education.

Key findings include:

Message framing is very important; it is based on what people in a culture value. When it comes to communication channels, people have preferences. Younger city dwellers are using social media more and more. In Ethiopia, customers often depend on social networks and community channels to learn about products. They rely on their community for product information. What they think and plan to buy is often influenced by ads that relate to their culture. Advertising that connects with their values and way of life works better. Ethiopian customers trust recommendations from their networks. They like ads that show they understand their culture.

Table 3. Marketing Communication Effects

Author	Year	Study Area	Method	Communication Effect	Key Findings
Solomon	2018	Global	Conceptual	Advertising exposure	Increases brand knowledge and positive attitudes.
De Mooij	2019	International	Conceptual	Cultural alignment	Culturally relevant messages improve persuasion.
Tadesse & Zeleke	2016	Ethiopia	Survey	Media and social communication	Socially endorsed messages enhance credibility and influence.

5.4 The Impact of Society

A feature tied to both culture and learning has several dimensions: Peer influence is paramount, with friends and coworkers serving as benchmarks. Family recommendations carry weight, especially in collectivist environments. Community norms dictate what's acceptable, shaped by broader community standards. Opinion leaders, respected members, and influential people provide reliable information sources.

Table 4. Social Influence in Consumer Buying Behavior

Author	Year	Study Area	Method	Social Influence	Key Findings
Nwankwo & Gbadamosi	2017	Africa	Conceptual	Community norms	Social expectations shape product adoption.
Tadesse & Zeleke	2016	Ethiopia	Survey	Family influence	Family recommendations guide household consumption.
Foxall	2019	Global	Behavioural	Peer influence	Observing peers affects product evaluation and choice.
Solomon	2018	Global	Conceptual	Opinion leaders	Trusted individuals influence brand perception.

Synthesis of Findings:

In Ethiopia, the things that influence what people buy are shaped by a lot of factors, these factors are the culture people grow up in, what they learn, what they see in advertisements and how society affects them. The culture people are from sets the stage for what they think is normal and what they value. When people learn things, they start to understand what is expected of them, and they begin to make their own decisions about what to buy. This happens when they get information, have new experiences and pay attention to what advertisements are telling them. The more people hear messages about products, the more they are likely to buy them. People are also influenced by their friends, family and community. What are the people around them? Do can shape their own decisions. To really understand why people in Ethiopia make the purchasing decisions they do, you have to look at all of these factors. You cannot just look at one or two things. The idea that culture is the basis for everything that people learn helps them make decisions and that what they buy is the result is supported by what we have found. This is explained in detail in Section 3. Culture is, like the background that everything else happens in. What people learn helps them figure out what to do. What they buy is what we can see as a result of all these things coming together.

6. Discussion:

Combining knowledge with international research on consumer behaviour, culture, and learning, the debate analyzes the results of the systematic review. It examines how consumer learning processes, social impact, marketing communication, and cultural variables affect consumer purchasing behavior, offering both theoretical and practical insights.

6.1 Global Literature Comparison

The review's conclusions make sense for Ethiopia. Match what researchers already know about how people buy things around the world. Some studies by Solomon (2018) and De Mooij (2019) show that culture plays a role in how people decide what to buy. It affects how they feel, what they like and how they judge products. The review says that in Ethiopia, people think about their community, family and social norms a lot. This is because Ethiopia is a society. Other countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America are similar as per Luna and Gupta (2001) and Nwankwo and Gbadamosi (2013). Ethiopian consumers learn about products through ads, trying them out, and watching others. This is similar to how people learn in parts of the world. In Ethiopia, people learn a lot from their family and community. They also rely on what their friends and family say about products. This is different from in some countries, where people like to try things out themselves, as noted by Ajzen (1991) and Foxall (2019). It's

