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AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR WITH RESPECT TO CONSUMER DURABLES**ANU GUPTA****ASST. PROFESSOR****SHRI CHIMANBHAI PATEL INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT & RESEARCH
AHMEDABAD****PRIYANKA SHAH****ASST. PROFESSOR****SHRI CHIMANBHAI PATEL INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT & RESEARCH
AHMEDABAD****ABSTRACT**

The Consumer Durables industry has been witnessing significant growth in recent years, helped by several drivers such as the emerging retail boom, real estate and housing demand, greater disposable income and an overall increase in the level of affluence of a significant section of the population. The industry is represented by major international and local players such as BPL, Videocon, Voltas, Blue Star, MIRC Electronics, Titan, Whirlpool, etc. The research paper surveyed 300 customers from Surat, Vadodra, Ahmedabad and Rajkot and difference in buying behavior in context of education, Income, Occupation, and Employment was statistically tested. ANOVAs and descriptive analysis was used to find the influence of various factors like durability, price, promotional schemes, technology and service on income, occupation and employment status of consumers with respect to consumer durables.

KEYWORDS

Consumer durables, Disposable income, Reference groups, buying behavior.

INTRODUCTION

The Consumer Durables industry consists of durable goods and appliances for domestic use such as televisions, refrigerators, air conditioners and washing machines. Instruments such as cell phones and kitchen appliances like microwave ovens were also included in this category. Reference groups influence consumer behavior in two ways: They set levels of aspiration for the individual, i.e. they offer clues as to what lifestyle should be led. They define items appropriate for a member of the group to lead that lifestyle. The research paper therefore is an attempt to study the influence of reference group on consumer buying behavior. The research paper studies the same taking into consideration the various factors influencing buying behavior like price, durability, promotion scheme etc. The paper also tries to understand the differentials in these papers in terms of various demographic profiles of customer like education, occupation, qualification etc.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In September 2007, According to Cygnus estimate, the total consumer durables market accounted for INR270 billion (considering all segments and sub-segments as discussed in the report) in 2006-07. Multinational companies particularly LG and Samsung have churned out significant market share due to their superior product offerings at best prices. However, few Indian companies are also trying hard to be in the competition and earn a respectable share in the consumer durables market.

This study conducted by Academy of Marketing Science Review (paleen kaur and ragbir singh) in 2006, Research on family decision making has been largely confined to spouses, who have been considered as the relevant decision making unit in a family. However, the role of third party influences, such as children, on decision making strategies and negotiations is essential to taking a broader view of the relevant unit of analysis. Contemporary researchers express that children constitute a major consumer market, with direct purchasing power for snacks and sweets, and indirect purchase influence while shopping for big-ticket items (Halan, 2002; Singh, 1998). Indian children have recently attracted considerable attention from marketers because the market for children's products offers tremendous potential (pegged at Rs. 5000 crore/\$1110mn) and is rapidly growing. According to available industry data, the chocolate and confectionary market is estimated at Rs. 1300 crore/\$290mn, the apparel market at Rs. 480 crore/\$110mn and kids footwear at Rs. 1000 crore/\$220mn (Bhushan, 2002). In addition to this, 54% of India is estimated to be under the age of 25 (Bansal, 2004).

The nature of joint decisions in couple decision making units and family decision making units is seen to be different (Filiatrault and Ritchie, 1980). The Indian families have become more modern in SRO, such that the decision making has become more egalitarian (Chadha, 1995; Dhobal, 1999). Compared to this, the West is experiencing an increase in the number of single parent or female-headed households (Ahuja and Stinson, 1993; Mangleburg et al., 1999). Such a shift in family composition and structure has a bearing on the strength in the role that children are expected to play as buyers in the family.

NEED OF THE STUDY

In India consumer durables is in growth stage and needs to be explored to strengthen marketing activity or brand image of electronics consumer Durables Company. For achieving marketing goals, one should have the clear understanding of perceptions and preferences of consumers in their purchase decision for consumer durables and, influence of reference group and social class also.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The research was aimed at studying the purchase pattern of consumers for consumer durables.

- To analyze the role of demographic factors on buying behavior with respect to consumer durables
- To analyze the consumer's perception about the brand of product they purchase
- To analyze the influence of social class on consumers' lifestyle characteristics and buying behavior.
- To study the factors affecting purchase of consumer durables.

