

Study of Purchase Decision Making Roles of Females with reference to Consumer Durable Products in the city of Ahmedabad: An empirical study

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ARTICLE DETAILS

Article History

Published Online: 24 May 2018

Keywords

Female Consumer, Consumer Behaviour, Durable Goods, Purchase Behaviour, Decision Making

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ABSTRACT

A decision is the selection of a action from two or more alternative choices. Constantly consumers make decision regarding the choice, purchase, use of products and services. They face a lot of dilemma at the time of taking a purchase decision. Thus it is a process by which the consumers identify their needs, collect information, evaluate alternatives and make purchase decision. Females play a significant role in the domestic and socio-economic life in the society. In India over the years, both female and male roles have been changing. Now a day's female are playing different role of chief purchasing officer and controlling 85% of buying decisions. Certainly in male dominated societies many goods and services are actually decided and purchased by female. This is due to increasing literacy, independent income and role in the family. The consumer behaviour in relating to consumer durables is strongly affected by some economic, social, cultural and psychological factors; the present research has been selected for an intensive empirical survey of the various factors influencing the buyer's behaviour on consumer durables in Ahmedabad.

1. Introduction

Consumer studies are an ongoing process and it is difficult to bring out an unified conclusion, this is because consumers vary by taste, design, colour, etc. Consumer behaviour can be defined as "the decision-making process and physical activity involved in acquiring, evaluating, using and disposing of goods and services". According to Webster, "Buying behaviour is all psychological, social and physical behaviour of potential customer as they become aware of evaluate purchase consume and tell other people about the product and services. In other words of Walter and Paul, "consumer behaviour is the process whereby individual decide what, when, how and from where to purchase goods and service". Thus the buyer behaviour may be defined as that behaviour exhibited by people in planning, purchasing and using economic goods and service in the satisfaction of their wants. Consumer behaviour reflects the totality of consumer's decisions with respect to acquisition, consumption and disposition of goods, services, time and idea by (human) decision making units (over time). It also includes whether, why, when, where, how, how much and how often and how long consumer will use or dispose of an offering. The Character, Behaviour and Attitude of consumer are the important dimensions in the decision making process. Durable goods like TV, Washing machine, Computer, Digital Camera, etc are the products used by the consumers. In the competitive market, the prospective buyer is prepared to choose the right brand based on their needs. All the purchases made by a consumer follow a certain decision making process. A consumer is one who does some physical activities and deliberates to take decisions concerning purchase and to dispose off on to evaluate products and services. Purchase decision process which is characterized as more complex in its nature, has been subject to research often, only recently. This study is an attempt to explore the purchase decision process within a family with special reference in female's purchasing

behaviour and their role in purchase decision. 'Family' influence in the purchase decision process is to be considered more seriously than the influence of any other factor, for the simple and the most importance reason, that, it is the family that decides the consumption pattern, choice of products, brands, stores and other product related aspects.

2. Review of Literature

Large numbers of research studies have been conducted on consumer behaviour both in India and abroad. The studies have covered both durables and non durables goods. The available literature on selected topic reveals that research studies on consumer behaviour date back to early fifties up to the present period. An attempt is made here review some selected works on consumer behaviours on consumer durables.

Dr. G. Sudharasan Reddy and Ms. Rajarashmi. P.S (2004) undertook a study entitled "Buyer Behaviour of Home Appliances with special reference to Microwave Products in Bangalore City" the objective of this study are to study the brand awareness of the buyers, to know the income level of microwave buyer, to extract the source of information through which buyers came to know about microwave, to know buyers preference of branded product, to determine the decision maker, to identify the factors influencing the buyers while purchasing microwave product, to identify the most favourable choice of microwave, to provide suggestions to microwave companies. Based on the objectives the findings are: the income levels of the buyer are above 15,000. The print media is the important source of information for the purchaser. Almost all the respondent prefers the branded product. The study reveals that the wives are the decision maker's followed by the husband and wife discussion. Factor influencing the purchase of microwave are Quality of the product rather than the any attribute followed by brand name, price, and features and after

sales service. Among all other brands LG stands first. Thus the buyer behaves positively when Quality and branded product is purchased by them.