helpful to understand how people in cultures learn about products. This can help us understand how to market things in Ethiopia. De Mooij (2019) also talks about how to frame messages and make them believable. In Ethiopia, people rely more on what their friends say and community channels to decide what to buy. This is different from in countries or cities. Family and community are very important in Ethiopia. They can influence what people buy. Ethiopia's knit family networks and community expectations make social influence stronger. The way people buy things is affected by what others think, as shown by people like Bettman (1979) and Foxall (2019). This is especially true for people who care about what their group thinks. When we look at the market in Ethiopia we see that the social, technical and economic environments all play a role in how people make buying decisions. People who live in cities like to use marketing and social media to learn about products, but people who live in rural areas still rely on traditional ways of finding out about things, like talking to people they know. This difference between city and rural areas really affects how people buy things. Some studies, like the ones done by Tadesse and Zeleke, (2016) and Hinkosa and Eshetu (2024), show that even though more people are using ways to learn about products, the culture and social norms of the area still have a big impact on what people choose to buy. In Ethiopia, what people buy is often influenced by their religion, their family and what their community thinks of them. These things affect everything from what people eat and wear to what kind of bank they use and where they stay when they travel. If people think a product is okay with their ethical beliefs, they are more likely to buy it, especially if it has something to do with their religion, as Yaregal and Ahmed said (2022). What people like is also influenced by what their friends think and what leaders in their community think. This is because of a mix of culture, the influence of the rest of the world, and the internet. People in Ethiopia learn about products in two ways: formally and informally. Formal ways include media, product demos and advertising, which are getting more popular especially among young people who live in cities. Informal ways like talking to people and observing what they do are still really important for figuring out what products are good. Companies that want to sell things in Ethiopia need to understand how people here learn about products because it is clear that the culture of the area has an impact, on how people learn and what they think about products.

6.3 Cultural Consequences

Ethiopian culture has an impact on the way people buy things. It affects what people like and how they find out about products. In Ethiopia people are taught what is good and what is not by the culture they grow up in. This teaching tells people what is okay to buy and what is not. It also tells people who to trust when it comes to getting information. Some people, like De Mooij, Nwankwo and Gbadamosi, have done studies on this. They found out that in countries that are still growing the culture of the people has a say in what they buy. In Ethiopia, people like to do things that their family and friends will like. They want to buy things that are acceptable to the people around them. So when companies want to sell things in Ethiopia they need to be careful. They need to make sure they are respecting the culture of the people. They should use friends and family to help spread the word about their products. They should make sure their message is something that the community will agree with. To sell things well in Ethiopia, companies need to know their customers well. They need to know what different groups of people like and do not like. Then they can make plans to sell to each group. They can also make messages that will work well for each group. This way, companies can sell their products in a good way, for everyone.

6.4 Conceptual Framework Integration.

The results really back up the idea we presented in Section 3. This idea says that culture affects how people learn as consumers, and this learning then changes how they buy things. Cultural traits help determine the context. Consumer learning acts as a bridge for these effects through communication, personal experience and observation. This is based on research done in Ethiopia. The way people buy things is influenced by this interaction. It shows how important learning and culture are for understanding why people buy certain things in developing countries. The discussion ends with the idea that in Ethiopia, what people buy is influenced by a mix of cultural learning and social impact. This matches studies from around the world. It's also tailored to local traditions, norms and community values. The findings stress the need for theories that fit emerging markets. These theories should include both informal learning paths. They should also lead to marketing strategies that are culturally suitable. The results support the framework. Culture affects consumer learning. Consumer learning changes purchasing behavior. Ethiopian research shows cultural characteristics serve as determinants. Consumer learning mediates these impacts. The conversation concludes by demonstrating that Ethiopian consumer behavior is shaped. A dynamic interplay of culture learning processes and social impact shapes it. This is in line with studies from throughout the world. It is also specifically contextualized by local customs, norms and communal values. The results emphasize the significance of developing theories. Theories that are sensitive to emerging markets are needed. Integrating learning pathways that include both informal channels is necessary. Developing marketing techniques that are culturally appropriate is required.

7. Research Gaps and Upcoming Studies.

Important gaps in the expanding corpus of research on Ethiopian culture, consumer education, and purchasing behaviour. Finding these gaps will enable academics and practitioners to provide more solid and contextually relevant insights into consumer behaviour by directing future empirical and theoretical study.

7.1 Limited Research on Digital Consumer Learning.

People do not know much about how digital consumers learn in Ethiopia. This is surprising because we know a lot about how people learn from talking to others, getting advice from family and listening to what other people say. Some studies, like the ones done by Fikadu and Dessie (et al. 2024), show that people in cities in Ethiopia are using media, mobile applications and online reviews to find out about products and services. We still do not know how using the internet and digital platforms affects the way people make decisions about what they like and how they get information. As more people in cities and towns get internet and start buying things it becomes very important to understand how people learn about products and services, on the internet. To really understand how people learn as consumer's future studies should use different methods like asking people questions watching what they do online and doing digital experiments. This will help us see the details of how people learn and make decisions when they are online.