HYPOTHESES

H₁: Consumer's Income influences the brand he purchases

H₂: Durability/Price/Promotional schemes/Technology, Service influences the purchasing behavior in consumer durables with respect to different Income classes

H₃: Durability/Price/Promotional schemes/Technology, Service influences the purchasing behavior in consumer durables with respect to different levels of education

H₄: Durability/Price/Promotional schemes/Technology, Service influences the purchasing behavior in consumer durables with respect to different employment classes

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design	Descriptive
Source Of Data	Primary: Questionnaire, Personal Interviews Secondary: Internet, websites, Organizational reports, Case studies, Business magazines, Books, Journals.
Sample Size	300 consumers
Sampling Frame	Serviceperson, Businessman, Household people, Students
Sampling Technique	Convenience sampling
Statistical Techniques	ANOVA
Scope of the study	Ahmedabad, Vadodara, Rajkot, Surat

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

H₁: Consumer’s Income influences the brand he purchases

TABLE 1

Variable	No of Samples	Overall Mean	Television	Refrigerator	Washing Machine	Laptop	Mobile	A.C.
Income								
Less than 1.5 Lacs	39	2.64	F=1.400	F=3.517	F=3.266	F=2.086	F=8.277	F=5.289
1.5-3 Lacs	76	2.59	0.034	0.008	0.012	0.033	0.000	0.000
3-5 Lacs	91	2.63						
5-8 Lacs	54	2.65						
More than 8 Lacs	40	2.13						
Total	300	2.56						

The ANOVA test was conducted to find out the differences in Brand preference of consumers on the basis of different Income groups. The results showed that consumers of five different groups during their purchasing encounters were found to be different. The mean analysis showed that consumers with 5-8 Lacs (2.65) have direct impact on Brand Preference. Then it was followed by the consumers with income Less than Rs 1.5 Lacs(2.64),between 3-5 Lacs (2.63),between 1.5 to 3 Lacs (2.59), and more than 8 Lacs income (2.13).

The difference was found among brand preferences For TV (F = 1.400, p = 0.034) Refrigerator (F = 3.517, p = 0.008), Washing Machine (F = 3.266, p = 0.012), Laptop (F=2.086, p=0.033) Mobile (F = 8.277, p = 0.000) and Ac (F = 5.289, p = 0.000) which are significant at 0.05 level. So for that null hypothesis of equal means is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted. So, higher the Income of consumers leads to higher differences among Brand preferences in consumer durables.

INCOME WISE

H₂: Durability/Price/Promotional schemes/Technology, Service influences the purchasing behavior in consumer durables with respect to different Income classes

TABLE 2

Variable	No of Samples	Overall Mean	Durability	Price	Schemes	Technology	Service
Income							
Less than 1.5 Lacs	39	3.39	F=1.185	F=3.210	F=5.481	F=6.143	F=2.422
1.5-3 Lacs	76	3.41	.117	.013	.018	0.00	.048
3-5 Lacs	91	3.47					
5-8 Lacs	54	3.64					
More than 8 Lacs	40	3.72					
Total	300	3.51					

The ANOVA test was conducted to find out difference in the preferences towards various features of consumer durable products on the basis of different Income groups. The results showed that consumers of five different groups during their purchasing encounters were found to be different. The mean analysis showed that consumers with income less than Rs 1.5 Lacs (3.39) have direct impact on various features of consumer durable products. Then it was followed by the consumers with income between Rs 1.5 and 3 Lacs (3.41), 3-5 Lacs (3.47), 5-8 Lacs (2.64) and more than 8 Lacs income (3.72).

The Difference was found towards various features of consumer durable products like Price (F = 3.210, p = .013), Schemes (F = 1.481, p = 0.018), Technology (F = 6.143 p = 0.00), Service (F = 2.422 p = 0.048) which are significant at 0.05 level. So for that null hypothesis of equal means is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted. We can say that different Income groups give different Priorities to Price in the consumer durables whose income is Less than 1.5 Lacs give more importance to price in compare to income groups of more than 8 lacs. We can say that different Income groups give different Priorities to Schemes in the consumer durables People whose income is less they give the most preference to various Schemes compare to High Income groups. Technology has a Significant at 0.05 levels. So here Technology influences the purchasing behavior in consumer durables with respect to income (different socio-economic class). We can say that different Income groups give different Priorities to Technology in the consumer durables Services have a Significant at 0.05 levels. So here Services influences the purchasing behavior in consumer durables with respect to income (different socio-economic class). Durability (F = 1.185, p = 0.017), which are not significant at 0.05 level. So for that null hypothesis of equal means is accepted and alternative hypothesis is rejected. So here Durability does not influence the purchasing behavior in consumer durables with respect to income (different socio-economic class).

