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BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF REFRIGERATOR BUYERS: A STUDY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CHITTOOR DISTRICT IN ANDHRA PRADESH

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ABSTRACT

Refrigerator buying has become a major challenge for many of the buyers especially whose family income is awfully limited. Within such limited income the families have to meet their obligatory needs and find ways to purchase refrigerator which has become more essential in the present day context. We could found such type of phenomenon in small towns and villages. Moreover, in many of such families both men and women are going for jobs. Time available for them in the morning and evening is very limited. During that limited time they may not be in a position to visit vegetable markets and eatable shops to buy their vegetables and eatables on daily basis. Possession of refrigerator enables wife and husband who are employed to buy and keep eatables and vegetables which are highly perishable in nature. In the refrigerators buying such an essential good would naturally influencing the behaviour of the buyer. The main purpose of this study is to examine the buying behavior of consumers of those who possess refrigerators in Chittoor district. For doing so, a sample of 360 respondents, Tirupati revenue division (180), Chittoor revenue division (100) and Madanapalli revenue division (80) have been selected on the basis of convenience sampling. This paper presents a detailed analysis pertaining to buying behavior of select sample buyers who possess refrigerators in Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh.

KEYWORDS

Buying behavior, refrigerator, marketers and consumers.

INTRODUCTION

Consumer behaviour, as a part of the large field of human behaviour, is relatively a new field of study. This study is relating to individuals who make decisions to spend their resources (time, money and effort) on consumables and durables (what they buy, why do they buy, where do they buy, how often they buy and use a product or service). The heterogeneity among the people across the world makes understanding consumer buying behaviour an intricate and challenging task. The consumer's identity, beliefs, specific needs, attitudes and the kind of product and brands available in that product category influence his/her buying behaviour. The marketing efforts of a firm have profound impact on the buying decisions of customers. Therefore, marketers shall make an attempt to obtain an in-depth knowledge of customer buying behaviour.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There is enormous variability in the way customers buy and use this product. Some customers will buy a product after a lot of consultation and many more visits to the shops, whereas others will buy the same in a single visit without consulting anybody else. Some customers will buy a product from upscale stores whereas others will buy the same product from a modest store which is close to their stay. Some customers may buy a product which reflects their social status whereas others will buy the product for purely functional reasons. The types of behaviours that different customers demonstrate in buying and using the same product and the different types of behaviours that the same customer demonstrates in buying different products elevates marketing to a discipline much more intricate than product management. Even the same customer may not behave in an equivalent fashion while buying the same product under varying circumstances. By studying the behaviour of customers it becomes possible to segment the market in new ways and serve them with different marketing mixes even if the product of the various marketing mixes may be the same. Consumer behaviour is one of the stimulating and challenging areas in marketing studies being human actions focused on the purchasing consuming and using of the products and services. Consumer behaviour involves the psychological process that through which consumers recognize their needs, find ways to satisfy these needs, making purchase decisions, interpret information, make plans and implement those plans buy engaging in comparison shopping or actually purchasing a product. Keeping this factual information in view an attempt is made to high light the determinants of consumer behaviour regarding buying decision making and to present the opinions of the buyers why they behave as they behave while purchasing refrigerators.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In developing countries like ours, most of the marketers are at various stages in the process of understanding the consumer behavior with respect to acceptance and adopting new types of products or services. In view of the growing importance of the consumer behavior, the present study is targeted at understanding consumer behavior with particular reference to refrigerator.

Increasingly, even low income groups are evincing lot of interest in buying durable products for them. These products are essential, rather than mere luxury. The identified factors like size, colour, brand name, price range and relative degree of influence of major players (the respondent, his or her spouse, children, parents, friends, neighbors the dealer, the media and the like) were found to have greater sway in the ultimate purchase decision can help marketers to position their items accordingly and suitably 'tap' the influential players. It would be logical to expect the purchase behavior of consumer with regard to durables to be different from that of non-durables as the quantum of funds required for the purchase of the former would be range enough to warrants more rational decisions. The present study is an attempt in this direction and is intended to high light the consumer behavior with regard to refrigerator.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the study is examine the consumer buying behavior of sample respondent buyers of refrigerators in Chittoor district.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is mainly based on primary data. Primary data have been collected by means of deploying the questionnaire to the select sample respondent buyers of refrigerators in three revenue divisions of Chittoor district viz., Chittoor, Madanapalli and Tirupati in Andhra Pradesh. Researcher's observations have also been used as an input to understand consumer behaviour. A sample of 360 households across the district have been selected on the basis of non-probability sampling method i.e., convenience sampling. The data were obtained from the owners of the refrigerators.

PRIMARY DATA

Primary data have been collected by interviewing the respondents using the interview schedule in three revenue divisions of Chittoor district.

