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A STUDY OF CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS SELECT HOUSEHOLD DURABLES IN RAJKOT DISTRICT

ALANKAR TRIVEDI ASST. PROFESSOR FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES MARWADI UNIVERSITY RAJKOT

ABSTRACT

Consumer behavior study which arose in the 20th century still occupies a prime place in the minds of marketers, businesses etc. Knowing the taste and preference of your target market gives the company a necessary edge to succeed and sustain themselves in the long run. But despite all the saying knowing consumer's choice is not an easy task for researchers and academicians. The focus of present study is to examine the buying behavior of household durables namely television, refrigerator and washing machine which are found in most homes in the Rajkot District of Gujarat. It becomes very difficult for a person carrying its daily household chores without these devices. Not only these machines make a person's life easier by reducing physical workload but it also saves time so that resources can be devoted to other useful activities. In the current modern era a person gets influenced by different marketing messages through various sources like internet, newspaper, radio etc. So, it becomes important for a researcher to know which vectors affect the consumer the most and how it influences the final purchase decision. Because a single reason is not solely responsible for the purchase but multiple reasons are. On the organization side companies also not always play on a single variable but offer multiple reasons to consumers to buy their products. This research is focused on identifying the important parameters that governs the purchase behavior of consumer in select group of durables namely television, washing machine and refrigerator as the consumer cruises through the journey from need recognition to final decision.

KEYWORDS

Consumer behavior, refrigerator, television, washing machine.

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INTRODUCTION

the English word 'Durable' simply means something that is able to withstand wear and tear and exist for a long time for e.g. house furniture, kitchen appliances etc. Thus, consumer durable can be thought of those items which help in household activities and stay as it is for a longer duration. The consumer durables chosen for this study are Television, Washing machine and Refrigerator only. This is because in any household they occupy a prime position for possession and are most sought after. The present study is carried out in the Rajkot district of Gujarat State. Off all the three household durables Refrigerator and Washing machines comes under white goods whereas television comes under brown goods. Consumer behavior, according to Philip Kotler and Kevin Lane Keller, is defined as the study of how individuals, groups, and organizations elect, buy, use, and dispose of goods, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy their needs and wants. Buying behavior of consumers is of great interest to the organizations as its success or failure depends upon correctly analyzing the behavior and applying the learning in the market place. Consumer behavior is complex process which is a function of variables like income, age, gender, educational qualification, mood, time of buying, social-cultural-economic-political conditions prevailing etc. As per Philip Kotler and Kevin Lane Keller's model of consumer behavior Market stimulus enters the mind of consumers and a set psychological process combine along with the characteristics of consumer to arrive at the final decision. The marketer's job is to identify what processes happen inside the consumer's consciousness between the market stimuli and purchase decision. By correctly doing this company can carefully design strategies to attract consumers and succeed in marketplace. This is particularly important because modern consumers are having multiple options for their product need. Especially since the reforms of 1991, foreign firms have entered the Indian marketplace giving stiff competition to local companies and providing multiple choices to Indian consumers. Also, organizations at large spend considerable resources to attract consumers towards their products and services. Thus, it becomes imperative to correctly understand consumer behavior. The consumer durable market has seen constant growth in the past and even though the Covid-19 Pandemic has dampened the sales it is expected to grow in the future as well. On November 2020 Government of India approved Production Linked Incentive scheme for 10 sectors (including white goods) to boost local manufacturing capabilities to promote 'Atmanirbhar' initiative. This task is undertaken to satisfy the increasing demands for consumer durable goods in Indian market. Also, a lot of scope for growth is expected from the rural market as the demand for durables like refrigerators and consumer electronic goods including television are likely to witness an increased demand in the coming years as the rural electrification is achieved significantly. According to the surveys carried out by the Retailers Association of India (RAI) the consumer durable and electronics segment achieved yearly sales growth of 10% and 15% in the months of January and February 2021 respectively. CARE ratings have expected the growth momentum to continue in the future provided that there is not another pandemic induced lockdown. Thus, in view above mentioned data it becomes necessary to know the buying behavior of consumers as to which factors play the decisive role in final purchase decision for select household durables.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ratika Rastogi and Sonia Chaudhary (2012), In their article on "Psychology and Buying Behaviour of Rural Consumers with Special Reference to Television, Washing Machine and Refrigerator in the Rural Areas of Meerut Region", concluded that large no. of rural consumers prefers the brands and their products because of the quality of the product and then the price of the product respectively. They also observed that brand awareness is higher in males as compared to females. Moreover, rural consumers prefer to buy new product of the same brand keeping in mind the quality of product they are already using of the same company.

