



A STUDY ON USERS BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS DURABLE GOODS IN SRIRANGAM

R. Buvaneswari*

Dr. R. Prakash Babu**

Abstract: *The Indian consumer durables industry has witnessed a considerable change over the last few years. Changing lifestyle and higher disposable income coupled with boom in the real estate and housing industry and a surge in advertising have been instrumental in bringing about a sea change in the consumer behaviour pattern. Consumer durables involve any type of product purchased by consumers that is manufactured for long-term use. As opposed to many goods that are intended for consumption in short term, consumer durables are intended to endure regular usage for several years or longer before their replacement is required. Just about every household contains at least a few items that may be considered to be of consumer durable nature. With India being the second fastest growing economy having a huge consumer class, consumer durables have emerged as one of the fastest growing industries in India. Indian urban consumer is young energetic and good earner in the family that automatically increases the demand of consumer durable earner. Sluggish growth or saturated market condition in the urban area compel these markets to move towards the rural market. The challenges of the rural market compel the marketing managers to design and develop unique, effective and separate marketing strategies.*

Keywords: *Consumer durable goods*

*Assistant Professor (Research Scholar), Department of Commerce, Srimad Andavan Arts & Science College (Autonomous), T. V. Kovil, Trichy.

**Associate Professor, Department of Commerce, A.V.V.M. Sri Pushpam College (Autonomous), Poondi, Thanjavur.



INTRODUCTION

Twenty first century is the century of uncertainty. Competitors come from across the seven seas with containers of cash and assault rifles, ready, willing and able to blast competitors off the marketplace. Globalisation has made the world one giant marketplace and introduced two new words in business economics - deregulation and privatisation. Quality, services, attractive prices, customization, brand equity, higher market share, product innovation, customer orientation, entering high growth market and such strategies no longer give a guarantee of success. Customer is no longer a "King". He is an emperor. Marketing jargon now has a host of previously unheard of expressions. Designing an effective marketing mix is becoming increasingly difficult, two more P's - Politics and Public opinion have been added to the traditional four P's - Product, Price, Promotion and Place. Advertising and sales promotion expenses are going out of hand and sales force is fast becoming one of the most expensive marketing communication tools. Price wars break out unexpectedly. There is a growing awareness about integrated marketing communications (IMC). Acquiring and retaining profitable customers require new skills as customer loyalty decreases by the day. The marketers of today must be capable to cope with marketing problems on a day-to-day basis. Their marketplace keeps on changing and the winning strategy of yesterday cannot guarantee success today and tomorrow. "Ability to change has now become competitive advantage" says Richard Love of Hewlett Packard.

Korean electronics, LG and Samsung dominate the Indian consumer durable market. The market leadership is enjoyed by LG group in overall consumer durables and home appliances business in India. LG at the time of entry has focused on the Indian Megacities to greater extent and then extend their product portfolio in the high-end technology based life style consumer durables. Simultaneously the company under the influensive leadership of Mr. K.R. Kim had developed plan for entering into the rural market in the early nineties with brand "Samporna" a color Television for just Rs.5000 for attracting rural consumer whose affordability is marginal. The LG has dominance in the area of Television, Refrigerator, Mobile and Air conditioners. LG has first spared in the market with Television and then launching other products and capturing entire electronic market including Branded Personal Computers. LG understood consumers of India very well as company has made tremendous modification in the products, which is successful in the home country.



NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Users' behaviour is a study of users' thinking and perception towards particular product. The said study has been selected with intention to know the various aspects of the users' behaviour towards consumer durable. Users' behaviour is one the important area of the marketing management. It gives an opportunity to the marketers to know what exactly user wants as well as how users' are reacting towards particular product or brand. The need and importance of studying buying behaviour of users' is rooted in the modern-marketing concept. In order to operationalise this concept, management attempts to solve consumption problems of consumers. However, no business can possibly help users' solve their consumption problems unless the marketer understands the buying behaviour of the users' and attempts to comprehend the buying process and the factors influencing it.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The methodology employed in the review is to examine significant prior studies published in recognised journals and research works for the past ten years. The search of abstracts was conducted based on key phraseology associated with consumer behaviour, buying behaviour, buying motives of durable goods. The search not only focused on the key phraseology but on multiple linked relationships. Due to the lack of combined knowledge between users' behaviour of durable goods and their delivery in an educational environment, the journal review was complemented by a review of book-based and institutional literature. There are more than 75 relevant literature were reviewed to the proposed research. The examination of the leading journals and recognised publications provided a theoretical foundation of various approaches to users' behaviour of durable goods. It aims at developing the research proposition and research aims by analyzing the gap in the literature introductory. In this way national and international reviews are identified this methodology and findings were explored. This leads to Microscopic as well as anatomical views over international literature and this synthesis are useful in identify flaws in literature. Purchase preference, satisfaction and decision of users'.