Aradhana Krishna (2003) viewed that buyers' purchase behaviours can be influenced not only by the current prices of a product but also by those prices expect in the future.

Bhawaniprasad and Kumari (1987) have analyzed "Impact of advertising on consumer durables markets: A study of Refrigerator consumer", in this study a ranking/importance of refrigerator among other consumer durables is studied. Study of 200 owners of Allwyn refrigerator in the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad and Districts of Nizamabad and Karimnagar in Andhra Pradesh indicates that a very positive impact of advertising is found on the consumer durables market.

Bayus (1991) studied "The consumer durable replacement buyer", and found that replacements account for a substantial portion of the sale of consumer durables in the U S. Results of replacement of automobiles indicate that "early" replacement buyers are more concerned with styling and image and less concerned with costs than "late" replacement buyers.

Anand and BS Hundal (2008) undertook a study on "Perceptions of consumers towards Promotional schemes for durables" in Punjab. This study was conducted to gain insight into the perceptions of rural and urban consumers about various promotional measures adopted by durable goods manufacturing companies. Sample size 600. The major findings are though both the groups seem to have considered all the factors as important in sales promotion, a minute observation states that urban respondents have assigned high priority for these schemes: installment purchase (4.370), off-season discount (4.346) free gift (08). The suggestion is all the promotional measures has to be enforced to capitalize the opportunities in this highly growing Indian market.

Mujahid-Mukhtar E, Mukhtar H (1991) has studied role of decision making for household durables: good measure of female's power within a household in Pakistan. It is their influence in the purchase of new home improvement technology good (cars, appliances, etc.), who's expense and life-long nature makes their purchase an important decision. The study identified various cultural and economic factors that affect female's decision making power

3. Statement of the Problem

An understanding of purchase behaviour of female towards durable goods is an essential as it reflects the influence of brands, price, quality, quantity, mode of purchase, etc. The success of the market or the failure depends on the purchase behaviour of consumers. female are taking the lead roles as of today than the yester years. This is due to the outcome of education, employment, etc. Present, female are taking the lead in purchase decisions too. Hence, the present study.

4. Objectives of the Study

After the national and international literature review, the researcher downsizes the appropriate two objectives namely:

1. To study female's purchasing behaviour.
2. To know the role of female in purchase decision making process.

5. Research Methodology

5.1 Area of the study:

The study was undertaken in Ahmedabad.

5.2 Sample size:

A total of 125 respondents residing in the AHMEDABAD town form the sample.

5.3 Research Tool Sampling Technique:

A structured questionnaire was given to the consumers who have visited the Durable Market in AHMEDABAD town. Convenience sampling method was followed for collecting response from the respondents.

5.4 Sources of data:

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected by using questionnaire and the secondary data has been collected from books, manuals and Internet.

6. Data Analysis

The statistical tools used for the purpose of analysis of this study are simple percentage technique, pie diagram and bar diagram. Exhibits are also used in appropriate places. After the collection of data through the questionnaire, editing was done carefully. Based on the responses of the samples, tables were prepared. The data collected were analysed and interpreted. Weighted Average scaling technique and ranking technique has also been used for analysis and interpretation of data.

Weighted Average technique was used to find out the weighted average for each category of respondents, over several study factors to know their level of satisfaction towards the quality, price, availability, service, size & design of the products. For this purpose the qualitative information was converted into numerical one using five point scaling technique. In using five point scales, score 5 was given to Highly satisfied. 4 was given to Satisfied 3 was given to Moderate 2 was given to Dissatisfied 1 was given to Highly Dissatisfied.

It is inferred that irrespective of the age, education, employment, marital status, nature of family and family size, majority of the respondents are highly satisfied with product quality.