Dr. Pranjal Bezborah and Mr. Subhadeep Chakraborty (2015) in their study of "Brand Preference of Consumers for Select Consumer Durables- A Study in Select Muncipal Wards of Tinsukia Town" opined that today in the era of competition many brands of consumer durables are available in the market. So, onus is on the marketers to find out the factors influencing the brand preference of consumers for consumer durables and also to know the level of satisfaction customers of consumer durables. Their study reveals that several factors like cost effectiveness, brand status, product style and appearance and after sales services are important in influencing brand preference of consumers for consumer durables. The study also shows that customers are satisfied and loyal towards the brands of consumer durables that they are already using.

P. Sathya and C. Vijayasanthi (2016) in their paper "Consumer Behaviour towards Consumer Durable Goods in Thiruvarur District" inferred that the market for consumer durables is becoming more competitive now days. Therefore, the producer of durable products should understand consumer interest much to find higher sale of their products. Marketers communicate with consumers and try to convince through every possible media. Highly inevitable to produce goods as preferred by the customer, as he is the kingpin around whom the entire marketing activity revolves. Thus, a marketer who understands the behavior of the consumers and plan his marketing strategies to suit the needs and aspirations of the target market will definitely have an advantage over his competitors. Anitha K (2018), In her paper on "Buying Behaviour of Refrigerators with Special Reference to Calicut City" observed that the consumers believe that company

which provides high quality product with reasonable prices is preferable. Consumers of refrigerator mainly get information from the TV commercial. As refrigerator INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMPUTER APPLICATION & MANAGEMENT

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became essential for the consumer day by day, many marketers are coming with this product in this electronic industry. So the market for refrigerator has become very competitive despite of having a good brand image and local presence. Organizations should also take much more attention and careful action to establish its product line in the market. Also, they should identify their customer's behavior and keep the commitment with them strongly. To build a positive perception and awareness among the consumers about their product they have to be stronger in their promotional activities and should maintain a good relationship both internally and externally in their corporate life.

NEED OF THE STUDY

This study will identify the important factors that help in arriving at the final purchase decision with respect to consumer durables namely Television, Washing Machine and Refrigerator.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- 1. To study the purchase behavior for selected consumer durables.
- 2. To study how marketing messages through TV or internet affect buying process

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on the primary data collected from 115 individuals in the district of Rajkot. The sampling method used was Convenience Sampling. The age group in the study was 20 to 60 and above. Information from respondents was obtained through a structured questionnaire. The research methodology followed for this study was descriptive in nature. The participants were asked to reveal various aspects of their buying process with respect to purchase of select consumer durables viz., Television, Washing machine & Refrigerator.

ANALYSIS

	TABLE NO. 1	
Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	66	57.4
Female	49	42.6
Total	115	100

From Table 1 we can see that males are the majority respondents (57.4) while females are the minority respondents (42.6%)

TABLE NO. 2			
Age	Frequency	Percent	
20-30	98	85.2	
31-40	5	4.3	
41-50	9	7.8	
51-60	2	1.7	
61 & Above	1	0.9	
Total	115	100	

Table 2 tells us that most of the responses for this study came from young people from 20 to 30 age range while the middle age category of 41 to 50 was at distant 2nd position. Also, only 1 response came from the senior most categories of 61 & above.

TABLE NO. 3		
Education	Frequency	Percent
Graduation	96	83.5
PhD	2	1.7
Post-Graduation	17	14.8
Total	115	100

From Table 3 we can infer that persons with graduation accounted for most of the participants while Post-Graduation was at second followed by Doctoral respondents.

RELIABILITY TEST

TABLE NO. 4		
Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items	
0.71	6	

Post survey a reliability analysis was carried out to check the internal consistency of the test items. The value came out to be 0.710 which is acceptable and signifies that the measurement of the concept is valid.

TABLE 5: CHOOSE THAT BETWEEN PRICE AND QUALITY WHICH IS MORE IMPORTANT TO YOU

Price	1
Price but I give minor preference to Quality as well	14
Quality	29
Quality but I give minor preference to Price as well	71
Total	115

Table 5 shows that quality presides over price when it comes to buying consumer durable. Majority respondents (29 and 71) have shown major preference towards Quality with minor preference for Price (1 and 14).

IMPACT OF ADVERTISING ON PURCHASE DECISIONS FOR CONSUMER DURABLES

TABLE 6: T.V. ADVERTISEMENTS PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN MY DECISION TO BUY A PRODUCT

Strongly Disagree	8
Disagree	14
Neutral	54
Agree	27
Strongly Agree	12
Total	115

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The above response table shows that Television advertisements does not account for a strong reason for the purchase of consumer durable. For most of the people (54) Television advertisements does not play important role for the purchase of consumer durable. However more people (39) did consider T.V. advertisements important for their purchase other than those who ignores them (22).