SECONDARY DATA

Secondary data have been collected from various secondary sources such as books, journals, reports, manuals, magazines, websites and the like.

SAMPLE DESIGN AND SIZE

Convenience sampling method was used for the purpose of selecting the desired number of samples. The sample size for the present study is 360.

TOOLS OF ANALYSIS

The following are the tools that are applied for analyzing the data collected from the various sample respondents.

- Percentages and
- Chi-square test

BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF REFRIGERATOR BUYERS: A STUDY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CHITTOOR DISTRICT IN ANDHRA PRADESH**TABLE 1: DISTRIBUTION OF SELECT SAMPLE RESPONDENT BUYERS OF REFRIGERATORS IN CHITTOOR DISTRICT OVER DIFFERENT REVENUE DIVISIONS AND BRAND SELECTION**

Revenue Division	BRAND PREFERENCE OF REFRIGERATOR BUYERS IN CHITTOOR DISTRICT							Total
	Godrej	Kelvinator	LG	Panasonic	Samsung	Videocon	Whirl Pool	
Chittoor	13 (13.00) (22.81)	11 (11.00) (26.19)	24 (24.00) (26.67)	11 (11.00) (30.56)	10 (10.00) (37.04)	12 (12.00) (30.77)	19 (19.00) (27.54)	100 (100) (27.78)
Madanapalli	11 (13.75) (19.30)	10 (12.50) (23.81)	23 (28.75) (25.56)	10 (12.50) (27.77)	-	10 (12.50) (25.64)	16 (20.00) (23.19)	80 (100) (22.22)
Tirupati	33 (18.33) (57.89)	21 (11.67) (50.00)	43 (23.89) (47.77)	15 (8.34) (41.67)	17 (9.44) (62.96)	17 (9.44) (43.59)	34 (18.89) (49.27)	180 (100) (50.00)
Total	57 (15.83) (100)	42 (11.67) (100)	90 (25.00) (100)	36 (10.00) (100)	27 (7.50) (100)	39 (10.83) (100)	69 (19.17) (100)	360(100) (100)
Chi-Square	$\chi^2 = 11.631$							

Source: Field survey data

Note: Figures in parentheses represent percentages to totals

NS = Not significant at 5% level

It is understood from the table above that 90 sample respondent buyers (25.00 per cent) out of 360 in all the three revenue divisions together in Chittoor district have purchased LG brand, followed by 69 sample respondents (19.17 per cent) have purchased the whirl pool refrigerator, 57 sample respondents (15.83 per cent) have purchased Godrej refrigerators, 42 sample respondents (11.67 per cent) have purchased Kelvinator refrigerator, 39 sample respondents (10.83 per cent) have purchased Videocon refrigerator, 36 sample respondents (10.00 per cent) have purchased Panasonic and 27 sample respondents (7.5 per cent) have purchased Samsung refrigerators.

It indicates that majority of the sample respondent buyers of refrigerators (25.00 per cent) irrespective of the revenue division where they hail from have purchased LG brand and relatively less number of sample respondents (7.5 per cent) have purchased Samsung brand. Majority of the sample respondent buyers of those who have purchased LG refrigerators are representing Tirupati revenue division and none of the respondent has preferred to purchase Samsung refrigerator are representing Madanapalli revenue division.

TABLE 2: DISTRIBUTION OF SELECT SAMPLE RESPONDENT BUYERS OF REFRIGERATORS IN CHITTOOR DISTRICT OVER DIFFERENT REVENUE DIVISIONS AND THE TIME THAT THEY SPEND BETWEEN NEED RECOGNITION AND ACTUAL PURCHASE

Revenue Division	TIME GAP BETWEEN NEED RECOGNITION & ACTUAL PURCHASE			Total
	Days	Months	Years	
Chittoor	19 (19.00) (20.65)	66 (66.00) (30.00)	15 (15.00) (31.25)	100 (100) (27.78)
Madanapalli	24 (30.00) (26.09)	39 (48.75) (17.73)	17 (21.25) (35.42)	80 (100) (22.22)
Tirupati	49 (27.22) (53.26)	115 (63.89) (52.27)	16 (8.89) (33.33)	180 (100) (50.00)
Total	92 (25.56) (100)	220 (61.11) (100)	48 (13.33) (100)	360(100) (100)
Chi-Square	$\chi^2 = 11.75$			

Source: Field survey data

Note: Figures in parentheses represent percentages to totals

* Significant at 5% level

It is understood from the table above that 220 sample respondent buyers (61.11 per cent) out of 360 in all the three revenue divisions of Chittoor district together took months gap, followed by 92 sample respondents (25.56 per cent) have taken days gap and 48 sample respondents (13.33 per cent) took years gap in actual purchase of refrigerators.

