

## An Exploratory Study on Consumer Attitude towards Buying On Shopping

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### **ABSTRACT:**

*Consumer Buying Behaviour refers to the buying behaviour of the ultimate consumer. Many factors, specificities and characteristics influence the individual in what he is and the consumer in his decision making process, shopping habits, purchasing behaviour, the brands he buys or the retailers he goes. A purchase decision is the result of each and every one of these factors. An individual and a consumer is led by his culture, his subculture, his social class, his membership groups, his family, his personality, his psychological factors, etc., and is influenced by cultural trends as well as his social and societal environment. By identifying and understanding the factors that influence their customers, brands have the opportunity to develop a strategy, a marketing message (Unique Value Proposition) and advertising campaigns more efficient and more in line with the needs and ways of thinking of their target consumers, a real asset to better meet the needs of its customers and increase sales.*

### **INTRODUCTION:**

Consumer buying behaviour has been always of great interest to marketers. The knowledge of consumer behaviour helps the marketer to understand how consumers think, feel and select from alternatives like products, brands and the like and how the consumers are influenced by their environment, the reference groups, family, and salespersons and so on. A consumer's buying behaviour is influenced by cultural, social, personal and psychological factors. Most of these factors are uncontrollable and beyond the hands

of marketers but they have to be considered while trying to understand the complex behaviour of the consumers. Consumer is the study "of the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use, or dispose of products, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy needs and desires" (Solomon 1995). In the marketing context, the term "consumer" refers not only to the act of purchase itself, but also to patterns of aggregate buying which include pre-purchase and post-purchase activities. Pre-purchase activity might consist of the growing awareness of a need or want, and a search for and evaluation of information about the products and brands that might satisfy it. Post-purchase activities include the evaluation of the purchased item in use and the reduction of any anxiety which accompanies the purchase of expensive and infrequently-bought items.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW:**

Consumer behavior refers to the selection, purchase and consumption of goods and services for the satisfaction of their wants. There are different processes involved in the consumer behavior. Initially the consumer tries to find what commodities he would like to consume, then he selects only those commodities that promise greater utility. After selecting the commodities, the consumer makes an estimate of the available money which he can spend.

Lastly, the consumer analyzes the prevailing prices of commodities and takes the decision about the commodities he should consume. Meanwhile, there are various other factors influencing the purchases of consumer such as social, cultural, personal and

psychological. The explanation of these factors is given below.

Consumer Behaviour may be defined as “the interplay of forces that takes place during a consumption process, within a consumer's self and his environment.

- This interaction takes place between three elements viz. knowledge, affect and behaviour;
- It continues through pre-purchase activity to the post purchase experience;
- It includes the stages of evaluating, acquiring, using and disposing of goods and services”.

The “consumer” includes both personal consumers and business / industrial / organizational consumers.

Consumer behaviour explains the reasons and logic that underlie purchasing decisions and consumption patterns; it explains the processes through which buyers make decisions. The study includes within its purview, the interplay between cognition, affect and behaviour that goes on within a consumer during the consumption process: selecting, using and disposing of goods and services.

#### Definitions:

“The behaviour that consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating and disposing of products and services that they expect will satisfy their needs.” - **Schiffman and Kanuk**

“The decision process and physical activity engaged in when evaluating, acquiring, using or disposing of goods and services.” - **Loudon and Bitta**

“The study of consumers as they exchange something of value for a product or service that satisfies their needs.” - **Wells and Prensky**

“Those actions directly involved in obtaining, consuming and disposing of products and services including the decision processes that precede and follow these actions.” -**Engel, Blackwell, Miniard**

#### Consumer Buying Process:



#### Stage1. Problem recognition:

Problem recognition results when a buyer recognizes a difference of sufficient magnitude between perceived benefits and actual benefits derived from a product or service. The buying process starts when the buyer recognizes a problem or need. The consumer began to feel a problem in the form of a certain need or desire. The needs can be triggered either by internal stimuli like hunger, thirst etc., or by external stimulus generally referred to as a sign or cue. Depending on the intensity of the want, the person will try to fulfil the unsatisfied want.

#### Stage2. Information search:

Information is to know about a service, attributes of service, prices, and stores and so on. Search may be categorized in four categories pre-purchase, ongoing, internal and external. An aroused buyer may or may not search for more information. If the buyers derive is strong and the desired service to satisfy the need is easily available then he or she may not search for more information. The extent of search activity depends upon the strength of derive, the amount of information buyer already have, the ability to obtain additional information, the importance or value given to gathering additional information and the satisfaction buyers gets from information search.