EDUCATION WISE

H₃: Durability/Price/Promotional schemes/Technology, Service influences the purchasing behavior in consumer durables with respect to different levels of education

TABLE 3

Variable	No of Samples	Overall Mean	Durability	Price	Schemes	Technology	Service
Education							
Post Graduate & Above	102	3.43	F=.697	F=1.060	F=1.017	F=1.109	F=1.223
Graduate	175	3.67	.554	.366	.035	.006	.002
10 + 2	19	3.76					
10 th or below	4	3.66					
Total	300	3.51					

EDUCATION WISE

The ANOVA test was conducted to find out difference in the preferences towards various features of consumer durable products on the basis of different Education groups. The results showed that consumers of five different groups during their purchasing encounters were found to be different. The mean analysis showed that consumers with Education Post Graduate & Above (3.43) have direct impact on various features of consumer durable products. Then it was followed by the consumers who are Graduate (3.53), 10th or below (3.66), and 10 + 2 (3.76).

The Difference was found towards various features of consumer durable products like Schemes ($F = 1.017$, $p = 0.035$), Technology ($F = 1.109$, $p = 0.006$), and Services ($F = 1.223$, $p = 0.002$) which are significant at 0.05 level. So for that null hypothesis of equal means is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted. So here Durability does not influence the purchasing behavior in consumer durables with respect to Education (different socio-economic class). So here Price does not influence the purchasing behavior in consumer durables with respect to Education (different socio-economic class). We can say that different Education groups give different Priorities to Schemes in the consumer durables. Technology has a Significant at 0.05 levels. So here Technology influences the purchasing behavior in consumer durables with respect to education (different socio-economic class). We can say that different Education groups give different Priorities to Services in the consumer durables.

Other features like Durability ($F = 0.697$, $p = 0.554$) and Price ($F = 1.060$, $p = 0.366$) which are not significant at 0.05 Level so for that null hypothesis of equal means is accepted and alternative hypothesis is rejected. Hence there is no impact of Education group on Features like Durability and Price.

EMPLOYMENT WISE

H₄: Durability/Price/Promotional schemes/Technology, Service influences the purchasing behavior in consumer durables with respect to different employment classes

TABLE 3

Variable	No of	Overall	Durability	Price	Schemes	Technology	Service
Employment	Samples	Mean					
Salaried	120	3.48	F=5.111	F=1.685	F=2.648	F=4.187	F=2.559
Businessman	83	3.83	0.001	0.153	0.034	0.003	0.039
Retired	1	3.00					
Housewife	25	3.58					
Student	71	3.16					
Total	300	3.51					

EMPLOYMENT WISE

The ANOVA test was conducted to find out difference in the preferences towards various features of consumer durable products on the basis of different Employment groups. The results showed that consumers of five different groups during their purchasing encounters were found to be different.

The mean analysis showed that consumers with Employment Status Retired (3.00) have direct impact on various features of consumer durable products. Then it was followed by the consumers who are Student (3.16), Salaried (3.48), housewife (3.56), and businessman (3.88).

The Difference was found towards various features of consumer durable products like Durability ($F = 5.111$, $p = 0.001$), Schemes ($F = 2.648$, $p = 0.034$), Technology ($F = 4.187$, $p = 0.003$), and Service ($F = 2.559$, $p = 0.039$) which are significant at 0.05 level. So for that null hypothesis of equal means is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted.

Other feature like Price ($F = 1.685$, $p = 0.153$) which are not significant at 0.05 Level so for that null hypothesis of equal means is accepted and alternative hypothesis is rejected. Hence there is no impact of Education group on Feature like Price.

CONCLUSION

Income influences the purchasing decision of any consumer when they want to purchase any brand of consumer durables. Income does not influence on durability feature in consumer durables, every consumer gives Preference to durability when they want to buy any consumer durable. Income influence on Price, Schemes, Technology and Services in consumer durables, every consumer give different reference to the above features with respect their income groups.

Consumer durable companies have an option to determine which income groups they want to target with respect to Price, Schemes, Technology and Services so by that way they can attract more Consumers towards him. Durability and Price does not influence the purchasing behavior in consumer durables with respect to Education. Schemes, Technology and Services influence the purchasing behavior in consumer durables with respect to Education.

Majority of the respondents (152) consider head of the family has the most effective reference group in CTV/LCD/PLASMA (consumer durables). Majority of the respondents (199) consider family members have the most effective reference group in Refrigerator (consumer durables). Majority of the respondents (192) consider of the family Members has the most effective reference group in washing Machine (consumer durables). Majority of the respondents (152) consider of the Friends/Relatives has the most effective reference group in laptop/Desktop Computer (consumer durables). Majority of the respondents (163) consider of the Friends/Relatives has the most effective reference group in mobile (consumer durables). Majority of the respondents (142) consider of the Head of Family has the most effective reference group in mobile (consumer durables).

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE SCOPE OF RESEARCH

The sample size for the survey of customers was limited to 300 respondents, which might not be representative of all customers of Gujarat state. Research also depends on surveyors' bias & his/her ability to analyze the data & draw conclusion. Future research may be carried on taking some more variables and other consumer durables sector could be carried.

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