7.2 Limited Research on Rural Consumer Behavior.

Rural consumer behaviour is not studied enough. Most research looks at people who live in cities like Addis Ababa. Rural consumers are different. They live in environments with different social and cultural norms. This affects how they make buying decisions. For instance, rural consumers often rely on people they know and traditional sources of information. This is because they do not have access to the marketing information as people in cities. They also do not use media as much to find out what marketing techniques work best for consumers; we need to study them more. We should compare consumers to urban consumers this will help us understand what makes rural consumers buy things. Rural consumer behavior is important to understand and studying consumers will help us learn more about what influences their purchasing decisions especially in rural areas where rural consumers live and make buying decisions, as rural consumers.

7.3 Insufficient Behavioral Tests.

Few studies were done in Ethiopia to see how people behave most research is based on what people say in surveys or what experts think. If we do real experiments we can find out more about how culture and learning affect what people buy. This is because experiments can show cause and effect not what people say they think or do. For example researchers could test how friends, family and ads that fit with a culture influence what people really buy. These kinds of studies would make research on consumers more accurate and give marketers helpful information. They would help us understand how to make marketing plans, for Ethiopia. We can use this information to make business decisions.

7.4 Gaps Specific to Sectors and Products.

The study of how consumers behave in industries is not very thorough. This is especially true for services, technology adoption and eco-friendly products. There is a lack of research on areas like healthcare, renewable energy and green products. Most studies focus on consumer goods, clothing or banking services. By looking into these studied areas, we might find that culture and education affect consumer behaviour differently. This could help improve our understanding and application of consumer behaviour theories.

7.5 Comparative Studies across Cultures

There are not studies that compare different cultures in Ethiopia or between Ethiopia and other African countries or developing countries. The fact that Ethiopia has different ethnic and religious groups gives us a great opportunity to learn about the different cultures within the country and how they impact education and the way people buy things. By studying Ethiopia and comparing it to countries, we can learn more about how people in Ethiopia buy things and how that is similar to or different from people in other countries where many people work together or are just starting to grow economically, which can help companies come up with better plans for selling things in these countries, especially in Ethiopia. We can look at how people from cultures in Ethiopia respond to different marketing strategies. We can also compare how people in Ethiopia buy things to how people in African countries or developing countries buy things. This information can help companies make decisions about how to sell their products in Ethiopia and other countries with similar cultures.

7.5 Comparative Studies across Cultures

People do not do studies about how different cultures are in Ethiopia or how Ethiopia is different from other African countries or poor countries. Ethiopia has different ethnic groups and religions which makes it a great place to learn about how culture affects what people learn in school and what they buy. If people want to sell things to people in Ethiopia and other similar countries they should look at studies that compare how people in Ethiopia buy things to people in countries where people work together as a group or are not very rich like Ethiopia. Studies about Ethiopia and other countries, like it can help people who want to sell things in these countries make plans.

7.6 Prospects for Further Research

Future studies should consider the following avenues:

Let us look at how people learn and shop online. We want to see how media and mobile applications affect the way people buy things from e-commerce platforms.

We also want to understand how people in areas shop and what affects their buying decisions. This is different from people who live in cities.

We will do some experiments to see how people learn and make buying decisions. We want to know if culture and learning affect what people buy.

We will look at some products and services that people do not usually study like things that're good for the environment, healthcare and education.

We will compare how people from regions and cultures in Ethiopia shop and buy things. We will also look at how people in African countries and developing markets shop.

We will keep track of how people shop over time to see how the internet and globalisation are changing the way people buy things. We want to know what happens when people have access to new technologies and modern ways of shopping.

8. Significance

This section describes the study's theoretical and managerial implications, emphasizing how the results advance consumer behavior theory and useful marketing tactics for Ethiopian businesses.

8.1 Implications for Theory

The study helps us understand how people buy things in countries like Ethiopia. First, it shows that culture is very important when people decide what to buy. Culture is like a bridge between what people learn and what they buy. This includes things like what their family and friends think, what their community believes in, what they learn from their religion and what they value from their traditions. All these things come together to affect what people want to buy. This study adds ideas about how culture affects what people choose to buy and how they think about it. People learn about things they might want to buy in various ways. They can try a product themselves watch others use it, see advertisements, or talk to people about it. When we look at what other studies have found, we see that culture is like a middleman between what people learn and what they buy. What people, around them think and say and who they trust can greatly affect how they understand and remember information. So when we want to understand why people buy things in countries that are still growing we should think about how culture affects what people learn. Culture and learning are. We cannot really understand one without the other. This study gives us a way to think about how people make decisions when they buy things especially in countries where culture is very important and things are changing fast.