It indicates that majority of the respondents (61.11 per cent) irrespective of their revenue division in Chittoor district where they hail from have taken months time between need recognition and actual purchase of refrigerators and relatively less number of sample respondents (13.33 per cent) have taken years gap between need recognition and actual purchase of refrigerators. Majority of the sample respondents of those who have taken months gap between need recognition and actual purchase are representing Tirupati revenue division and less number of sample respondents of those who have taken years gap between need recognition and actual purchase are representing Chittoor revenue division. The main reason revealed by the respondents for Time gap between need recognition and actual purchase are non availability of finance, searching for a better brand and non availability of the required set at the local dealer.

TABLE 3: DISTRIBUTION OF SELECT SAMPLE RESPONDENT BUYERS OF REFRIGERATORS IN CHITTOOR DISTRICT OVER DIFFERENT REVENUE DIVISIONS AND THE MEMBERS OF THEIR FAMILIES WHO HAVE TAKEN DECISION TO BUY REFRIGERATOR

Revenue Division	PURPOSE FOR PURCHASE OF REFRIGERATORS				Total
	To store & Preserve	Social Status	Cooling facility	Pressure from family Members	
Chittoor	62 (62.00) (26.84)	10 (10.00) (29.41)	16 (16.00) (28.57)	12 (12.00) (30.77)	100 (100) (27.78)
Madanapalli	43 (53.75) (18.61)	13 (16.25) (38.24)	11 (13.75) (19.64)	13 (16.25) (33.33)	80 (100) (22.22)
Tirupati	126 (70.00) (54.55)	11 (6.11) (32.35)	29 (16.11) (51.79)	14 (7.78) (35.90)	180 (100) (50.00)
Total	231 (64.17) (100)	34 (9.44) (100)	56 (15.56) (100)	39 (10.83) (100)	360(100) (100)
Chi-Square	$\chi^2 = 12.614$				

Source: Field survey data

Note: Figures in parentheses represent percentages to totals

NS= Not significant at 5% level

It is clearly evident from the table above that 124 sample respondent buyers (34.44 per cent) out of 360 irrespective of their revenue division where they are residing responded that they themselves have taken decisions to buy their refrigerators in their families followed by 72 sample respondents (20.00 per cent) have responded that the spouses of respondents in their family have taken decision to buy refrigerators, 47 sample respondents (13.06 per cent) said that their parents in their families have taken decision in buying the refrigerators, 42 sample respondents (11.67 per cent) said that their friends have assisted them in taking a decision to buy refrigerators, 41 sample respondents (11.39 per cent) have responded that their sons took decision to buy refrigerators and 34 (9.44 per cent) sample respondents said that their daughters took a decision to buy the refrigerator.

From the foregoing analysis one can infer that majority of the sample respondent buyers (34.44 per cent) in all the three revenue divisions together said that they themselves took a decision in buying their refrigerators. Others involved in buying decision are the spouse (20.00 per cent), parents (13.06 per cent), friends (11.67 per cent), sons (11.39 per cent) and daughters (9.44 per cent). On the whole the parties involved and associated in purchasing decision of refrigerators clearly shows that in Tirupati revenue division the purchase decision making process is dominated by respondent himself/herself. Daughters role in decision making is insignificant in Tirupati revenue division.

TABLE 4: DISTRIBUTION OF SELECT SAMPLE RESPONDENT BUYERS OF REFRIGERATORS IN CHITTOOR DISTRICT OVER DIFFERENT REVENUE DIVISIONS AND THE PURPOSES WHICH PROMPTED RESPONDENTS FOR PURCHASE OF THEIR REFRIGERATORS

Revenue Division	INFLUENCE OF FAMILY MEMBERS ON THE PURCHASE DECISION						Total
	Respondent	Spouse Wife/Husband	Sons	daughters	Parents	Friends	
Chittoor	28 (28.00) (22.58)	18 (18.00) (25.00)	17 (17.00) (41.46)	12 (12.00) (35.29)	13 (13.00) (27.66)	12 (12.00) (28.57)	- 100 (100) (27.78)
Madanapalli	20 (25.00) (16.13)	16 (20.00) (22.22)	10 (12.50) (24.39)	11 (13.75) (32.35)	12 (15.00) (25.53)	11 (13.75) (26.19)	- 80 (100) (22.22)
Tirupati	76 (42.22) (61.29)	38 (21.11) (52.78)	14 (7.78) (34.15)	11(6.11) (32.35)	22 (12.22) (46.81)	19 (10.56) (45.24)	- 180 (100) (50.00)
Total	124 (34.44) (100)	72 (20.00) (100)	41 (11.39) (100)	34 (9.44) (100)	47 (13.06) (100)	42 (11.67) (100)	- 360(100) (100)
Chi-Square	$\chi^2 = 16.867$						

Source: Field survey data

Note: Figures in parentheses represent percentages to totals

* Significant at 5% level

It is clearly visible from the table above that 231 sample respondent buyers of refrigerators (64.17 per cent) out of 360 have purchased the refrigerators for the purpose of storing and preserving the food of different in nature followed by 56 sample respondents (15.56 per cent) have purchased their refrigerators because the refrigerators have cooling facility. 39 sample respondents (10.83 per cent) revealed that they have purchased their refrigerators because of heavy pressure from the members of their own family and only a small percentage (9.44 per cent) of sample respondent buyers feel that it is a prestigious product (status symbol).