Factor Analysis: Factors considered by the respondents were analysed by ranking method. For which respondents were asked to assign the rank of the factors which given in the schedule. As per this technique, the number of respondents multiples the rank assigned by the respondents. The preference is taken as total score assigned to a factor. The factor scoring the least value is the most important rank was determined with ascending order. By using this technique, it was decided to analyse the factors by ranking for some preference.

Table 1
Factors Influencing Purchase Behaviour

Sr. No	Influencing factors	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Convenience	13	10
2	Quality	89	71
3	Quantity	3	2
4	Cost	5	4
5	Service	7	6
6	Customer relation	1	1
7	Brand	7	6
	Total	125	100

Table 2
Problems Related to Purchase

Sr. No.	DURING PURCHASE PROBLEMS	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Unavailability of Request Brand	15	12
2	Showing Other Brands	33	27
3	Compulsion to Purchase	39	31
4	Clarity of Explanation of the Product Features	12	10
5	Do not Reveal the Truth of the Product	23	18
6	Billing, and Others	3	2
	Total	125	100
POST-PURCHASE PROBLEMS			
1	Follow-up service	27	21
2	Towards complaints	29	23
3	Transportation Problems	57	46
4	Customer Care	12	10
	Total	125	100

Table 3
Age and Factors Affecting Purchase

Sr. No	AGE	18-30 years	31-40 years	41-50 years	Above 50 years
1	Quality	4.45	4.37	3.94	5.00
2	Price	3.90	3.79	3.61	4.00
3	Availability	3.87	4.00	3.78	4.00
4	Service	3.91	3.84	3.83	4.00
5	Size	3.73	3.21	3.28	4.00
6	Design	3.97	3.95	3.94	4.00

Table 4
Education and Factors of Purchase Decisions

Sr. No	Educational Qualification	School Level	Graduate	PG	Diploma	Professionals
1	Quality	4.19	4.46	4.18	4.75	4.00
2	Price	3.57	3.92	3.45	3.75	4.17
3	Availability	3.90	3.92	3.55	4.00	3.83
4	Service Rendered	3.57	3.93	3.73	4.75	4.17
5	Size	3.43	3.69	4.27	3.75	3.17
6	Design	3.86	4.00	4.00	3.75	4.17

Table 5
Income and Factors Affecting Purchase Decisions

Sr. No.	Income	Below Rs. 15,000	Rs.15000 -Rs. 20,000	Rs. 20,000 -Rs. 25,000	Above Rs.25,000
1	Quality	4.38	4.38	4.17	4.71
2	Price	3.90	3.87	3.50	3.71
3	Availability	3.90	3.80	3.92	4.14
4	Service Rendered	3.69	4.38	3.83	4.43
5	Size	3.61	3.64	3.92	4.00
6	Design	3.92	3.84	3.83	4.43

Table 6
Nature of Family and Factors Affecting Purchase

Sr. No	Nature of family	Nuclear	Joint
1	Quality	4.40	4.32
2	Price	3.79	3.95
3	Availability	3.88	3.88
4	Service Rendered	4.08	3.49
5	Size	3.61	3.80
6	Design	3.98	3.98

Table 7
Weighted Average Likert Scale of Age Groups with Reference to Purchase Variables

Particulars Age	18-30 years		31-40 years		41-50 years		Above 50 years	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
Quality	3.51	I	4.21	I	4.22	I	4.50	I
Performance	3.31	II	3.00	II	2.39	V	1.50	V
Cost	2.91	III	2.89	IV	2.50	III	4.00	II
Service	2.63	V	2.00	V	2.44	IV	2.00	IV
Brand	2.78	IV	2.95	III	2.83	II	3.00	III

Table 8
Weighted Average Likert Scale of Occupation with Reference to Purchase Variables