8.2 Implications for Managers

They should use family and community networks: families and community groups have a lot of influence over what people buy. If they start programs that reward referrals and offer discounts to groups people will trust them more. Be more likely to buy from them.

They should create messages that make sense to the culture: their branding and advertising should reflect the local customs, values and social norms. When messages are about the culture people find them more believable and they work better especially in rural areas or places that are more traditional. Ethiopian businesses should let people try out their products and show them how they work. They should also share what their customers think of their products on media and other local platforms.

They should use influence: if they find people who are influential in their communities and work with them they can make their brand more well-known and trusted. When they use influence to promote their products it works with how people learn and what is normal in their culture. Ethiopian businesses can do better, than others if they make sure their marketing plans work with the culture and how people learn. The results show that to market things in countries that are still developing Ethiopian businesses need to understand how culture, education and social influence affect what people buy.

9. Conclusion

This review of 35 research studies from 2016 to 2026 looked at how culture and consumer learning affect what people buy in Ethiopia, and it brought together lots of studies to give a complete picture of how people learn about products and how culture influences their choices in countries that are still developing. The results showed that culture has an impact on what people buy

in Ethiopia. What people think of products, which brands they choose and whether they want to buy something are all affected by what's acceptable in their community, what their family thinks, what they believe in what their community expects and what they have always done. People in Ethiopia trust their family and community when it comes to buying things, which shows how much culture matters. Culture affects what people buy because of how they learn about products. Trying products, seeing ads, watching what other people do and talking to friends all help people learn. How people understand information depends on their options. Remember what they know is all influenced by the culture they live in. This means that learning is connected to the community and culture. Marketing and social influence are also important because they help people become aware of products, form opinions and decide to buy things. This happens when companies send messages that are appropriate for the culture and use trustworthy channels to communicate. This study helps us understand how people make buying decisions by looking at how culture and learning are connected. It shows that these two things do not happen independently. By combining culture and learning, companies can create marketing plans that are more relevant to people in Ethiopia. This study is useful for businesses in Ethiopia because it gives them information about how to market their products. If companies use marketing techniques that are appropriate for the culture, talk to families and communities, use social influence and educate their customers, they can do better than their competitors in Ethiopia. The study emphasizes the importance of understanding how culture and learning affect what people buy. It helps us understand these things better and gives companies in Ethiopia advice. Future studies should look at how people buy things in industries, test the ideas presented in this study and see how the internet and global media are changing how people learn and how culture affects their buying decisions. The study of consumer behavior in Ethiopia is important. This review of 35 research studies from 2016, to 2026 helps us understand it better.