From the foregoing analysis one can infer that majority of the sample respondent buyers of refrigerators (64.17 per cent) in all the three revenue divisions together said that they have purchased the refrigerators to store and preserve the perishable products and least percentage (9.44 per cent) of sample respondent buyers stated that it is status symbol for them. It is clearly observed from the study that for majority for the sample respondent buyers of those who said that they have purchased their refrigerators to store and preserve perishable goods are representing Tirupati revenue division whereas majority of the respondents who said that it is a social status are representing Madanapalli revenue division.

TABLE 5: DISTRIBUTION SO SELECT SAMPLE RESPONDENT BUYERS OF REFRIGERATORS IN CHITTOOR DISTRICT OVER DIFFERENT REVENUE DIVISIONS AND THE FACTORS WHICH WERE CONSIDERED FOR EVALUATION OF ALTERATIVE BRANDS OF REFRIGERATORS

Revenue Division	FACTORS WHICH WERE CONSIDERED FOR EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVE BRANDS OF REFRIGERATORS							Total
	Price	Company image	Design/ appearance	Product Performance	Loan/ installment	Durability	After sales service	
Chittoor	15 (15.00) (33.33)	24 (24.00) (23.53)	13 (13.00) (31.71)	15 (15.00) (28.30)	10 (10.00) (27.03)	12 (12.00) (26.09)	11 (11.00) (30.56)	100 (100) (27.78)
Madanapalli	12 (15.00) (26.67)	16 (20.00) (15.69)	10 (12.50) (24.39)	11 (13.75) (20.75)	10 (12.50) (27.03)	11 (13.75) (23.91)	10 (12.50) (27.78)	80 (100) (22.22)
Tirupati	18 (10.00) (40.00)	62 (34.44) (60.78)	18 (10.00) (43.91)	27 (15.00) (50.94)	17 (9.44) (45.95)	23 (12.78) (50.00)	15 (8.33) (41.67)	180 (100) (50.00)
Total	45 (12.50) (100)	102 (28.33) (100)	42 (11.67) (100)	41 (11.39) (100)	37 (10.28) (100)	46 (12.78) (100)	36 (10.00) (100)	360(100) (100)
Chi-Square	$\chi^2 = 9.202$							

Source: Field survey data

Note: Figures in parentheses represent percentages to totals

NS= Not significant at 5% level

It is understood from the table above that 102 sample respondent buyers of refrigerators (28.33 per cent) out of 360 in all the three revenue divisions in Chittoor district together have contemplated that the company image is one of the factors which influenced them to purchase refrigerators followed by 46 sample respondents (12.78 per cent) have considered product durability as one of the factors which influenced them to buy refrigerator, 45 sample respondents (12.50 per cent) have considered price as the major factor, 42 sample respondents (11.67 per cent) have deliberately stated the physical appearance & design are the most important factors which influenced them to purchase refrigerators, 41 sample respondents (11.39 per cent) believed that the product performance is one of the major reasons for purchasing their refrigerators, 37 sample respondents (10.28 per cent) responded that the installment facility and 36 sample respondents (10.00 per cent) said that after sales services are the least important factors to purchase refrigerators.

From the foregoing analysis one can infer that company's image is the most important feature which influenced the sample respondent buyers to purchase their refrigerators whereas installment facility and after sales service are the least important factors which also influenced the sample respondent buyers while purchasing their refrigerators. Majority of the sample respondent buyers of refrigerators who said that they have purchased their refrigerators because of company's image are representing all the three revenue divisions. The least per cent of respondent buyers who said that they purchased their refrigerators because of the after sales service is representing Madanapalli revenue division.

CONCLUSION

Most of the sample respondent buyers have purchased LG refrigerators and least have preferred Samsung refrigerators. The long lasted time between the need recognition and actual purchase is months in case of majority of the sample respondent buyers of refrigerators whereas the long lasting time between the need recognition and actual purchase those who have taken the decision to purchase refrigerators reveals that the respondents themselves have taken a decision to buy their refrigerators. Very significant number of buyers has purchased refrigerators because of their company's image. Majority of the respondents are under the opinion that they have purchased their refrigerators because the refrigerators that they purchased have a built in stabilizer.

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