Particulars Occupation	Professionals		Business		Service		Agriculture		Others	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
Quality	3.67	I	3.83	I	3.89	I	4.00	I	3.57	I
Performance	2.67	IV	3.17	II	3.15	III	2.58	IV	3.22	II
Cost	2.50	V	2.58	IV	3.37	II	2.42	V	2.88	IV
Service	2.83	III	2.42	V	2.52	IV	3.17	II	2.31	V
Brand	3.00	II	3.04	III	2.33	V	2.83	III	2.93	III

Table 9
Weighted Average Likert Scale of Marital Status with Reference to Purchase Variables

Particulars	Marital Status	Married		Unmarried	
		Score	Rank	Score	Rank
Quality		4.17	I	3.47	I
Performance		2.98	II	3.18	II
Cost		2.83	III	2.88	III
Service		2.23	V	2.64	V
Brand		2.81	IV	2.83	IV

7. Findings and Suggestions

1. The distinctive feature of the higher income group respondents is that, they shop as and when they like. Similarly, the housewives shop almost weekly but the career going female do shop; only when need arises.
2. Education also plays a key role in shopping behaviour, in the sense that, compared to the respondents with no formal education, respondents having a good educational background shop more often.
3. Majority of the respondents are students belonging to the age group of 18 to 30 years and an analysis of the level of education, it is found that, they have attained graduation status. Most of the respondents belong to nuclear family and number of members in the family ranges 4 or above 4.
4. In majority of the respondents family, female plays a major role in purchase decision and they prefer to prepare item list before purchasing. The involvement each one has on the family matters influences their behaviour to a greater extent. The main aim of the study being to understand the behaviour of individuals in the process of decision making, information gathering and need identification.
5. In the selected sample, respondents gather information from both internal and external sources. Majority of the sample respondents give importance to their friends and relatives opinions and suggestions and thus adhere to the advice given by them as per their earlier purchase behaviour of course advertisements do have a better say with lower and middle income respondents.
6. Majority of the respondents prefer to purchase products from departmental stores rather than other types of shops, as they feel it is economical and products are of good quality.
7. The sample respondents adopt bargaining method of purchase; some do not follow this method because of their confidence in buying.
8. Some respondents are ready to purchase new products offered in order to make a test purchase and some respondents are not ready for test purchase.
9. The respondents are not conforming to the purchase list for the reason that they have forgotten to add some items in purchase list.
10. Most of the respondents are aware of the quality marks and they carry the products in their own vehicle or by bus and some avail the benefit of door delivery. The sample respondents prefer cash payment rather than credit payment. The result from the respondents says that most of them are facing various problems like harassment, adulteration, no follow up service, poor quality, etc during and after purchase. The post purchase behaviour of the sample respondents reveal the fact that, the decision process is not a satisfactory affair. The pressure of negative attitudes mounts up in certain families and is overcome by convincing, compromising, augmenting, etc. To overcome such an attitude, either they get convinced or as observed in the study, the way for getting rid of the product and not to buy it again is a better option. Most of the respondents are interested in recommending the product purchased by them to others and are satisfied with salesmen service. This clearly indicates that in family purchase decisions, in spite of an individual's age, income, level of education, status, family size, etc, the interactive they have with each other leads the way for best 'buy'. Ultimately greater the interaction, better the involvement and may be a satisfactory purchase. Most of the respondents under various personal factors have given highest preference to product quality. Most of the respondents were satisfied with all the factors like price, quality, availability, service, size and design and no one is dissatisfied with the above mentioned facts.

8. Conclusion

The market for consumer durables is becoming more competitive now a day. Therefore, the producer of durable products should understand consumer interest much to find higher sale of their products. Overall, it is argued that the study of consumer behaviour is rapidly evolving as researchers recognize and implement new techniques and Trans disciplinary perspectives to understand the nature of purchase and consumption behaviour. The result of this study is emphasized and further supported the importance of perception of female consumers as an important element of female purchase decision. (Rajesh Matai, Anil.K. Bhat, 2013)

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