USER SATISFACTION

In the present day Indian Context, user satisfaction is still a matter of strategy. However, it is a matter of survival for many organizations in the western countries. As the behaviour of users' keeps changing with the changing environment, user satisfaction becomes a dynamic



issue. Many determined efforts have to be made on a continuous basis to trace user satisfaction. According to the present day concept, the user satisfaction is by design and not by default. No one knows the individual user satisfaction better than the user himself. The companies are being attuned to this and are trying to find credible ways to ascertain this complex and highly subjective management issue. The companies are changing their methods of handling the users' with a view to capture the future market than the present. In this way, user satisfaction would determine product and technology expectations. It would also give direction to the element of human interaction essential for any business.

The product is purchased by the users' not only for their own sake but also to satisfy a long felt need of others. Hence, the interest of the marketers in their selling process should not and with the sale of the product alone. Much can be learnt about post-purchase behaviour by studying how buyers use the product, which uses the product, where it is used, when it is used and with what other things it is used. The detailed survey of literature provides the main idea about the determinants of purchase preference, satisfaction and decision of users'. Preferences are identified as one of the outcomes of experiences. These preferences are manifested in such categories as the generic product, the brand, the size, the store as well as the price of the product. In addition, these preferences may be about the nature and performance of the product or services. The cost and efforts to be expended before obtaining the direct product or service benefits are also important. The social benefits or costs accruing to the user because of the purchase are also significant. The inter-personal communication among friends etc plays a major role in many user decisions. In many situations, the 'opinion leaders' have a more central role in purchase process than others. In the Indian situation in general and the durables industry in particular, in addition to the above variables, the delivery terms also play an important role in the purchase decisions.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The study of behavioral aspect of users' is of great importance for marketers and this knowledge is applied to find out the users' wants and needs. The main point for developing successful marketing strategy is a clear understanding of the users' mind before, during and after a purchase. As not all users' are alike and their shopping patterns and preferences are constantly changing, they prefer varieties of products, which reflect their own needs, personalities and life styles. After globalization, a wide range of consumer durables started



flooding the market. Consumer durables, which were the presence of upper class during the eighties, have suddenly started thronging the middle-income group households. The focus of everyone's attention is shifted towards owning these gadgets and the very social status of the family has come to be assessed by the possession of these assets. Many products purchases may require the evaluation of a variety of economic, social, and psychological factors. To solve the problems of users' and marketers, there must be continuous studies in the field of user buying behaviors. Hence, this study is carried out to understand to the users' behaviour towards durable goods in Tiruchirappalli District.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To analyse the impact of brand loyalty, quality and brand consciousness on the users' behavior of durable goods
- To ascertain the influence of novelty, fashion, recreation and shopping consciousness on the users' behavior of durable goods
- To examine the association between demographic variables and product and shop selection.
- To offer suggestions to marketers to maximize the convenience to users' at the shopping place.

HYPOTHESES: The hypotheses of the research problem were taken out in the present context in consonance with the objectives of the study and the answers given by the respondents. The following statistical null hypotheses are formulated and tested in the appropriate places.

- There is no significant association between the users' of durable goods and gender.
- There is no significant association between the users' of durable goods and age.
- There is a significant association between the users' of durable goods and status.
- There is significant association between the users' of durable goods and income.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design is a systematic plan prepared for directing a research study. A research design is the program that guides the researcher in the process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting findings. This research is based on both descriptive and empirical approach. It aims at exploring result based on higher order mathematical and statistical tools.



RESEARCH PROCEDURE

After doing the required literature review and studying the history and theoretical background, questionnaire was prepared and a preliminary test of the questionnaire was conducted. The survey managing and implementing the data collection organized in such a way that face to face mode of communication with the respondents was possible. Followed by this, Data entry, coding and data analysis were done. While the data was being analyzed, the post test or revision of data collection was conducted to verify and avoid even the minor mistakes that prevailed.

METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

One of the important stages in the research process is data collection. The researcher used both primary and secondary methods of data collection.

PRIMARY METHOD

The primary data was collected by using questionnaire. It is one of the important and powerful tools for the data collection in the social research. The interview techniques is a verbal method of securing data especially in the field research connected with the social business. The researcher used well-structured section wise questionnaire to collect the primary sources of data.

PILOT STUDY

A pilot study administering the questionnaire with 50 users' of durable goods, Stratified random sampling method was applied by covering all the parts of Srirangam. The purpose of the pilot study is to test the quality of the items in the questionnaire and to confirm the feasibility of the study. Based on the pilot study necessary modifications were made in the questionnaire. The researcher sought adequate guidance through the research supervisor.

SECONDARY METHOD

Secondary data were collected through books, relevant articles in journals, magazines, published and unpublished reports, dailies and internet.