#### Stage3. Evaluation of alternatives:

Evaluation involves those activities undertaken by the buyer to compare alternatives carefully on the basis of certain criteria, alternative solutions to market related problems etc. The marketers are interested in knowing how the buyer processes information to arrive at brand

choice. There is no single evaluation process used by the buyers or even one consumer in all purchase decisions.

#### **Stage4. Purchase decisions:**

Actual purchasing process of buyer seeking to build a better understanding of how buyers make their purchases. The earlier mentioned evaluation step helps the consumer in arriving at a purchase intention. In the decision evaluation stage, the consumer forms preferences among the brands in the choice set. The consumer may also form a purchase intention and lean towards buying the most preferred brand.

#### **Stage5. Post purchase behaviour:**

Once the buyer makes a decision to purchase a product or service there can be several types of additional behaviour associated with that decision such as decisions on service uses and decision on services related to the item purchased. The marketer's job continues even after the service is bought especially since he has to learn a lot from the post purchase behaviour undertaken by the buyer.

#### **Factors Affecting Consumer Behaviour:**

**1. Cultural Factors:** Consumer behavior is deeply influenced by cultural factors such as: buyer culture, subculture, and social class.

**Culture:** Basically, culture is the part of every society and is the important cause of person wants and behavior. The influence of culture on buying behavior varies from country to country therefore marketers have to be very careful in analyzing the culture of different groups, regions or even countries.

**Subculture:** Each culture contains different subcultures such as religions, nationalities, geographic regions, racial groups etc. Marketers can use these groups by segmenting the market into various small portions. For example marketers can design products according to the needs of a particular geographic group.

**Social Class:** Every society possesses some form of social class which is important to the marketers because the buying behavior of people in a given social class is similar. In this way marketing activities could be tailored according to different social classes. Here we should note that social class is not only determined by income but there are various other factors as well such as: wealth, education, occupation etc.

**2. Social Factors:** Social factors also impact the buying behavior of consumers. The important social factors are: reference groups, family, role and status.

**Reference Groups:** Reference groups have potential in forming a person attitude or behavior. The impact of reference groups varies across products and brands. For example if the product is visible such as dress, shoes, car etc then the influence of reference groups will be high. Reference groups also include opinion leader (a person who influences other because of his special skill, knowledge or other characteristics).

**Family:** Buyer behavior is strongly influenced by the member of a family. Therefore marketers are trying to find the roles and influence of the husband, wife and children. If the buying decision of a particular product is influenced by wife then the marketers will try to target the women in their advertisement. Here we should note that buying roles change with change in consumer lifestyles.

**Roles and Status:** Each person possesses different roles and status in the society depending upon the groups, clubs, family, organization etc. to which he belongs. For example a woman is working in an organization as finance manager. Now she is playing two roles, one of finance manager and other of mother. Therefore her buying decisions will be influenced by her role and status.

**3. Personal Factors:** Personal factors can also affect the consumer behavior. Some of the important personal factors that influence the buying behavior are:

lifestyle, economic situation, occupation, age, personality and self concept.

**Age:** Age and life-cycle have potential impact on the consumer buying behavior. It is obvious that the consumers change the purchase of goods and services with the passage of time. Family life-cycle consists of different stages such young singles, married couples, unmarried couples etc which help marketers to develop appropriate products for each stage.

**Occupation:** The occupation of a person has significant impact on his buying behavior. For example a marketing manager of an organization will try to purchase business suits, whereas a low level worker in the same organization will purchase rugged work clothes.

**Economic Situation:** Consumer economic situation has great influence on his buying behavior. If the income and savings of a customer is high then he will purchase more expensive products. On the other hand, a person with low income and savings will purchase inexpensive products.

**Lifestyle:** Lifestyle of customers is another important factor affecting the consumer buying behavior. Lifestyle refers to the way a person lives in a society and is expressed by the things in his/her surroundings.

It is determined by customer interests, opinions, activities etc and shapes his whole pattern of acting and interacting in the world.