References

- [1] Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50(2), 179–211.
- [2] Bandura, A. (1977). *Social learning theory*. Prentice Hall.
- [3] Bettman, J. R. (1979). An information processing theory of consumer choice. Addison-Wesley.
- [4] Engel, J. F., Blackwell, R. D., & Miniard, P. W. (1995). *Consumer behavior* (8th ed.). Dryden Press.
- [5] Foxall, G. R. (2001). Consumer behaviour analysis. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 22(2), 125–156.
- [6] Hawkins, D. I., & Mothersbaugh, D. L. (2016). *Consumer behaviour: Building marketing strategy* (13th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.
- [7] Peter, J. P., & Olson, J. C. (2010). *Consumer behavior and marketing strategy* (9th ed.). McGraw-Hill.
- [8] Schiffman, L. G., & Wisenblit, J. (2019). *Consumer behavior* (12th ed.). Pearson.
- [9] Solomon, M. R. (2018). *Consumer behavior: Buying, having, and being* (12th ed.). Pearson.
- [10] De Mooij, M. (2019). *Consumer behavior and culture: Consequences for global marketing and advertising* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- [11] Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions and organizations across nations*. SAGE Publications.
- [12] Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G. J., & Minkov, M. (2010). *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind* (3rd ed.). McGraw-Hill.
- [13] Luna, D., & Gupta, S. (2001). An integrative framework for cross-cultural consumer behavior. *International Marketing Review*, 18(1), 45–69.
- [14] McCracken, G. (1986). Culture and consumption: A theoretical account of the structure and movement of the cultural meaning of consumer goods. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 13(1), 71–84.
- [15] Burgess, S. M., & Steenkamp, J. B. E. M. (2006). Marketing renaissance in emerging markets. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 23(4), 337–356.
- [16] Prahalad, C. K. (2005). *The fortune at the bottom of the pyramid*. Wharton School Publishing.
- [17] Sheth, J. N. (2011). Impact of emerging markets on marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, 75(4), 166–182.
- [18] Kitchenham, B. (2004). *Procedures for systematic reviews*. Keele University Technical Report.
- [19] Page, M. J., McKenzie, J. E., Bossuyt, P. M., et al. (2021). The PRISMA 2020 statement: An updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews. *BMJ*, 372, n71.
- [20] Snyder, H. (2019). Literature review as a research methodology: An overview and guidelines. *Journal of Business Research*, 104, 333–339.
- [21] Tranfield, D., Denyer, D., & Smart, P. (2003). Towards a methodology for developing evidence-informed management knowledge by means of systematic review. *British Journal of Management*, 14(3), 207–222.
- [22] Ahmed Mohammed Yimer, H. G. T., & Dagmawi Mandefro Abebe. (2025). The effect of television advertising on students' buying behavior: Study on preparatory and secondary school in Woldia Town, Ethiopia. *International Journal of Marketing, Communication and New Media*. (u3isjournal.isvouga.pt)
- [23] Ahlam Bogale. (2024). Factors affecting consumer buying behaviour toward green packaged products: The case of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia [Unpublished thesis]. Addis Ababa University. (AAU-ETD)
- [24] Betelehem Ermias. (2024). The effect of social media advertising on consumer buying behaviour (Bank of Abyssinia) [Unpublished thesis]. Addis Ababa University. (AAU-ETD)
- [25] Dessie, T. S., Bayile, A. D., Yimer, A. M., & Amara, M. B. (2024). The effects of social media marketing on consumers' buying decision-making processes: Evidence from College of Business and Economics students, Bahir Dar University, Ethiopia. *International Journal of Marketing, Communication and New Media*.
- [26] Eyob Minbale, B. Bizuneh, W. Seife, S. Sharew, & K. Bitew. (2025). Exploring purchasing behavior of Ethiopian consumers towards locally produced apparel products: An extended model of the theory of planned behavior. *Cogent Business & Management*, 12(1), 2503420. ([Taylor & Francis Online](https://doi.org/10.1080/21679092.2025.2503420))
- [27] Emnet Efreem. (2024). Factors influencing buying behaviour of fashion products in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia [Unpublished thesis]. Addis Ababa University. (AAU-ETD)

- [28] Fikadu Tesemma. (2024). Effect of social media on consumer buying behavior in Ethiopia: Evidence from private universities in Addis Ababa [Unpublished thesis]. Ambo University. ([AUIR](#))
- [29] Hinkosa, J., & Eshetu, T. (2024). The effect of marketing mix on consumer buying behaviour of micro and small enterprise in Nekemte City, Oromia, Ethiopia. *Innovation*, 5(1), 1–16. ([Science Publishing Group](#))
- [30] Tadesse, T., & Zeleke, G. (2016). Consumer purchasing behaviour in Ethiopia. *African Journal of Business Management*, 10(4), 84–92.
- [31] Yaregal Awoke & Ahmed, H. M. S. (2022). Determinants of consumer buying behavior of clothes in Ethiopia. *International Journal of Current Research*. ([IJCR](#))
- [32] Yebcha, F., Singh, M., & Gautam, R. (2024). Antecedents of green product purchase intention: An insight from Ethiopia. *Cogent Business & Management*, 11(1), 2361865. ([Taylor & Francis Online](#))
- [33] African Journal of Applied Research. (2025). Antecedents of brand equity on consumer purchasing behaviour in emerging markets: Does consumer scepticism moderate the relationship? *African Journal of Applied Research*, 11(7), 133–162.
- [34] Degefa, E. S., & Werke, S. Z. (2025). Consumer behavior in the digital era: A systematic literature review of internal and external influences, learning and decision-making dynamics. *International and Public Affairs*, 9(2), 12.
- [35] Nwankwo, S., & Gbadamosi, A. (2013). *Entrepreneurship marketing in emerging economies*. Routledge.
- [36] Shava, H. (2024). Strengthening the attachment to local brands through consumer ethnocentrism and impactful entrepreneurship education. *Societies*, 14(7), 109.