SAMPLE SIZE

Stratified random sampling method was employed to select the sample respondents are chosen from Srirangam. Totally, 250 users' of durable goods are selected on simple random sampling method. Out of the sampling, 228 consumers only returned the filled in



questionnaires and of them, 500 only are usable. Hence, the exact sample of the study is 200.

MEASURING TECHNIQUES

Measurement is central to process of obtaining data. The three levels of measurement are used in the study like nominal, ordinal and interval.

SCALING TECHNIQUES

Scaling describes the procedure of assigning numbers to various degrees of opinion, attitude and other concepts. In the present study, five scale methods have been used.

STATISTICAL APPLICATIONS

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used in the analysis of the data collected in this research as the researcher deemed it the most appropriate given its versatility and considering the nature of the data collected. The SPSS has the incredible capabilities and flexibilities of analyzing huge data within seconds and generating an unlimited gamut of simple and sophisticated statistical results including simple frequency distribution tables, polygons, graphs, pie charts, percentages, cumulative frequencies, binomial and other distributions.

The researcher has utilized appropriate statistical tools to analyze the data. In most of the cases, comparison has been made based on observation. Comparisons of tables with simple mathematical tools have been used to make the analysis more understandable. Based on the answers given by the respondents, a null hypothesis was framed which involves statistical tools for test hypothesis. Such as

- ❖ One sample t-test is applied to analyze the respondent's preferences on various elements of purchase decision process in respect of durables.
- ❖ Factor analysis by principle component method is applied to analyze the various elements of purchase decision process in respect of durables.
- ❖ One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) is used to identify the significant differences among the various elements of user behaviour with regard to durables.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study aims at analysing users' behaviour relating to durable goods. The products selected for the study are consumer durables, which include Refrigerator, washing Machine,



television, Air-Conditioner and Microwave oven. The scope of the study has been limited to certain buying behavioral aspects of purchase decision process, namely (Information search, product awareness, interest, product evaluation process, brand preference, factors of motivation, price and quality consciousness, purchase and post purchase behaviour). The study broadly aims at examining perceptions of the users' mainly in terms of the information gathered, sources of information, location where the purchase is made and the ultimate purchase decision.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study takes into account certain factors influencing the purchase decision process.

- ❖ Due to time and cost constraints, the sample size of the study is restricted to 200 and it covers the users' of durable goods in Srirangam only.
- ❖ The products selected for study are from consumer durables viz. Refrigerator, Washing Machine, Television, Air-Conditioner and Microwave oven, the study is conducted with a macro approach.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- It is found from the analysis that a good majority of respondents prepare to buy durable goods from the neighboring retail outlets.
- The users' purchase style was studied and learn that majority of the users' purchase the durable goods by hot cash.
- It is divulged from the study that majority of the respondents were aware about durable goods only through advertisement than the other sources.
- While analyzing the communication media it was learnt that television media and press medium influencing more among the respondents in selecting durable goods.
- The study reveals that the users' of durable goods are much influenced and attracted by the product positioning and credit facilities offers are facilitated by the dealers.
- It is found from the analysis that the users' always compared the price of durable goods.
- The study clearly proved that the respondents are learning more about features of durable goods with their brands before buying.



CONCLUSION

As far as the durable products are concerned, the users' are indifferent when compared to purchasing of durables. Previously users' stuck to one particular shop and one particular brand. However, there is a remarkable change in the buying behaviour of the users' towards durable products. This is because of the different shopping outlets, various sources of information, multifarious aspects of article evaluation process and consistent promotional offers made by the marketers. Further, it is concluded that the changing concept of retail business into retail in detail, establishment of giant sized retail shops in the name of malls and the influx of foreign direct investment in retail business also influence the buying habits of the users'.

REFERENCES

1. Buying behaviour, Discount Store News, 35(23), (1996), P. 1-6.
2. C. R.Handy, "Consumer Satisfaction / Dissatisfaction: Perspectives and overview, in proceeding of Conference on Conceptualization and Measurement of Consumer Satisfaction / Dissatisfaction", H. Keith Hunt, eds., Marketing Service Institute, Cambridge, Mass (1977), P.6.
3. C.I. Hoveland, A.A. lumsdaine and F.D. Sheffield, "Experiments on Mass Communication", Vol.3 Princeton N.J. Princeton University Press, (1948), P.8.
4. Churchill, G.A., Peter, J. P. "Marketing: Creating value for customers", Second edition. New York: Irwin, 1998.
5. Asseal, H. Consumer behaviour and marketing action. Fifth edition. Ohio: South Western College Publishing, 1995.
6. Baker, M.J. The marketing book. Fourth edition. London: Butterworth, 1999.
7. Barrie, G, Furnham, A. Consumer profiles. New York: Routledge, 1992.
8. Berman, B, Evans, J.R. "Retail Management: A Strategic Approach". Eighth edition. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, (2001), P.258.