**Personality:** Personality changes from person to person, time to time and place to place. Therefore it can greatly influence the buying behavior of customers. Actually, Personality is not what one wears; rather it is the totality of behavior of a man in different circumstances. It has different characteristics such as: dominance, aggressiveness, self-confidence etc which can be useful to determine the consumer behavior for particular product or service.

**4. Psychological Factors:** There are four important psychological factors affecting the consumer buying behavior. These are: perception, motivation, learning, beliefs and attitudes.

**Motivation:** The level of motivation also affects the buying behavior of customers. Every person has different needs such as physiological needs, biological needs, social needs etc. The nature of the needs is that, some of them are most pressing while others are least pressing. Therefore a need becomes a motive when it is more pressing to direct the person to seek satisfaction.

**Perception:** Selecting, organizing and interpreting information in a way to produce a meaningful experience of the world is called perception. There are three different perceptual processes which are selective attention, selective distortion and selective retention. In case of selective attention, marketers try to attract the customer attention. Whereas, in case of selective distortion, customers try to interpret the information in a way that will support what the customers already believe. Similarly, in case of selective retention, marketers try to retain information that supports their beliefs.

**Beliefs and Attitudes:** Customer possesses specific belief and attitude towards various products. Since such beliefs and attitudes make up brand image and affect consumer buying behavior therefore marketers are interested in them. Marketers can change the beliefs and attitudes of customers by launching special campaigns in this regard.

**The basic components in consumption behaviour are as follows:**

**Decision making (Cognitive and Affect):** This includes the stages of decision making: Need recognition, Information search, Evaluation of alternatives, Purchase activity, and Post purchase behaviour.

**Actual purchase (Behaviour):** This includes the visible physical activity of buying of goods and/or service. It is the result of the interplay of many individual and environmental determinants which are invisible.

**Individual determinants and environmental influences:**

The environmental factors affect the decision process indirectly, through way of affecting individual determinants.

**Buying roles:** There are five buying roles, viz., Initiator, Influencer, Decider, User, and Buyer. The initiator is the person who identifies that there exists a need or want; the influencer is the one who influences the purchase decision, the actual purchase activity and/or the use of the product or service; the decider is the one who decides whether to buy, what to buy, when to buy, from where to buy, and how to buy; the buyer is the one who makes the actual purchase; and, the user is the person (s) who use the product or service. These five roles may be played by one person or by different persons. A person may assume one or more of these roles. This would depend on the product or service in question.

**Buyers and Sellers:** They are the key elements in consumer behaviour. They have needs and wants and go through a complex buying process, so as to be able to satisfy the need through purchase of the good or service offering. They enter into an exchange process with the seller, which leaves both the parties (buyer and seller) better off than before. In fact the exchange process is value enhancing in nature, leading to satisfaction of both the parties.

**Let us take two examples:**

**Example 1:**

A child goes to a kindergarten school. She comes back home and asks her parents to buy her a set of colour pencils and crayons. Now the roles played are:

- 1. **Initiator:** the child in nursery school
- 2. **Influencer:** a fellow classmate

- 3. **Decider:** the father or the mother
- 4. **Buyer:** the father or the mother
- 5. **User:** the child

**Example 2:**

The lady of a house who is a housewife and spends her day at home doing household chores watches TV in her free time. That is her only source of entertainment. The TV at home is giving problem. She desires a new TV set, and says that she wants an LED plasma TV. Now the roles played are:

- 1. **Initiator:** the housewife (mother)
- 2. **Influencer:** a friend / neighbour
- 3. **Decider:** the husband or the son
- 4. **Buyer:** the husband or the son
- 5. **User:** the family

Consumer behaviour focuses specifically on the Buyer and often User. But also analyzes impact of other roles.

**CONCLUSION:**

Consumer Buying Behaviour refers to the buying behaviour of the ultimate consumer. Many factors, specificities and characteristics influence the individual in what he is and the consumer in his decision making process, shopping habits, purchasing behavior, the brands he buys or the retailers he goes. A purchase decision is the result of each and every one of these factors. An individual and a consumer is led by his culture, his subculture, his social class, his membership groups, his family, his personality, his psychological factors, etc., and is influenced by cultural trends as well as his social and societal environment. By identifying and understanding the factors that influence their customers, brands have the opportunity to develop a strategy, a marketing message (Unique Value Proposition) and advertising campaigns more efficient and more in line with the needs and ways of thinking of their target consumers, a real asset to better meet the needs of its customers and increase sales.



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