TABLE 7: ONLINE ADVERTISEMENTS ARE IMPORTANT IN MY DECISION TO BUY A PRODUCT

Strongly Disagree	13
Disagree	22
Neutral	48
Agree	22
Strongly Agree	10
Total	115

Table 7 shows that online advertisements do not play a big role in buying a consumer durable. Most of the respondents are neutral towards them and do not consider them important. Another interesting point is that almost equal number of participants consider online advertisements important (32) while other half (35) finds the unimportant.

TABLE NO. 8: I TRUST THE MESSAGE GIVEN BY ADVERTISEMENTS

Strongly Disagree	15
Disagree	32
Neutral	52
Agree	13
Strongly Agree	3
Total	115

We can infer from Table 8 that majority of the people (52) does not take message given by advertisements seriously. On the other hand, almost, same number of respondents (32 & 15) do not trust the message given by the advertisement while a small chunk of participants does trust the messages by the advertisements **PREFERENCE WITH RESPECT TO MODE OF PURCHASING**

TABLE NO. 9: I PREFER BUYING ELECTRONIC DURABLE GOODS SUCH AS TELEVISION, REFRIGERATOR & WASHING MACHINE VIA

Offline Purchase from stores like Sales India, Vijay Sales etc.	103
Online Purchase from websites like Amazon, Flipkart etc.	12
Total	115

Significant information is revealed by the above matrix that big parts of respondents prefer offline purchase of consumer durables like washing machine, Television and Refrigerator. This is important because the survey was conducted during the partial lockdown phase to avoid the SPREAD of coronavirus. Only a small part of people prefers online purchase. This implies that buyers want to physically check and feel the product before buying to get an idea for the same. **IMPACT OF PROMOTIONAL SCHEMES ON PURCHASE DECISIONS FOR CONSUMER DURABLES**

TABLE NO. 10: WARRANTY OR GUARANTEE INFLUENCE MY DECISION TO BUY CONSUMER DURABLE

Disagree	1
Neutral	13
Agree	44
Strongly Agree	57
Total	115

Table 10 tells us that warranty or guarantee does play an important role in purchase consideration of consumer durable (44 and 57) as it gives the buyer some level of assurance about the product performance.

TABLE NO. 11: DIFFERENT PROMOTIONAL SCHEMES LIKE DISCOUNT ON PRICE OF REFRIGERATOR IMPACT MY DECISION IN BUYING THE PRODUCT

Disagree	6
Neutral	34
Agree	43
Strongly Agree	32
Total	115
6	

Above table shows that promotional schemes like discount on price of a consumer durable does have a positive impact on the buying process as majority of participants (43 and 32) find them important.

TABLE NO. 12: BRAND IS A MAJOR FACTOR THAT WILL INFLUENCE MY DECISION TOWARDS BUYING A CONSUMER DURABLE

Strongly Disagree	1
Disagree	1
Neutral	14
Agree	37
Strongly Agree	62
Total	115

From table 12 we can infer that brand has a big impact (37 and 62) on buying of a T.V. refrigerator or washing machine. A very small portion (1 & 1) considers brand unimportant.

FINDINGS

- 1. Quality of the product is the major factor in buying a consumer durable rather than the price.
- 2. Customers do not take advertisements seriously bit only use them to get information about the product.
- 3. Customers prefer buying consumer durables from brick mortar stores rather than from the internet.
- 4. Promotional Schemes positively correlate with the buying of consumer durable as buyers do find them fruitful.
- 5. Brand Image has a big positive impact on buying process.

SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Competition in consumer durable industry is high and intense. Daily new products with innovative features are launched. Thus, Consumer durable manufacturing companies should focus greatly on improving their brand image rather than investing heavily in T.V. or internet advertisements. This can be done by providing quality products with reliable after sales service. As people for the past 3 decades have habituated in watching the commercials they do not take the message of

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the advertisements seriously. Thus, it becomes necessary for the company to offer better quality products than their competitors to the consumers so that positive experience is generated as people give primary importance to quality. This will result in good word-of-the-mouth publicity for the company's products. Also, people prefer buying Television or refrigerator from brick and mortar stores rather than from internet. So, companies should increase its presence by more branches with good amenities. On the other hand, bundling different offers like extended warranty or a free product can increase sale but they should not be considered primary factor for the generating revenue. Thus, we can conclude that quality and physical presence have greater impact on buying of the consumer durable along with other factors like warranty or bundled product offer.

LIMITATIONS

The survey has fewer responses from older categories which limits its application.

The study was conducted in limited geographical area it should be expanded further to gain better understanding.

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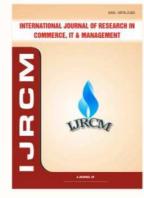
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